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Constructing and Contesting the Good British Citizen:
an investigation of the contemporary citizenship regime
as discursive practice

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Declaration

No portion of the work in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification at this or any other university or other institute of learning. The thesis is entirely my own work.

Abstract

The last two decades have seen major interventions in naturalisation legislation across much of the ‘industrialised’ world, with successive UK administrations introducing and refining citizenship tests, language proficiency requirements, and ceremonial performances in an explicit bid to elevate the acquisition of citizen-status from a ‘right’ to a ‘privilege’ (Home Office, 2013a). In this thesis, I draw on theorisations of the border as a geopolitical, a biopolitical, and a ‘neuropolitical’ (Isin, 2004) phenomenon, and thus conceptualise these newly-instituted ‘citizenisation’ (Fortier, 2017) processes as a political project, as part of an assemblage of bordering practices through which to heighten and manage the anxieties of the neurotic subject within the securitised state, and to realise the nation state in *domopolitical* terms as a *home* (Walters, 2004). While discourse researchers have certainly provided much important empirical insight into the strategies employed in contemporary citizenship documentation, and in the broader discursive contexts in which these citizenship regimes are situated (e.g. Wodak et al, 2009; Löwenheim and Gazit, 2009), I argue that the citizenship regime cannot be understood as wholly constituted through the linguistic practices of élite policy and media actors, but should instead be conceptualised more broadly as discursive practice: as a complex set of linguistic, material, and symbolic practices. From this premise, I situate my research within a particular local context, drawing together a data set which takes into account policy documents and testing materials, observations of testing and ceremonial rituals, and interviews with twenty actors involved in the production of the citizenship regime, including citizenship officials and recent and prospective citizens. Articulating themes across the data set, I look to the ways in which both the state and the Good citizen-subject are performed and secured within this discursive landscape, and find important moments of disruption and contestation to this dominant discursive formation.

Introduction

“If you believe you’re a citizen of the world, you’re a citizen of nowhere. You don’t understand what the very word ‘citizenship’ means”

Theresa May, October 2016¹

“When you are a citizen the light is different [...] people look I feel people look at you in a different way [...] they don’t think maybe you are a scrounger you are a refugee you are someone who is scrounging at their resources [...] you just feel also you have a right to be”

Thandi, March 2015

In the juxtaposition between PM Theresa May’s expression of disdain for the concept of global citizenship and Thandi’s powerful articulation of the importance of citizen-status sits the heart of this thesis. It is a thesis about citizenship in the contemporary UK; and in examining the national citizenship project, it is also, necessarily, a thesis about borders, bordering practices, and the politics of mobility within the contemporary, securitised, nation state.

In the Introduction to this thesis, I begin by mapping the political landscape and locating the contemporary citizenship regime within this discursive context. I then turn to a brief interrogation of the concept of citizenship before providing an outline of naturalisation legislation as it currently stands. Finally, I articulate the central focus of this thesis and clarify certain key terms as they will be used throughout this PhD.

¹ Theresa May’s 2016 party conference speech in Birmingham (May, 2016a)

i Mapping the landscape

The complexities of global mobility have long preoccupied national governments, both within and outside the UK; however, the global conflicts, geopolitical ruptures, and economic developments of the past few decades have precipitated a particular determination amongst successive UK administrations to address the question of inward migration. The referendum on the UK's withdrawal from the European Union was contested almost exclusively on issues around immigration (Van Reenen, 2016), and, in the months following the 'Brexit' decision, anxieties and hostilities directed towards 'uncontrolled migration' (May, 2016b) and the so-called 'migrant/migration crisis' – a term not only employed by the tabloid press but also used widely, and without clarification, in broadsheet newspapers and political discourse (e.g. *BBC*, 2016a; *the Guardian*, 2017; Boris Johnson, 2017) – have continued apace.

As Jones et al (2017: 70) note, it seems almost inconceivable in the current climate to recall Tony Blair's speech at Davos in 2000 in which he spoke in support of an 'open global society' (Blair, 2000), and the Cabinet Office statement in 2001 which declared that 'migration is likely to enhance economic growth and the welfare of both natives and migrants' (Cabinet Office, 2001). Indeed, while public opinion polls over many decades may have consistently reported a majority view that there are 'too many' migrants (Blinder, 2011), the sense that migration is a significant concern for the nation itself is rather more recent: as Anderson (2013: 49) points out, Ipsos MORI polls in 1999 found only 5% of respondents viewed immigration/race relations as a 'priority matter', compared with a notable 46% in 2007. Certainly that is not to imply that fears, anxieties, and outright racisms directed towards the migrant Other are a 21st Century phenomenon. However, the sense of a degree of optimism or at least a relative indifference towards migration, as expressed by Tony Blair and the Cabinet Office, appears in marked contrast to contemporary political and media discourses in which mobility and the figure of the migrant are widely and variously articulated as indicating a loss of national sovereignty, as evidencing a separation between the 'metropolitan elite' and the rest of society (Jones et al, 2017: 41), as presenting an insurmountable threat to the jobs, homes, and financial

resources available to established citizens (Anderson, 2013: 10); as posing an immanent danger to the nation's security (De Genova, 2011; Muller, 2004), and as posing an inherent risk to the nation's 'democratic values' and principles (Gianni, 2013: 212).

While multiple, and complex, fears around the mobility of those deemed illegitimate, undesirable or inadmissible (Bhandar, 2008) are thus apparent, the particular increase in anxiety evident this Century is at least partly a reflection of the securitised logics central to, and proliferating around, the global 'War on Terror'. Post-2001, the spectacular figure of the terrorist has come to be articulated as an ever-present phantasm whose entrance into the national space must be policed; hence the global proliferation of border-control technologies such as e-border programs and biometric scanners (Rygiel, 2011). However, within a UK context, fears around the threatening terrorist Other have also become increasingly entangled with questions around the 'integration' of those deemed 'culturally' Other, both established citizens and those more recently arrived (Closs Stephens, 2013; McGhee, 2009; De Genova, 2011).

This existential anxiety is evidenced most notably in the ideological shift across successive UK administrations from a multiculturalist approach to the management of diversity to an integrationist, or indeed 'neo-assimilationist' (Waite, 2011: 353), agenda since the turn of the century.² In the context particularly of the 2001 disturbances in the North West of England and the July 2005 bombings in London, both right and left of the political spectrum have issued rejections of multiculturalism as both ideology and as policy (Lenton, 2012), with the widespread accusation that the approach bears responsibility for the 'fragmentation' (Modood, 2005) of the national community; this view is epitomised by Trevor Phillips' now infamous 'sleepwalking [...] to segregation' statement (Guardian, 2005). As the very term 'multiculturalism' has thus begun to disappear from political discourse, both in the UK and indeed across much of the 'industrialised' world (Vertovec and Wessendorf,

² Much has been written on the so-called 'death' or 'crisis' of multiculturalism over the 2000s; see for instance Back et al, 2012; Lentin and Titley, 2012; Però, 2013; Lewis, 2014.

2010; Lewis, 2014), the 2000s have seen an increasingly widespread consensus that the desired unity of the national community is necessarily undermined by the differing ‘cultural’ demands and expectations of minoritised ethnic, in particular Muslim, groups, and that social cohesion can only be *secured* (in both senses of the term) by a more explicit, or aggressive, re-assertion of the nation’s sovereignty, its ‘values’, and its ‘identity’ (Lentin, 2012; Però, 2013).

Within this landscape, citizenship has emerged as a key technology through which to address the perceived disjuncture between Britain’s diverse communities, articulated as a site at which the unity of the British nation, its supposed norms and principles, can be realised. While this is evidenced to some degree in the introduction of a citizenship curriculum in mainstream secondary education,³ it is particularly apparent in the complete reformulation post-2001 of citizenship legislation for those from migrant backgrounds. Thus, and in keeping with developments across several other European and Anglophone nations, where the acquisition of British citizen-status was once a rather more mundane, bureaucratic activity predicated predominantly on length of residence in the country, the newly-instituted processes for attaining British citizenship have become increasingly demanding, with the introduction of a testing regime, minimum language proficiency levels, an extensive set of eligibility criteria, an increasingly onerous application fee, and a compulsory ceremony for all new citizens (Però, 2013; MacGregor and Bailey, 2012). Through these legislative shifts, successive administrations have articulated their intention to elevate the acquisition of citizen-status from a ‘right’ to a ‘privilege’ (Home Office, 2013a), to ‘place much greater emphasis than we do at present on the value and significance of becoming a British citizen’ (Home Office, 2001a: 30).

ii Citizenship: reterritorialising, renationalising

On most accounts of citizenship, the concept is articulated as a formal institution involving a constitutional relationship between the individual and the nation state

³ It is outside the scope of this thesis to explore broader citizenship pedagogies; for further analysis of the mainstream secondary curriculum see Kerr et al (2007) and Lopes and Kerr (2005).

(Delanty, 1997: 285). Citizenship in these terms indicates the legal integration of inhabitants into the national community (Castles and Davidson, 2000: 2), whilst simultaneously emphasising the contributions and accountabilities of the ‘common man’ to the nation state (Isin and Turner, 2007: 6). This understanding of the term accords with T. H. Marshall’s (1949/2006) seminal account in which citizenship is understood to operate as a means to ensure that all members of the polity are treated as ‘full and equal’ members of society (Kymlicka and Norman, 1994: 354) and is guaranteed through the construction of three sets of rights: civil, political, and social. And this understanding of citizenship is widely repeated, with Marshall’s particular account prominent in citizenship literature across numerous disciplines; indeed, Secor (2003: 149) contends that the theory ‘anchors most understandings of citizenship today’.

However, Marshall’s conceptualisation has been subject to criticism in more recent years for two key reasons: firstly for its failure to account for the inconsistencies and inequalities in membership and inclusion, particularly along race, class, and gender lines (Bloemraad et al, 2008; Yuval-Davis, 2007); indeed, Marshall’s is an essentially white, middle-class, and fundamentally hetero-normative model of citizenship; and secondly for the assumption that citizenship refers solely to the relationship between the individual and the nation state. Given the increase in global migration and the attendant growth of diasporic communities and transnational affiliations (Turner, 2006: 226), a plethora of alternative conceptualisations of citizenship have emerged, each proposing alternatives to the nation state as the sole locus of membership. For scholars such as Falk (1993), Bauböck (1994), and perhaps most influentially, Soysal (1994), the national citizenship project should be re-evaluated, and a ‘post-national’ or ‘transnational’ concept proposed in its place.

And yet, while these alternative notions of citizenship offer an interesting theoretical response to the inevitable questions raised by global mobility, they in fact appear somewhat unpersuasive in the current political climate, a landscape in which ‘reclaiming sovereignty’ and ‘taking back control of our borders’ are central refrains in the national discussion (Bhambra, 2016). Thus, where proponents of a post-national concept of citizenship may have seen the European Union as exemplifying

the successful transfer of authority away from the nation state and towards a de-territorialised model of citizenship, the recent EU referendum on Britain's position within this complex political unit indicates the fragility of this respatialising endeavour. And rather than witnessing the retreat of the nation, there has instead been an explicit re-assertion of the national in both UK, and more broadly 'Western' citizenship policy (Però, 2013; MacGregor and Bailey, 2012; Joppke, 2013).

iii **Citizenisation: constructing the parameters of inclusion**

This 're-nationalisation' (Kiwani, 2008) is evident in the legislative interventions into the citizenship regime over the past two decades. In order to become a citizen of the UK now, the citizen-candidate must satisfy a set of seven criteria, including:

- to be aged over 18
- to be 'of sound mind'
- to intend to continue living in the UK post-naturalisation
- to be 'of good character'
- to meet certain residential requirements, such as satisfying the current residential qualifying period of five years
- to be 'able to communicate in English [...] to an acceptable degree'
- to 'have sufficient knowledge of life in the UK'.

Within these stipulations then, the candidate must now demonstrate both their language proficiency⁴ and their knowledge of society and civic institutions. While a language requirement had in fact been in existence since the *British Nationality Act* of 1981, previously, the 'sufficient knowledge' demanded of applicants was not defined (Blackledge, 2009b: 72) and the 'test' for this competence consisted of an interview between the applicant and a police officer: if both parties could understand one another, this was deemed sufficient proof of language proficiency (van Oers, 2010: 64). I do not intend to claim here that these were halcyon days in which

⁴ English, Welsh, or Scottish Gaelic are permissible languages, although English is clearly prioritised across the gov.uk website and wider government discourse (more on which in Chapter 4).

citizenship was accessible to all; indeed, an unregulated language ‘test’ poses its own particular problems. However, the practices for determining an applicant’s language level have, since 2001, become notably more rigorous, with the specific imposition that the citizen-candidate possess certain qualifications or attend particular courses (Blackledge, 2009b: 73). And this language requirement is also now extended to those applying for naturalisation on the basis of marriage, a cohort previously exempt from any such obligation. Currently, the minimum language proficiency requirement is set at ESOL entry level 3 (B1 on the CEFR).⁵

In order to satisfy the final requirement – ‘sufficient knowledge of life in the UK’ – all citizen-candidates must also now pass the *Life in the UK* test: an online, multiple choice examination consisting of 24 questions. In order to prepare for this exam, individuals are recommended to purchase and read the preparatory texts: the *Life in the UK Official Study Guide*; the *Life in the UK Guide for New Residents*; and the *Life in the UK Official Practice Questions and Answers* book (Wales, 2013; Mitchell, 2013; TSO, 2013). It is particularly significant that, prior to 2013, applicants could *either* demonstrate their ‘knowledge of life in the UK’ by taking the *LUK* test *or*, for those with a lower language proficiency level, by attending an ‘ESOL with citizenship’ programme. During the course of this PhD, however, the government withdrew this ESOL with citizenship option: as of 28th October 2013 therefore, all applicants for naturalisation must both demonstrate a minimum English language proficiency level of ESOL entry 3 (B1), *and* pass the *Life in the UK* test.

Finally, and again in keeping with the desire to make citizenship acquisition a more ‘significant’ event, the (New) Labour government also introduced a mandatory citizenship ceremony in which the ‘State, and the local community [could] welcome formally its new citizens’ (Home Office, 2001a: 34) and which has continued since its implementation in 2004. During this ceremony, the individual is required to

⁵ Categorized in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as being at the threshold of an independent user, who ‘can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters’; ‘can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken’; ‘can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar’; and ‘can describe experiences and events [...] and briefly give reasons and explanations’ (see appendix A for CEFR table).

make an oath or affirmation of allegiance to the Queen and her successors, and a pledge to be faithful to the ‘rights’, ‘freedoms’, ‘values’, and ‘laws’ of the UK.

With these interventions, the citizenship application process now thus demands that the citizen-candidate both achieve and demonstrate a set of skills and values – their language proficiency, their ‘knowledge’ of society and civic institutions, and their commitment to the UK. For Fortier (2017, drawing on Wallace Goodman, 2014) these newly-instituted measures can be referred to as ‘citizenisation’ practices; these are practices which relate to the ‘promotion and assessment of skills and knowledge deemed necessary for political membership’ (Fortier, forthcoming: 2). And these citizenisation practices provide a useful perspective from which to examine the articulation of the nation state and the citizen, and the ‘enactment of state-citizen relations’ (Fortier, 2017: 5), for in these reconfigurations, both the imagined nation state and the Good, legitimate citizen can be defined. So whilst alternative notions of citizenship which transcend and traverse the nation state (for instance, Isin’s (2008) more recent ‘acts’ of citizenship), offer a useful response (and resistance) to the state-centred narrative, the reformulation of the national citizenship project points to its continued positioning as a key site at which the management of the national population can be enacted; as a ‘normative frame’ (Byrne, 2014: 6) or a ‘benchmark’ (Newman, 2003) through which to demarcate the legitimate insider and the potentially threatening outsider.

iv PhD focus: temporal and spatial locations

The purpose of this thesis then is to interrogate this national citizenship project. It does so not from the perspective of legislative shifts, but from the critical standpoint of participants within the regime, offering a contextualised study of the national citizenship project in action. It seeks to answer the broad research query:

- How is citizenship for naturalisation purposes brought into practice in a particular urban setting in the UK?

And, in engaging with this central question, it examines the object of study through the lens of the following four specific questions:

1. (How) do naturalisation practices work to realise the nation state/the citizen?
2. (How) do naturalisation practices work to realise the nation state/citizen relation?
3. (How) do individual actors produce and navigate the citizenisation process?
4. What counter-hegemonic spaces exist for contestation/resistance to dominant discursive formations?

In examining these questions, this PhD looks to the ways in which citizenisation practices are articulated within a particular city in the UK, and the ways in which a group of actors orientate to, negotiate, and themselves produce the citizenship regime as discursive practice.

This thesis is necessarily located both temporally and spatially. While I have briefly positioned the UK citizenship regime within a broader global and historical context in the opening section of this Introduction, I focus throughout the rest of this thesis on citizenship practices within one particular location, and within the specific time frame 2012-2015. This decision reflects both my methodological commitment to focusing on the nuances of the particular case, and my own personal locatedness: as Anderson (2013: 9) similarly finds in her research, engagement with the detail of political discourse, legislative change, and broader public debate has a necessary specificity, and my own embeddedness within a particular time and space is central in this PhD.

v A note on terminology

Whilst acknowledging the philosophical complexities in endeavouring to fix definitions, it is useful at this point to note the ways in which certain terms will be employed throughout this thesis. Firstly, I will be utilising the terms *naturalisation*, *to naturalise*, or *citizenship for naturalisation purposes* to refer to the practice of attaining British citizen-status by those individuals who do not hold this status from

birth. I am fundamentally suspicious of any claims to ‘nature’ or the ‘natural’ order and thus find the term uncomfortable; however, this is the language employed in legislative documents, and is itself revealing: as Fortier (2013: 698) notes, the term carries with it the presupposition of a natural order to which the individual can be brought into conformity, a metaphor which produces the political and the natural worlds as analogous (Somerville, 2005: 669). On this account, the process of naturalisation thus re-establishes the natural order of things, aligning the individual’s nationality with their place of residence (Fortier, 2013). Significantly for this project, naturalisation is then not simply a legislative process, but rather entails an ontological shift on the part of the citizen-candidate.

Secondly, I use the terms *non-citizen* and *citizen-candidate* to refer to those individuals who do not hold British citizen-status from birth, and are, in the case of the latter, in the process of applying for this status. I am aware that this term does not capture the fact that the majority of these individuals are likely to hold a citizenship status from a different country – they are not technically therefore non-citizens; however, I follow established scholarship in the field (e.g. Fortier, 2017; Byrne, 2014; Anderson, 2013; Jones et al, 2017) in employing these terms.

Thirdly, the term *citizenship regime*: this phrase is drawn from scholarship (for instance Feldman, 2012) which looks to the ‘*migration regime*’ as a specific ‘assemblage’ of institutions, actors, and legislative decisions through which the practices of mobility are (partly) structured. Drawing on this literature then, it sees the term ‘citizenship regime’ similarly as referring to the particular legal frameworks and official directives with which citizenship applicants are compelled to engage. The shifts in citizenship policy, including the introduction of the test, the production of testing materials, and the ceremony, along with the pronouncements of specific policy actors, could all be classed as part of this regime. It is important, however, to avoid reification here: the term ‘regime’ does not presuppose coherence and the absolute interpellation of the non-agentic subject; rather, as Sciortino (2004: 33) notes, it allows space for ‘gaps, ambiguities and outright strain’; as such, it encompasses the emergence of particular patterns (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013: 179) within national/institutional citizenship discourse, without neglecting the

heterogeneity of the actors and sites involved in the enactment of citizenship ‘on the ground’. Throughout this thesis, I use the terms *citizenship project*, *citizenship regime*, and *citizenisation* interchangeably to refer to the practices described here.

I should also note at this point that I have chosen to anonymise the name of the city in which I conducted this research. Although the content of this project is not of an obviously sensitive nature, I am aware both that certain figures, such as the Lord Mayor, would be immediately recognisable if I were to reveal the specific city in which she works, and also that issues around citizenship, status, and the state are often beset with anxieties; indeed, it took a good deal of perseverance and reassurance to secure participants for this thesis (more on which in Chapter 3). As such, and in accordance with my commitment to protecting the welfare of all the participants (as discussed further in section 3.3), I have chosen to define the site only as a multi-ethnic city in England. Throughout this document therefore, I refer to the location as ‘the City’, and have endeavoured to be cautious about the degree to which I reveal very specific detail which would immediately expose the exact urban setting. Further, all participants were given the option to anonymise their data with a pseudonym of their choice. In some cases participants elected to use their own names; in others their given names have been replaced with a pseudonym without comment.

vi Thesis structure

Turning now to the structure of this thesis, I begin in the next chapter by offering a brief descriptive outline of the citizenship application process and a short summary of key statistical data, particularly in terms of application numbers both nationally and in the City. I believe that this will be useful information for a reader unfamiliar with citizenship legislation to gain a sense of the key documentation, time scales, and costs of a citizenship application. The data I use has been drawn from official government sources however, and I intend this short section to be read, in the spirit of the thesis, not as objective fact, but as itself part of the articulation of a ‘legible’ (Scott, 1998: 2) population.

Following this bureaucratic mini-Chapter, I turn to the construction of a theoretical framework. In Chapter One, I examine the concept of the *border*, drawing on insights in particular from critical security scholars (Vaughan-Williams, 2012; Salter, 2008) to argue that borders should be understood geopolitically – in terms of their tangible enactment at the cartographic frontier; biopolitically – relating to the ways in which they work to constitute the population; and neuropolitically – drawing on Isin’s (2004) scholarship to examine the ways in which the contemporary politics of mobility orientates to the neurotic citizen whose anxieties are both heightened and managed by state *bordering practices*. I then position the contemporary citizenship regime within this theoretical context. I move in Chapter Two to locate the thesis more specifically within the relevant scholarship in the field, identifying the key research on which this PhD draws and noting the gap which this study seeks to fill. In particular I argue that direct engagement with *both* the actors *and* the sites involved in the production of citizenship as a situated practice is missing from previous research, and thus note the contribution this PhD seeks to make to the field.

Chapter Three then examines the methodological considerations informing this PhD. Drawing on discourse theoretical literatures (e.g. Howarth, 2000; Laclau and Mouffe, 1987), it begins with an outline of the onto-epistemological principles on which the thesis is based, arguing that ‘meaning-making’ is a fundamentally contingent endeavour and thus rejecting positivistic conceptions of truth and falsity. It then goes on to outline a research design, as informed by these philosophical principles, which endeavours to avoid the subsumption of individual actors under an *a priori* theoretical framework and therefore foregrounds an iterative research process in which my own positionality as researcher is not elided from the research endeavour. Finally, it outlines the analytical procedures with which I approached the data constructed.

These chapters provide a theoretical and methodological framework for the analytical work which I undertake in Chapters Four to Seven, in which I offer both data and analysis concurrently. In Chapter Four I focus specifically on the concept of legitimacy and legitimation, looking to the way in which citizenisation practices work to articulate a certain version of the state and the legitimate citizen. Chapter

Five then examines these practices in terms of the neoliberal logics to which they speak. In Chapter Six I consider the concepts of performance and performativity in the citizenship regime, before examining the object of study through the lens of affect in Chapter Seven. I draw these analytical chapters together in a concluding Chapter 8, articulating the ways in which this analytical work responds to the research questions constructed in this thesis, and offers a useful academic contribution, particularly to the fields of citizenship and discourse studies.

Introduction II: a bureaucratic note

In the following short section, I outline the central features of a citizenship application as it currently stands. I include this information in tabular form for ease of reference as this is a distillation of three rather lengthy Home Office documents (Booklet AN, Home Office, 2017a; Guide AN, Home Office, 2017b; and Form AN, Home Office, 2017c). I then offer some statistical data on both national and local applications.

vii Application procedures, costs, eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria	<p>In order to be eligible to begin the process of applying for citizenship, an individual must fulfil the following 7 criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to be aged over 18 (under 18s can be registered as citizens if they were born after 1983 and one of their parents has been granted citizen-status; or they can be included in a family citizenship application).• to be ‘of sound mind’ ‘so that you understand the step you are taking’ (Home Office, 2017a: 3).• to intend to continue living in the UK post-naturalisation.• to be ‘of good character’ (details of all criminal cautions/convictions, including road traffic offences, must be provided; it is also stipulated that applicants must declare if they have any children who have been convicted of an offence).• to meet certain residential requirements, such as satisfying the current residential qualifying period of five years (3 years for a spousal application), and without absence of more than 90 days in the last 12 months.• to be ‘able to communicate in English [...] to an acceptable degree’.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ‘have sufficient knowledge about life in the UK’. • As it currently stands, all applicants must also have already been granted Permanent Residence or Indefinite Leave to Remain.
<p><i>Life in the UK test</i></p>	<p>All applicants aged 18-65 must take the <i>Life in the UK</i> test.</p> <p>The entire booking process for this test takes place online, although there is a free helpline number for advice. Applicants can book a test at any point during the year (although this depends on availability at each testing centre) up to 7 days in advance, and can choose from one of 60 testing centres across the country.</p> <p>To book the test, applicants require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one form of photo ID (if applicants are in possession of a biometric residence permit they must provide this) • proof of address • email address • debit/credit card. <p>The online form requires applicants to set up an account and provide certain personal details, including full name (as given on ID: testing centres are meticulous in demanding that the name used to register for the test matches the name on the ID presented exactly); DOB; full UK address; HO ref number (if applicable); and reason for taking the test.</p>
<p>Fees (as of July 2017)</p>	<p>Fees vary depending on the nature of the application but at the minimum include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic fee for naturalisation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adults: £1282 ○ Children: £973 • A ceremony fee: £80 (for over 18s) • A test fee: £50 (for over 18s).

	<p>The cost of an application has increased by over £300 in the time I have been writing this thesis. At the time of writing, a complete adult application costs a minimum of £1431.20 per applicant.</p>
<p>Documents required alongside application form</p>	<p>Alongside the 30 page application form, all applicants must also provide their biometric information (at a cost of £19.20). Fingerprints will apparently only be retained until the applicant has attended their citizenship ceremony (Home Office, 2017a: 20).</p> <p>Applicants must also send:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cheque or debit card payment covering the relevant fees • Evidence of identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For instance passport, HO travel document, birth certificate • A passport photograph • Letters of ‘endorsement’ from 2 referees (one must be a ‘professional’ of any nationality; the other must be British and over 25) • A letter confirming success in the <i>LUK</i> test, stamped and signed by the test supervisor (the test results are also automatically sent from the test centre to the HO) • Evidence of language proficiency. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A certificate showing a recognised speaking and listening qualification in English/Welsh/Gaelic at B1 or higher OR ○ An original degree certificate showing sufficient English content and evidence that the qualification has been assessed by UK NARIC (a qualifications comparison organisation) to be equivalent to a UK

	<p style="text-align: center;">degree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of lawful residence in the UK during the 5 years before the application. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Passport AND/OR ○ Supporting letters, for instance from employers or educational establishments, demonstrating time spent at the institution • Evidence of freedom from immigration time restrictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For instance HO letter granting Leave to Remain in the UK • For EEA applicants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Valid passport AND ○ HO document certifying permanent residence (a permanent residence card is now obligatory) <p>It is worth noting that applicants who wish to ensure their documents are returned by secure post (presumably the majority given the sensitive nature of many of the required documents) must enclose their own pre-paid envelope.</p>
<p>Time scales</p>	<p>Final decisions are usually confirmed within 6 months (this the Home Office describes as ‘quick’ (Home Office, 2017b: 18)).</p> <p>Some applicants may be called to an interview if further information is deemed necessary.</p> <p>There is no legal right of appeal, although applicants can make a representation if they feel the refusal was inaccurate in terms of existing nationality law.</p>

Successful applicants	Successful applicants are ‘invited’ to attend a ‘ <i>compulsory</i> ’ citizenship ceremony. Applicants must contact their local authority to arrange this within 3 months of receiving the letter; if they fail to do so, they will be required to begin the application process again (and pay all the attendant fees once again).
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Table 1: Key features of a citizenship application

In this table I have identified the aspects of the application which I deem most pertinent to this thesis. Of particular interest here are the costs of the process, the documentation required, the time scales involved, and the information given regarding biometric data – this is a very recent stipulation, and the fact that fingerprint records are apparently only held until the applicant has attended their citizenship ceremony is particularly pertinent in this thesis.

I will now dwell briefly on the overall trends in citizenship acquisition in the UK. This provides useful contextual data for this thesis, and locates the particular urban setting in which I conducted this research within this broader landscape. I open the section by setting out some numerical data on national citizenship applications, and thence position the City within this statistical context.

viii Knowing the population: figures, trends, and the local context

Interestingly, during the first two years of this PhD project it was surprisingly difficult to identify any figures on the number of individuals applying for and being granted citizen-status in the UK over the past decade. While there was certainly much comment in parts of the press, particularly at points of specific ‘crisis’ or concern over migration (e.g. Slack and Drury, 2014), and a small number of reports produced by thinktanks such as the Migration Observatory (e.g. Blinder, 2013), I found it difficult to identify government-sanctioned statistics on citizenship

applications. This is an interesting finding in itself, for while the techniques used to ‘know’ the population and thus create a ‘legible people’ (Scott, 1998: 2) may have flourished in the contemporary era, these devices are often hidden, obscured from the very population they are used to constitute.

In 2014, however, the then Liberal Democrat-Conservative coalition government launched the data.gov.uk website, a project supposedly designed to open up these government figures for public use. With the gradual release of data, I was finally able to access a more detailed breakdown of figures on citizenship applications, rejections, and withdrawals, along with some detail on the national background of applicants and the geographical distribution of citizenship ceremonies. This data covers, to varying degrees of specificity, the period 2000 to 2015, but, interestingly, does not appear to have been updated since that time, perhaps due to the change in administration. Alongside this spreadsheet, the Home Office (gov.uk, 2017a) also releases a commentary on their overall immigration statistics each year in which there is a short section outlining citizenship applications and grants. The two documents are difficult to read together as they employ slightly different time scales (the data.gov spreadsheet appears to document each calendar year, while the Home Office write-up takes the time period June to June), and all such population metrics should of course be read in the spirit of this thesis not as objective fact; however, that said, the two data sources do give an interesting insight into the trends over the past decade, and it is worth noting certain key points here.

Firstly, and perhaps unsurprisingly given the increase in the number of migrants coming to the UK over the past two decades, the overall trend in both citizenship applications and grants since 2000 has been upwards. Although exact figures on citizenship *applications* are unavailable for 2000 and 2001, the number of individuals *granted* status jumped from 82,210 in 2000 to 90,282 in 2001 and then to 120,121 in 2002. From there, the number has generally continued to rise year on year, with particular spikes in 2005 (161,699), 2009 (203,789), and 2013 (207,989), as highlighted in Figure 1 below. The Home Office publication (2014) comments that the period June 2013 to June 2014 saw a 3% increase in applications, and that the number of grants issued in 2013 was more than double the number in 2001 and

the highest comparable annual total since such data was first recorded in 1962. Interestingly however, the number of citizenship grants dropped noticeably in 2014 (125,744), and again in 2015 (118,053). Figure 1 below indicates the number of citizenship applications granted per year between 2000 and 2015, and uses data extracted from the data.gov.uk website.

Year	Decisions to grant citizenship
2000	82,210
2001	90,282
2002	120,121
2003	130,535
2004	148,273
2005	161,699
2006	154,018
2007	164,637
2008	129,377
2009	203,789
2010	195,046
2011	177,785
2012	194,209
2013	207,989
2014	125,653
2015	118,053

Figure 1: Citizenship applications granted, 2000-2015

The decrease in 2014 may be at least partly attributable to a rather mundane cause: as a number of the council officials pointed out in our conversations, the Passport Office suffered a well-publicised workforce crisis in 2014 which led to the redeployment of a number of border agents and other Home Office staff into the

Passport Office to provide support with applications. This staffing shift may have resulted in fewer officials being available to handle citizenship applications, and may therefore account to some degree for the relatively low number of citizenship decisions that year. However, while this may provide a fairly persuasive explanation for the particular statistical shift in 2014, the patterns which appear across the data cannot be explained solely in terms of staffing anomalies. Indeed, the Home Office (2014) themselves point out the ‘notable increases’ in citizenship grants in the two years 2005 and 2013. Rather than suggesting a bureaucratic explanation for these spikes, they instead attribute these changes directly to the impact of certain legislative interventions. They explicitly note that the 2005 spike can be attributed to people anticipating the introduction of the *Life in the UK* test and therefore applying before these testing stipulations were enforced, and, similarly, the 2013 spike to those anticipating the abolition of the 2-strand (ESOL or *LUK*) testing approach and the concomitant stipulation that all applicants prove their language proficiency separately from their ‘Knowledge of Life’ in the UK (as mentioned in Section iii of the Introduction). On their own account then, legislative shifts have precipitated an increase in applications from those keen to avoid the new stipulations.

Turning now to the specific location in which I conducted this research, the City has a significant population of migrants; indeed the increase in residents witnessed in the City over the last decade is attributable as much to inward migration of overseas individuals as it is to natural growth, and the number of overseas individuals moving into the City is amongst the highest in the country, outside the capital (Evans, 2012). It is also a city with relatively higher rates of unemployment compared to the national average, and relatively lower levels of educational attainment, according to a report published on the city council website in 2014 but which has surprisingly since been withdrawn. While London conducts far more citizenship ceremonies than any other urban context, the City holds more than double the number of ceremonies each year than other similarly populated cities. During the course of the research, I was able to obtain some data from council employees on the number of attendees at citizenship ceremonies in the past two years, and, although this is not entirely current, it gives a useful indication of approximate figures naturalising in the City

each year. In 2013 then, 799 individuals attended group ceremonies while 309 attended private ceremonies, giving an overall total of 1108 individuals naturalising in that year. In keeping with the broader national figures, this number decreased in 2014 to 643 attending group ceremonies and 184 attending private ceremonies, totalling 827 new citizenship grants in that year.

In terms of the specific locations at which citizenship ‘events’ take place – all of which I spent some time in during the course of this research – the group citizenship ceremony is held in the City’s Town Hall, a rather grand civic building in the heart of the city centre. The private ceremony, in contrast, is conducted in a small room at the City’s registry office. As for the *Life in the UK* test, this now takes place at a *learnirect*⁶ building outside the city centre. I will comment in detail on the spatial distribution of these sites, and on their particular material and symbolic attributes, throughout this thesis.

⁶ I follow the company’s own practices in employing lower case letters in their title.

Chapter 1: Domopolitics and the neurotic citizen: citizenship as a bordering practice

As I noted in the Introduction to this thesis, I locate the citizenship regime as part of a broader politics of mobility in which migration and the figure of the migrant are positioned as a source of immanent anxiety to the national community. In the following chapter, I construct a theoretical framework with which to theorise the object of study, arguing in particular that the citizenship project can be examined through the lens of the border and the concept of bordering practices. In doing so, I outline two key conceptualisations of the border itself: firstly, as a material site at the nation's frontier – a geopolitical position which emphasises the physical border as a zone of expulsion and filtration; and secondly as a more complex set of practices dispersed throughout the nation state – a biopolitical understanding which sees bordering practices as diffuse and multi-sited. I argue that, in the contemporary securitised state, very material violences are enacted at both the external frontier and the de-territorialised border, looking to the so-called 'Mediterranean crisis' and the discriminatory practices embedded within the 2014 Immigration Act to justify this claim. However, I maintain that neither the practices of control and expulsion at the national frontier, nor the technologies of manipulation within the nation space should be read as solely repressive acts; rather, it is through such practices that the (il)legitimate, (in)secure subject is actively constituted and produced.

Drawing further on Foucauldian scholarship, I then follow Isin (2004) in positing that the state of unease characterising this century can be understood through the lens of 'neupolitics', as an assemblage of techniques through which to both produce and manage the anxieties of the contemporary citizen. Within this discursive context, I contend that citizenship policy has, since 2001, played an increasingly key role in the bordering of the nation, in the *domopolitical* (Walters, 2004) articulation of the nation as a home that must be protected, and in the concurrent realisation of the proper, integrated citizen and his/her juxtaposition with the ontologically threatening *anti-citizen*.

1.1 Bordering the territorial frontier: sovereign power and (de)legitimation

Within the ‘modern geopolitical imagination,’ as Agnew (2003) has termed it, the global political order is characterised by a set of territorial borders separating and demarcating space into discrete sovereign entities (Vaughan-Williams, 2012: 14). On this understanding, the border is the means by which individual nation states separate themselves from one another, dividing the inside from the outside, or more specifically, as Rajaram and Grundy-Warr (2004: x) put it, demarcating a ‘coherent inside from a chaotic outside’. This understanding of the role of the border as a protective barrier crucial to the state’s survival continues to inform contemporary security practices; indeed, contrary to predictions that state borders would become increasingly irrelevant on account of ‘globalisation’ (Ohmae, 1995), the post-9/11 world has seen the territorial border (re)emerge as a key site of concern in the securitisation of political communities (Vaughan-Williams, 2012: 14; Darling, 2011: 263; Bauder, 2011). Hence, since 2001, the US for instance has sanctioned numerous measures to secure its ‘endangered “homeland”’ by fixing its ‘leaky’ borders (Walters, 2011: 52) through concerted ‘boundary control’ practices (Inda, 2011: 78). Certainly, there have long been apparatuses of control designed to police borders and thereby manage perceived risk (de Genova, 2011: 108); however, the attacks in the US ushered in a dramatic increase internationally in the use of risk-management techniques such as fingerprinting, iris-scanning, and other forms of identity control at strategic sites such as airports, train stations, and ports (Bigo, 2011).

While the incumbent US President’s policies have been widely decried in political speeches and editorials as inhumane at worst, impractical at best (*BBC*, 2017a; *The New York Times*, 2017), his attempts in 2017 to introduce further legislation with which to police the US frontier continue, if rather more explicitly, the post-2001 security practices established by his predecessors. Trump’s (attempted) executive order in January 2017, for instance, seeks to place a total ban on entry to the US for individuals holding certain national passports, with citizens from Iraq, Syria, Iran,

and Sudan subject to these restrictions. And in this proposed legislation, the importance of national citizenship as a key instrument in the realisation of the state border is made evident. For while it may be the case that population movement is a core feature of contemporary life, passports indicating national citizenship are ever more crucial. Indeed, as Torpey (2000) notes, it was the development of a complex bureaucratic infrastructure, most pertinently the passport indicating national citizenship, which enabled the modern state to determine ‘who is in’ and ‘who is out’, and thereby to monopolise the legitimate means of movement. This control is evidenced most explicitly in the global passport power rank – a website listing national passports in order of their status (Passport Index, 2017). While German, Swedish, and Singaporean passports allow their citizens visa-free travel across 158 countries, it is of little surprise that citizens of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, and Syria are tightly constrained in their movement, a disparity made most evident in the harrowing scenes played out with desperate frequency on refugee boats in the Mediterranean Sea.

In Trump’s travel ban, and, most vividly in the so-called ‘Mediterranean crisis’, the materiality of border control is made manifest. Here, it is at the frontier site that a particularly repressive form of sovereign violence can be enacted, with very real consequences on the bodies of certain travellers. As the UNHCR (2017) notes, 2016 saw the largest number of fatalities at sea, with at least 5096 individuals dying in their attempts to cross the Mediterranean and seek asylum in European countries. The tragic consequences intrinsic to this ‘new era of migration’ (Jones et al, 2017: 5) are encapsulated in Mbembe’s (2003) concept of ‘necropolitics’: the construction of ‘death worlds’ (ibid: 40) in which a particular destructive violence is enacted on those designated ‘bare life’ (Agamben, 1998). Here, the ‘Mediterranean crisis’ reveals in vivid form the power of the contemporary nation state to control mobility and to enact a tangible, ‘material destruction’ (Mbembe, 2003: 14) on certain travellers as they seek to traverse the border.

The border zone is thus an important site at which a form of sovereign power can be seen – the state filtering, selecting (Darling, 2011: 264), and expelling those bodies delineated safe and those deemed unsafe. However, this is not simply a repressive power at work; rather, in this thesis, I draw on a discourse theoretical ontology of radical contingency and follow Glynos and Howarth (2007) in presuming that all systems of social relations are inherently relational; in other words, that social entities do not ‘possess’ a *sui generis* logic of their own, but are fundamentally dependent on their differential relations with other entities (more on which in section 1.5). And on this account, with the subject thus constituted in discursive practice, I argue that it is at the border zone that a certain sort of subject is actively *produced*, as I will now go on to explore.

As I noted in the Introduction to this thesis, the post-2001 landscape has seen mobility itself articulated as an immanent threat to the security of the state (Packer, 2006; Walters, 2004). That is not, however, to say that all mobility has been quashed or even reduced – indeed, as I noted above, global movement is a defining feature of contemporary life; rather, a plethora of new border technologies are being developed with a view to facilitating *controlled* mobility, to differentiating quickly and efficiently between desirable and undesirable, low-risk and high-risk movement (Rygiel, 2011: 143). And while this new ‘border imperialism’ (Walia, 2013) is experienced with particularly violent consequences by some more than others – as Balibar (2002: 79) argues, the ‘polysemic’ border ‘never exist(s) in the same way for individuals belonging to different social groups’ – this is not simply a politics of exclusion; rather, this management of mobility has implications for *all* individuals who pass through frontier sites, including both the ‘abject cosmopolitan’ (Nyers, 2003) and indeed the cosmopolitan elite. Salter (2008) is persuasive when he argues that the border, as a permanent state of exception, a ‘zone of indistinction, between inside and outside’ (Agamben, 1998: 10), operates as a liminal space in which every border crosser is held temporarily at the threshold of law, momentarily required during the border examination to affirm their legitimacy and seek permission from the sovereign to (re)enter the territory.

In examining this liminal zone as a productive space, it is useful to draw on securitisation theories (as examined through speech act theory (e.g. Wæver, 1995); or as explored as more complex social practice (e.g. Bigo, 2011)) which view security not as the material reality of traditional IR scholarship, but rather as a construct, the outcome of social processes in which certain practices are constituted as threats (Muller, 2004: 282). On this account, security is not therefore a question of given or actual danger, but is instead a ‘definitional process’ (Huysmans and Guillaume, 2013: 19), a technique by which risk and unease are discursively constructed (Nyers, 2009: 3). And it is through these discursive articulations that the (il)legitimate subject can be realised. With the events of September 2001, the spectacular figure of ‘the terrorist’ came to be articulated as the defining global threat, the purveyor of unpredictable chaos against which the state must act to protect itself (de Genova, 2011: 95). And while this notional terrorist is repeatedly invoked in the contemporary security state, it is in fact the more ‘mundane’ mobility of *migrants* which occupies the routine practices of government; as such, as de Genova (ibid) argues, migration is now an ‘utterly decisive material site where the ostensible War on Terror may be practically and physically realised’.

This is evidenced most explicitly in President Trump’s attempts to justify the proposed legislative change, as referenced earlier. Here, in decreeing that individuals from certain (Muslim-majority) countries be banned from entering the US, Trump states that ‘hundreds of refugees are under federal investigation for terrorism and related reasons’, before going on to declare that the executive order would ‘keep our citizens safe’ (Miller, 2017). In these words, Trump invokes the image of a mobile crowd in whose midst lurks the phantasmatic figure of the terrorist. In doing so, he (re)produces the articulation of migrant/refugee-terrorist, the racialised discursive realisation of a threatening Other whose mobility must be controlled for the safety of the nation. In the articulation of a somewhat nebulous threat, so technologies of control at the national frontier are legitimated as a crucial resource in the fight against this existential risk. And in these security practices at the border zone, so the traveller is held in a moment of liminality, an anxious space in which s/he is positioned as secure in opposition to the notional terrorist, both

thence *constituted as*, and distinguished from, the threatening Other, the legitimate from the illegitimate. Within this discursive landscape then, the territorial border becomes one of the key sites at which the (in)secure subject can be articulated and produced.

1.2 Bordering the nation: biopolitics, governmentality, and the management of population

As I have argued thus far then, the territorial border works as a site of inclusion/exclusion, constituting the legitimate traveller in opposition to the delegitimised Other. However, as I will go on to contend, it is not only the techniques utilised at airports, stations, ports, and other frontier sites that operate as technologies of control and exclusion in the contemporary state. Instead, the border has become somewhat more diffuse than the modern geopolitical imaginary might envisage (Vaughan-Williams, 2012). Indeed, while traditional IR scholarship may generally leave the concept of the border unproblematised, a number of scholars are now taking the border itself as a subject of inquiry (Mezzadra and Neilsen, 2013; Wastl-Walter, 2011; Parker and Vaughan-Williams et al, 2009; Salter, 2008; Bauder, 2011), with an increasing consensus emerging that the border can no longer be viewed simply as a ‘wall’ around the territory in the ‘Fortress Europe’ sense, but rather involves a more complex network of actors, mechanisms, and technologies (Aas, 2007: 296).

On this account, the realisation of the border does not occur solely at the territorial frontier of the state, but can instead be witnessed at multiple sites outside and within the geopolitical boundary (Côté-Boucher et al, 2014: 196). The domestication of state borders is evident, for instance, in the increasingly pervasive use of surveillance, regulation, and identification technologies (Walters, 2004) such as biometric tools at various sites, including schools, properties, hospitals, and sports venues (MacDonald and Hunter, 2013). In the UK, the Immigration Act 2014 introduced particularly controversial legislation outsourcing border control to citizens in a wide range of social contexts – landlords, medics, teachers, universities

– all of whom are now required to verify visa statuses or risk significant penalties (Jones et al, 2017). Indeed, banks and building societies have now been ordered to conduct immigration checks on 70 million current accounts in order to identify immigration violations (Travis, 2017). As Walters (2002) contends, such technologies point to the border’s increasingly privileged position in the systematic and multi-sited regulation of the national population, and indicate a shift in securitisation from the exceptional to the everyday (Agamben, 2005).

As Amoore (2006: 337) explains then, the contemporary border can be described as a ‘mobile regulatory site’ through which the everyday lives of individuals can be ‘made amenable to intervention and management’; and it is thus through such domesticated practices of classification and identification that bodies can again be determined and inscribed, or constituted, as legitimate/illegitimate, secure/insecure. From this basis, she argues the need to shift from a notion of borders in purely cartographic terms as geopolitical phenomena, to an understanding of the ways in which borders, or rather bordering *practices*, simultaneously operate as biopolitical phenomena, as an assemblage of diverse techniques through which to manage and control the population (Foucault, 1981). Foucault (1991: 100) saw this biopower as oriented not to the wellbeing of a sovereign entity, but to the healthy constitution of the population – its condition, its wealth, its health. In other words, with the emergence of the population as a ‘political subject’, so its wellbeing, its security, becomes the goal of government (Vaughan-Williams, 2012: 79). And as Vaughan-Williams (ibid) goes on to explain, this biopower is not concerned with fixing and demarcating territory, but rather with controlling and managing movement within and across territory, ‘allowing circulations to take place [...] sifting the good and the bad’ (Foucault, 2009: 65), a practice which seeks to regularise the population, to achieve, in Foucault’s terms, an ‘overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole from internal dangers’ (Foucault, 2003: 249).

Crucially for this thesis, the political power oriented to achieving such equilibrium and wellbeing is not simply exercised by a singular, repressive point of authority –

the sovereign state. Rather, the ‘governmentality’ involved in the management of the population instead refers to a multiplicity of actors, mechanisms, strategies, and technologies; in Foucault’s terms: ‘the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections’, and the manifold ‘calculations and tactics’ through which power is exercised (1991: 102). As Foucault (2009: 109) argues then, the state cannot be understood and analysed simply as a totalising and unified locus of control; instead, the practice of government is more diffuse and ‘multifarious’ (ibid: 93), oriented towards the population not (solely) through the exercise of violent sovereign power but through a complex set of practices through which certain relations between individuals are established.

Again then, as with my argument in the preceding section, I contend that the de-territorialised realisations of the border described above do enact a particular material effect on (certain) subjects. As Patel and Peel (2017) argue, for instance, the 2014 Immigration Act is already leading to widespread discrimination in the housing market, with landlords reluctant to rent homes both to non-British nationals, and indeed to British citizens from minoritised communities. And, although academic research in this area is as yet embryonic, the Race Equality Foundation (2014) has predicted an increase in homelessness and reduced access to healthcare for those targeted by the Immigration Act, while landlords and agents risk prison sentences and fines if they fail to adequately ‘police’ their prospective tenants. Such institutionalised discrimination may not have the fatal consequences of security policies at the geopolitical border, as discussed in the preceding section; however, as Jones et al (2017: 58) note, the increased vulnerability, ‘public humiliation’, and social exclusion resulting from such legislative acts may be experienced in a very tangible way by certain subjects.

However, again, as I argued above, the domestication of the state border should not be read simply in repressive terms; rather, as I will go on to explore further throughout this thesis, it is a productive set of practices through which the (il)legitimate and (un)desirable subject is actively produced. On this account then,

rather than viewing the border as a tangible space in which a unitary force enacts its violences in a wholly repressive manner, bordering practices also work to constitute the population in more complex terms: in manifold spaces, through multiple technologies, and in establishing relations through which to measure, manage, and manipulate both the ‘quantities and qualities’ of the population *within* (Salter, 2008: 366). I now turn to the ways in which citizenship can be explored as part of this theoretical framework.

1.3 Domopolitics and the neurotic citizen

As I have argued throughout this chapter, the dual issues of security and threat have increasingly been positioned at the centre of governmental practice across the industrialised nations over the past fifteen years. In the UK, at the time of writing, the threat from ‘international terrorism’ is, according to the MI5, ‘SEVERE’, only one level down from the highest ‘CRITICAL’ alert. Indeed, Alex Younger, the head of MI6, made a rare speech in 2016 in which he declared the threat to the UK from international terrorism to be ‘unprecedented’ (MacAskill, 2016). Interestingly, as with the colour coded system in the US (Byrne, 2014: 33), threat levels can range from low to critical but there is no category for ‘safe’ or ‘non-existent’ on this spectrum. And such terror alert classifications, along with the near-constant stream of images and analysis on the apparent ‘floods’ (Reynolds, 2016) and ‘swarms’ (BBC, 2016b; Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008) of migrants ‘invading’ UK shores, typify the emergence of *anxiety* as a crucial feature of 21st century governmentality.

Within this ‘hyper-securitised’ (Bonino, 2013: 393) landscape, successive administrations have made the specific commitment to constructing a ‘really hostile environment for illegal immigrants’ (words attributed to Theresa May in Travis’ (2013a) Guardian article).⁷ As part of the articulation of this hostility, the past

⁷ A ministerial group was in fact constructed with the initial title ‘the Hostile Environment Working Group’ (Aitkenhead, 2013), although this was soon altered to the less provocative heading, ‘the Inter-Ministerial Group on Migrant Access to Benefits and Public Services’.

decade has seen a notable ‘militarisation’ of immigration enforcement, with a particular emphasis on *visible* displays of border policing within local communities (Jones et al, 2017: 14). In the summer of 2013, for instance, the Home Office orchestrated a number of particularly aggressive communications campaigns, including the publication of a series of images from their Twitter account showing immigration officers apprehending ‘illegal’ migrants:⁸



Figure 2: Home Office Twitter activity, July 2013

Alongside this Twitter activity, 2013 also saw the launch of ‘Operation Vaken’, a tactic which involved the use of a mobile billboard van featuring a close-up image of

⁸ Screenshot from Twitter, July 3rd 2013.

a pair of handcuffs next to the slogan ‘In the UK illegally? Go home or face arrest’ and a free phone number to text for advice and help with travel documents:⁹



Figure 3: 'Operation Vaken': Go Home van

The van was driven through the streets of six London boroughs – Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge, Barnet, Brent, Ealing, and Hounslow, areas with notably large ethnic minority populations – and captured the reproduction by mainstream government of rhetorical strategies typically used in far-right discourse (Jones et al, 2017: 3).

As with the 2014 Immigration Act, the effects of such explicitly hostile campaigns were felt widely, throughout multiple sections of UK society (Forkert et al, 2016: 182). As Jones et al (2017: 15) argue, performances such as Operation Vaken address two audiences: both the immediate targets of this ‘coercive power’, *and* those who require persuasion that the state is indeed exercising its authority over ‘dangerous “others”’. Thus, it is not only those with irregular status whose fears

⁹ Image taken from Travis (2013b) article in *The Guardian*.

may be compounded by such governmental strategies, but a rather broader cross-section of society including minoritised communities, and, significantly, those for whom the issue of migration is an existing cause for concern (Forkert et al, 2016: 182). Indeed, a recent inquiry by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration (APPG, 2017) criticised the Home Office for ‘stoking anxiety’ and contributing to the production of a ‘toxic’ atmosphere around immigration. The particular threat posed by the ‘illegal’ migrant in these campaigns remains implicit – as I mentioned in the Introduction, multiple, complex, and interrelated fears around the migrant Other circulate; however, it is in these highly visible performances of hostility that I see a ‘governmentality of unease’ (Bigo, 2011: 45) made manifest. As Bigo argues, governmental strategies in the contemporary securitised state ‘transfor[m] reassurance into unease, angst, and even fear’ through an invocation of chaos, insecurity, and terror. So as migration and security become increasingly interlinked (Léonard, 2011; Hyndman, 2012; Lazaridis and Wadia, 2015), a ‘sensitivity of vulnerability’ (Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking, 2013: 347) is constructed, a sense that a threatening Other lurks within the national community and must be removed or secured by the exercise of governmental power.

It is from a recognition of such articulations of anxiety and unease that Isin (2004) moves to construct his thesis on the ‘neurotic citizen’, a concept which is particularly productive for this PhD. Isin looks to the Foucauldian notion of biopower as the basis for his theoretical intervention. As Isin notes, the quest to maintain the health of the species-body, to protect the population from danger and risk, requires the manipulation, or ‘calibration’ (2004: 222), of this aggregated object. And this calibration is an individualising endeavour in that it requires the individual subject to orientate their conduct to the requirements of the whole; to ‘govern themselves to assess, evaluate and reduce’ (ibid) the risks that may threaten the ongoing health of the body politic. However, where Isin sees much contemporary sociological analysis as positing a citizen-subject who acts responsibly towards his/her own health, wealth, and happiness – and thus that of the species-body – through rational calculation, he seeks to move his analysis forward to acknowledge the state of unease described above. In doing so, he proposes that it is not so much the *rational*

citizen who is now the object of governmental concern, as the *neurotic* citizen, the individual for whom risk and ‘metaphysical uncertainty’ (Fournier, 2014: 310) are central to everyday life. This neurotic citizen is then impelled to work towards the management of his/her own anxieties and insecurities through the elimination of risk/danger. For Isin then, contemporary governmentality thus orientates not only to the realisation of the responsible citizen-subject who applies ‘market-like rationality’ (Fournier, 2014: 312) to their everyday choices in the service of the population, but to the neurotic citizen, whose anxieties and insecurities need, in Isin’s terms, ‘soothing, appeasing, tranquillising, and, above all, managing’ (Isin, 2004: 226). As Byrne (2014) goes on to explain, a state of constant anxiety is now articulated as the social norm, and the management of this unease as central to governmental concerns.

One domain in which Isin (2004) sees this neurosis as being produced and managed is in the home, constituted both as a vital space of sanctuary and stability, and, concurrently, as a threatened, unstable territory. For Isin, the home is, in fact, a site at which a ‘double movement of neuroticisation’ (ibid: 231) plays out, for while the anxieties about external dangers can be stabilised within this sanctuary space, so the home simultaneously becomes itself a place of anxiety, a domain which *must* thus be protected from these external threats at all times. And I argue that this understanding of the anxieties surrounding and central to the home parallels the realisation of the ‘homeland’ within the securitised state. In seeing this connection, I draw on Walters’ (2004: 241) concept of *domopolitics* – or, as he puts it, ‘the government of the state [...] as a *home*’. With a particular focus on the government’s 2002 White Paper *Secure Borders, Safe Havens*, which outlined the then Labour government’s approach to the management of diversity in the UK, Walters looks to the ways in which this particular text operates within the securitised logics of the contemporary nation state, noting the entanglement of (in)security and risk with movement and the presence of ‘unauthorised bodies’ within the national border. From this premise, he sees a particular *domopolitical* governmentality at work in which the safety of the nation as ‘refuge’, or ‘sanctuary’, as the place to which ‘we belong naturally’, and as embodied in such concepts as ‘community, trust, and citizenship’ – is juxtaposed

with the dangers inherent in the ‘chaotic outside’ – terrorists, ‘illegals’, and those who work to disturb the sanctity of the nation-as-home (Walters, 2004).

Here then, the “‘homely’ nation’, like the domestic space, becomes a zone of anxiety and neurosis, a domain which must be ‘secured, ordered, and maintained’ (Darling, 2014a: 73) against the disruption threatened by the outsider, the Other. And importantly, alongside this sense of *domus* as the realisation of the nation-as-home, there is a second, intertwined, aspect to the concept of domopolitics – that is the notion of the related Latin word *domo* as taming or subduing; in Walters’ terms as the ‘will to domesticate the forces which threaten the sanctity of home’ (2004: 242). Here, domopolitics encapsulates the drive to control, or domesticate, the Other, either to make safe the threatening alien within the home, or to realise their expulsion from the national territory. Domopolitics thus captures the complex processes through which the insider/outsider, the citizen/stranger, is made and unmade (Nyers, 2009: 7).

And it is in the realisation of this homely nation/threatening Other nexus that Byrne sees the construction of the citizen and the so-called *anti-citizen* (Byrne, 2014: 24). Here, the proper, desirable citizen is safe and secure, integrated into the national polity. S/he responds with fear and anxiety to the existential threat posed by the anti-citizen, as exemplified in the figure of the ‘illegal migrant, the terrorist, the uncivilised Other, the deviant’ (Byrne, *ibid*: 3, drawing on Barbero, 2012). But this neurosis is made manageable by governmental strategies of reassurance: exclusion, control, and surveillance. These strategies include both the techniques of expulsion utilised at the national frontier, as discussed in the first section of this chapter, and also the more diffuse practices of control increasingly drawn in to the national space, as described in section 1.2. The bordering practices through which the anti-citizen is managed thus operate as ‘technologies of reassurance’ (Fortier, 2008a), as ways in which the neurotic citizen can be reassured that the government is doing all it can to demarcate, manipulate, or filter those bodies deemed safe and those positioned as immanent threat to the home(land) (Byrne, 2014: 24).

1.4 The citizenship regime as domopolitical bordering practice

1.4.1 ‘Citizenship is a privilege and not a right’¹⁰

It is within this context that I seek to position the contemporary citizenship regime, arguing that the national citizenship project can usefully be considered as a domopolitical bordering practice through which the everyday lives of the people inside the national territory can be made amenable to intervention and management (Amoore, 2006) and the neurotic citizen’s anxieties simultaneously intensified and appeased. On this account, citizenship operates not only in the form of the national passport as a technology of filtration at the territorial border, as discussed in section 1.1, but also as a way in which to produce and manage the nation-as-home – as part of a web of strategies through which to achieve ‘community building, integration and governance’ (Aas, 2011: 334) and thereby to both realise and to police the citizen/anti-citizen.

As I noted in the Introduction, repeated interventions have been made into the naturalisation process, with successive administrations seeking to construct a more ‘robust’ and ‘meaningful’ citizenship process, elevating citizenship from a ‘right’ to a ‘privilege’ (Home Office, 2013a). David Blunkett’s 2002 White Paper *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* (Home Office, 2001a: 30) promised to:

...place much greater emphasis than we do at present on the value and significance of becoming a British citizen;

while David Cameron’s (2011, *italics added*) speech on immigration declared: ‘citizenship should be a *big deal* for them and for us’ (‘them’ in this case referred to migrants who choose to naturalise; presumably ‘us’ referred to the UK-born population, although this is not stated explicitly). The apparent cross-party

¹⁰ As stated in the Home Office (2013a) statement of intent document outlining changes to citizenship legislation

consensus that the naturalisation process should be elevated from a bureaucratic procedure to a significant affair, a ‘big deal’, epitomises the increased prominence given to citizenship over the past fifteen years. Certainly, that is not to say that citizenship is a 21st Century concept – notions of the citizen have undoubtedly been in evidence at least since the construction of the city-state in ancient Greece (Turner, 2006). However, a particular re-evaluation of the concept of the citizen appears to have taken place in more recent times, with Kymlicka and Norman (1994: 352) commenting on the ‘explosion of interest’ in the subject during the 1990s, and Kivisto and Faist (2007: 1) more recently maintaining that we are currently ‘living in an age of citizenship’.

For Tyler (2010), this newfound interest began with the 1981 *British Nationality Act*, which marked the first legislative attempt to define *who* should be entitled to British citizenship, and, as the *Sunday Times* reported at the time, to articulate ‘who belong(s) to Britain’ (ibid: 63). Much has been written about the racial logics at play within the Act (Baucom, 1999; Dixon, 1981; Bhambra, 2016), which Tyler (2010: 64) argues essentially excluded black and Asian populations in the Commonwealth, designing them out of citizenship. It is indeed crucial in any examination of citizenship to acknowledge the postcolonial context in which contemporary British citizenship emerged, in which individuals could be subjects of the Empire but lack any of the citizenship rights to which their fellow citizens were entitled. This was, as Byrne (2014) notes, a practice which cemented in legislation an ‘essentially racial definition’ (Goulbourne, 1993: 181) of Britishness as white. I will not dwell further on the 1981 Act specifically, except to note that this piece of legislation epitomises the legislative realisation of an explicit link between post-imperial national identity and immigration control. And it was from this basis that the New Labour government began its own interventions into citizenship law in the early 2000s, from which successive administrations have followed.

For while citizenship prior to 2001 was an essentially bureaucratic affair, the application process has become rather more complex over the past 15 years, with the

introduction of a test, a ceremony, and the fulfilment of an increasingly complex set of minimum requirements, as I explained in section iii. Rather than witnessing the retreat of the nation, there has in fact been an explicit re-assertion of the national in both UK, and more broadly ‘Western’ citizenship policy (Però, 2013; MacGregor and Bailey, 2012; Joppke, 2013), with successive governments seeking ways to accentuate the unity of the British nation, highlighting a collective understanding of, and appreciation for, ‘Britishness’ based on a common sense of shared national norms and values (HM Government, 2011; Home Office, 2012; Osler, 2008; McGhee, 2010; Lentin, 2012). And within this discursive landscape, citizenship has taken on an increasingly integral role (Tyler, 2010: 65), with the naturalisation process explicitly positioned as a crucial site at which the nation’s ‘common principles’ (Cantle, 2001: 10) can be both articulated and tested.

1.4.2 The citizen and the anti-citizen

As I noted in the Introduction, this prioritisation of citizenship should be located in the broader political context within which it has taken place, in which the ‘enthusiastic self-ethnologising’ (Balibar, 2002: 74) of the UK government has been underpinned by a steady shift in political policy and discourse away from the ‘multiculturalist’ approach which previously characterised UK politics (Però, 2013: 1246), and towards the prioritisation of ‘integration’. Much has already been written on the subject of this ‘de rigueur distancing’ (Lentin, 2012: 3) away from multiculturalism, a discursive shift which appears to have taken place across both the right and left of the political spectrum (Joppke, 2004; Kymlicka, 2003; Entzinger, 2007), and which draws on the increasingly widespread consensus that the desired unity of the national community is inescapably undermined by inward migration.

The subsequent drive to ‘take net migration back to the levels of the 1990s’ (*The Conservative Manifesto*, 2010: 121) has formed the basis of successive administrations’ approaches to managing migration (Grove-White, 2014); and yet this ‘managed migration’ policy belies the somewhat uncomfortable fact that the UK is fundamentally positioned within a globalised system in which mobility is both

inevitable and indeed economically desirable. Indeed, in order to promote the national economic interest, cross-border mobility has long been viewed as a 'productive force to be harnessed' (Squire, 2011: 2); in fact successive UK administrations have continued to reaffirm the economic benefits of a particular form of inward migration, with demands to facilitate the entry of certain 'desirable' individuals, specifically those with a level of economic capital and investment potential (Theresa May, 2012). In September 2013 for instance, the Home Office announced further changes to the immigration rules to 'benefit businesses' and 'make the UK more attractive' to global organisations, international students, and skilled workers (Home Office, 2013b). For then-Immigration Minister Mark Harper (ibid), these rules were designed to demonstrate that the UK is 'open for business', while both David Cameron (Cabinet Office, 2013), and Theresa May (2012) emphasised their commitment to 'attract(ing) the brightest and best talent from around the world – the top academics, brightest students, the best businessmen, investors, skilled workers and entrepreneurs'.

In affirming the importance of welcoming these 'brightest and best' whilst simultaneously seeking to close entry routes for those who do not meet this standard, a central facet of the contemporary politics of mobility becomes evident: that is, the articulation of an explicit distinction between the legitimate traveller (often characterised as 'transnational worker' or 'international businessman/woman') whose presence is to be actively facilitated where possible; and in contrast, the illegitimate migrant (the 'bogus asylum seeker', 'would-be economic migrant', or, as Nyers (2003) puts it, 'abject cosmopolitan'), whose position within the national territory is undesirable and whose movement is thus cast as illegitimate (Squire, 2011; McNevin, 2013). As Mezzadra and Neilson (2013: 142) contend, these categories – 'asylum seeker', 'refugee', etc. – are discursive constructions, articulated by state bureaucracies to label and hierarchise particular subjects in terms of their (il)legality within the state and thereby inscribe desirability on certain subjects, and irregularity, criminality, or illegitimacy on others (Squire, 2011: 4).

And the post-2001 citizenship regime can be seen as a key site at which this desirable citizen/potentially deviant anti-citizen is produced. It is through the newly-instituted naturalisation practices that the nation is (re)centred and (re)narrated, its cultural and political narratives (re)defined (Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking, 2013: 346), and its position as a threatened space of safety, belonging and togetherness (Nyers, 2009) (re)emphasised. Rather than operating principally as a legal or bureaucratic marker of the relationship between subject and state, citizenship has, since 2001, become a ‘normative frame’ (Byrne, 2014: 6), a discursive space within which to define the ‘Good Citizen’, and thus, in contrast, the potentially threatening anti-citizen – threatening in a material, economic, existential sense. As I will go on to examine in Chapters 4-7, it is through the testing and ceremonial practices at the centre of the naturalisation regime that the nation-as-home is articulated and the ideal citizen realised; and through these practices that the anti-citizen is tamed, tested to ensure they correspond to the ideal model of the integrated Good Citizen, constituted as the legitimate subject who shares the moral, or ‘cultural’ values of the national community (Anderson, 2013).

1.5 The ‘radical contingency’ of citizenship: an ontological note

In the context of this theoretical framework, I turn finally to one further matter in this chapter – that is the issue of individual agency within this discursive landscape.

The interpretation of citizenship offered thus far introduces an ontological element which is widely absent in much theorising on the topic. For much of the existing research, as I will explore further in Chapter 2, citizenship at an ontological level appears to be somewhat un-problematised: thus, scholars seeking to typologise distinct national citizenship regimes or to draw up models and measures with which to assess the (il)liberal credentials of each regime (Michalowski, 2011; Wallace Goodman, 2010; van Oers, 2010; Etzione, 2007) widely appear to accept the very concept of citizenship as a natural category, possessing its own endogenous logic, which can thus be taken at face value. And yet, just as ‘security’ is increasingly understood by many contemporary scholars not as a foundational reality but as

produced through the discursive articulations of (state) actors (as expressed in section 1.1), so similarly citizenship is equally perceived as a social construction in this thesis; not as a hypostatized entity but rather as contingent on its discursive articulation(s).

As I explained in section 1.1, such a conceptualisation of citizenship can usefully draw on a discourse theoretical ontology of radical contingency, with the understanding that social 'reality' is not a foundational essence, but is rather discursively produced. I will return to examine the ontological underpinnings of this project further in the opening section of Chapter 3; however I note briefly here that I define discourse in poststructuralist terms not simply as a solely linguistic entity, but in a wider sense as the 'practices and meanings shaping a particular community of social actors' (Howarth, 2000: 5). The role of hegemonic politics then, is to organise the relations between objects and practices so as to construct, or indeed 'fix', their meaning in a particular way (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 3). By way of example, Dahlberg's (2014) analysis of capitalism as a discursive system posits a view of the economy not as a natural entity governed by an *a priori* economic logic, as it may be presented in much contemporary financial analysis, but rather as a fundamentally contingent set of practices produced within a particular ideological context in which certain elements are articulated into a 'seemingly coherent whole' (ibid: 258). From this point, the inherent vulnerability of any capitalist system, and the subsequent possibilities for contestation and re-articulation, can be obscured, and the system thus naturalised and reified.

An understanding of social systems as discursively produced, and a recognition that governmental strategies work to naturalise certain social orders, offers theoretical grounding for the contention that citizenship is not a natural and incontestable entity, but is rather fundamentally contingent, articulated into 'reality' within a particular political, and indeed ideological, context. This provides support for my contention that the citizenship regime can usefully be viewed as a political bordering project. However, while I maintain that the governmental project may work to sediment

certain ‘truth horizon(s)’ (Phelan, 2013: 139), these articulations can never achieve absolute fixity; there is, in any social practice, always space for contestation and resistance: the individual is not simply interpellated by the legislative regulations in which they are implicated, and the social practices of a given individual do not ‘automatically derive’ from institutional measures and official discourses (Miller-Idriss, 2006). In the analysis of any policy regime then, there exists the possibility of contradiction and resistance ‘between, and within, governmental rationalities’ as interpreted by actors operating in the everyday (McGhee, 2009: 13). As such, I seek in this project to avoid a totalising citizenship narrative in which the discursive realisation of the citizenship regime as a domopolitical bordering practice is presented as a complete project. Instead, I follow Torfing (2005: 13) in maintaining that ‘Truth’ is always ‘local’ and ‘flexible’, subject to the reactions, interpretations, and actions of the individual in the everyday. And it is to this matter that I will turn in Chapter 2.

Conclusion

I have argued in this chapter then that the intrusion of the border into everyday spaces can be examined in terms of geopolitics, biopolitics, and also ‘neuro-politics’ as a productive practice through which anxiety is both heightened and controlled. These bordering practices work to produce and to manage both the secure citizen, and the *anti-citizen* whose very presence potentially poses an existential threat to the security and viability of the nation-as-home. Positioning the contemporary citizenship regime within this framework offers a productive angle through which to explore the newly-instituted citizenisation practices, seeing this renationalised citizenship project as part of a set of domopolitical practices: as central to the articulation of the nation as home under threat, and in the construction of a normative frame (Byrne, 2014: 6) through which the dichotomous citizen/anti-citizen are realised. I have concluded, however, that any governmental project is inherently contingent and vulnerable, and thus emphasised my commitment to exploring the spaces for contestation and resistance that may be read in an examination of the citizenship regime. In the following chapter, I will map the field of research into

citizenship, looking to the ways in which I will draw on existing research and build on the theoretical framework articulated here, in this PhD project.

Chapter 2: Mapping the field, positioning the thesis

The previous chapter gave a theoretical insight into the current citizenship regime and provided an interpretation of institutional citizenship discourses over the past decade. However, and as outlined in the final section, there is a danger in overstating the impacts of such ‘top-down’ apparatuses in the enactment of policy in the everyday. Rather, the central aim of this project is to look to the actual spaces in which the current citizenship regime is effectively brought into practice ‘on the ground’ (Gray and Griffin, 2014: 311). That is not to say that analysis of elite discourse is irrelevant; thus, I begin this chapter by drawing together a number of contributions on which this PhD thesis can usefully be informed, and which take as their focus the official text. However, it is to argue that the individual and the local cannot be elided in an examination of citizenship policy; as such I move in the second section of this chapter to consider several useful pieces of scholarship which foreground the individual subject. I then turn to locate this PhD within this current research landscape.

2.1 Citizenship from the ‘top-down’: policy directives and the written text

As I noted in the previous chapter, the subject of citizenship has been a rich and productive research focus for scholars across a range of disciplines, particularly over the last decade. However, a large proportion of this scholarship has been located either in the field of legal studies or in the political sciences, and has tended to take a theoretical or normative approach to the subject, focussing in large part on comparative typologies of citizenship legislation across national contexts (e.g. van Oers, 2010; Carens, 2010; Bauböck and Joppke, 2010; Paquet, 2012). While these are certainly instructive studies, they are of little direct relevance for this thesis as their principal concern is to determine the degree to which contemporary citizenship legislation can be described as meeting the criteria of political liberalism, a question upon which I do not dwell in this project. More relevant research on citizenship policy does exist however, with a small number of projects focusing on the ceremony (Byrne, 2014; Aptekar, 2012; MacGregor and Bailey, 2012), more on

which in section 2.3, and a larger body of scholarship examining the national citizenship test. Indeed, since the mid-2000s, there has been a significant increase in scholarly input on these ‘Knowledge of Life’ tests, the most common of which (certainly in English-language publications) have involved content and discourse analytical investigations into these examinations and their position within a broader national approach to immigration.

I explore the *LUK* test in greater detail in this thesis, particularly in Chapter 4 and, as such, it is worth dwelling briefly on some of the most instructive pieces of scholarship which have informed my research. In terms of detailed content analysis, Brooks (2014) offers a particularly useful comparative analysis of the three iterations of the *LUK* test (from 2004, 2007, 2013), noting in detail the differing content of each test, and pointing out discrepancies and factual errors in each version. His conclusion is unequivocal and unapologetically polemical as he maintains that the test has now become ‘a bad pub quiz’ which is ‘unfit for purpose’ due to its reliance on historical ‘facts’ over practical knowledge. This echoes White’s (2008) comparable content analysis of the 2004 and 2007 versions of the UK test in which she concludes, like Brooks (2014), that the test fails to meet its own aims, both in terms of its content and, perhaps more significantly, in its very conceptualisation. White references official statements in the 2007 naturalisation guide to argue that the purpose of the test is to prepare citizens to actively embrace diversity and to play an active role in British society (2008: 221); she then goes on to contend that an online multiple choice test could never be a suitable measure of an individual’s commitment to these principles.

Interestingly, although neither Brooks nor White explicitly references education research, both scholars essentially draw on concepts widely used in the literatures on testing in educational contexts, in particular the notion of ‘validity’, which refers to the degree to which a testing instrument can be shown to measure exactly what it claims to measure (Messick, 1989). Comments such as Brooks’ and White’s on a test’s fitness for purpose (in both content and construct) could certainly be

theoretically enhanced by reference to this well-developed field, as, for instance, in McNamara and Ryan's (2011) work on the role of English literacy in the Australian citizenship test. Here, the authors introduce theoretical and empirical insights into issues surrounding the extent to which the construct of a test is appropriate for the conclusions it aims to draw, or the potential for test items to show systematic bias against certain categories of test-takers, for instance ethnic or racial groups. Drawing on these studies, McNamara and Ryan go on to consider principles of both *fairness* and *justice* in the language component of the Australian naturalisation test. And yet, while a small number of scholars have similarly turned their attention to the *English language* requirement in the UK naturalisation process (for instance Blackledge, 2009a/b; Blackledge and Wright, 2010), there is a surprising lack of input into the *LUK* component from scholars in the field of education.

Taking a wider focus, Osler (2009) positions the examination as part of a broader policy approach, focusing in particular on the discourse on 'shared values', prominent across official citizenship discourses (as introduced in section 1.4.1). She notes that it was only in the 2007 version of the testing materials, following the events of '7/7' and the ensuing report from the Cohesion and Integration Commission, that a section on shared values was introduced in the naturalisation materials, and contends that there is little, if anything, to distinguish supposedly 'British' values from the human rights values expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For Osler, all individuals, regardless of national origin, are therefore equally as likely to accept/reject these principles; as such, the 'deficit model' of migrants constructed in the citizenship test, which presumes that 'certain' 'newcomers' are less likely to subscribe fully to these so-called 'British' values, is inherently exclusory. Taking a similar stance, Fozdar and Spittles (2009) and Chisari's (2012) analyses of the Australian citizenship test also focus on the subject of values, again contending that the values deemed as exclusively 'Australian' are not, in fact, so unique to this national context. Taking the critique further, both studies also conclude that the rhetoric on 'Australian values' functions as part of an 'ideological re-imagining of Australia' based solely on a Judeo-Christian, Anglo-Saxon heritage, and thereby neglects to incorporate either the indigenous population

or the range of ‘ethno-cultural’ heritages represented across the nation (Fozdar and Spittles, 2009: 511).

From a discourse analytical perspective, and rather more epistemologically compatible with this PhD project, Gray and Griffin (2014) examine the ways in which the content of the *LUK* test defines the boundaries and meanings of citizenship, and consider the positioning of social actors within the test. They conclude that the *LUK* test institutionalises a notion of citizenship as a form of identity which can be achieved through the ‘internalisation’ of a particular set of core values, and, (in much the same way as Fozdar and Spittles (2009) above), they argue that, rather than promoting cohesion, the test will simply ‘promote the hegemony of White (male) Britishness’ (Gray and Griffin, 2014: 311). In their approach and conclusions, Gray and Griffin’s research is redolent of the work conducted by a number of scholars, including Turner (2014), Löwenheim and Gazit (2009), de Leeuw and van Wichelen (2012) and Milani (2008), all of whom offer analyses of citizenship tests situated in a broadly Foucauldian framework. Each of these studies explores the disciplinary power of the examination as a governmental technique with which to construct a particular sort of citizen-subject, demanding the migrant’s uncritical absorption of certain truths about the nation and reinforcing particular power relations between the migrant and the state. As de Leeuw and van Wichelen’s (2012: 196) discourse analysis of the Dutch citizenship test leads them to conclude, the ‘integration exam’ should be viewed as a mode of governmentality, a key instrument with which the state is ‘institutionalising and shaping the “new”’, and indeed not-so-new ‘migrant’, and through which a particular version of Dutch culture is ‘disciplined’ on new and aspiring citizens.

Whilst taking divergent philosophical and methodological approaches to the object of study, both content and discourse analytical research on citizenship testing has tended to draw notably similar conclusions, namely that the test (regardless of national context) articulates a narrow and exclusionary version of the national community, and that the testing process itself operates as a powerful tool in the

governmental realisation of the ‘integrated’ national community and the Good citizen. This coheres with my contention in Chapter 1 that the contemporary citizenship regime works to (re)narrate the nation, institutionalising a reified version of the nation’s (his)story¹¹ and ‘identity’ as part of a bordering project. The discourse analytical work referenced above in particular provides support for my claim that the citizenship testing project operates as a powerful practice through which the desirable citizen, who affirms the ‘truths’ advanced in the testing materials and thereby coheres with the ‘normative frame’ (Byrne, 2014: 6) constructed therein, can be realised.

The research explored in this section certainly provides important insights on which to draw throughout this PhD, and I will return to several of these studies, particularly in Chapter 4. However, it is problematic on two distinct points which I will expand on further throughout this chapter: firstly, as Turner (2014) concedes in his own work, and as Byrne (2017) notes in her most recent work on the *LUK* test, these investigations take a rather abstracted approach to their object of study, removed from social practice. In the case of the scholarship on testing mentioned here, it does not ‘tell the story’ of a subject’s own experiences of testing; indeed, amongst all the studies mentioned thus far, not one engages with the testing process from the perspective of the applicants themselves. In this sense, they offer a somewhat totalising narrative in which the testing candidate is wholly interpellated by the governmental project. Research does exist which seeks to foreground the individual, and which I will comment on in the next section, 2.2; however, these studies are subject to their own inconsistencies and gaps. Secondly, there is, in the existing scholarship, little if any exploration of the ways in which the examination process actually plays out ‘on the ground’ within a particular locality. Whilst the content of the test may indeed be inscribed and institutionalised from the top down, and is

¹¹ I use this term to capture the sense that these texts narrate both a *story* and an apparent national *history*. However, the parenthesis also nods to the suggestion that this is a gendered narrative: as Brooks (2013: 29) highlights, for instance, there is a notable gender imbalance in the text, with 29 men and only 4 women listed in the chapter on UK history. As I will explore further in Chapter 6, this is a version of the UK which foregrounds the ‘successes’ of its white, male military.

certainly of great interest to this project, the Foucauldian work on governmentality referenced in Chapter 1 points to the complex, diffuse, and multi-sited technologies through which relations between individuals are established. As such, it is not simply through the written text but in the localised and nuanced *practices* surrounding the test that the citizenship project is realised. I will examine this contention further in section 2.3

2.2 Foregrounding the individual: identifications and belonging

In response then to the prevalence of ‘top-down’ theoretical and normative accounts of citizenship, a rapidly expanding body of literature has emerged over the past decade which seeks to privilege the perspectives and lived experiences of (non)-citizens rather than the legal-political elements of the concept (Valentine and Sporton, 2009; Nordberg, 2006; Phalet and Swyngedouw, 2002), for, as Conway (2004: 368) explains, citizenship is ‘not only bestowed from above’ but is also ‘claimed from below’. The most developed area of research on this subject has been direct engagement with individuals from migrant backgrounds, most often subjects who have already gained citizenship status within their particular national context and are asked to reflect on this status from their own lived perspectives. For instance, Leitner and Ehrkamp’s (2006) comparative ethnographic project in Germany and the US explores the values and meanings contemporary migrants assign to national citizenship and the acquisition of citizenship status. Through extensive interviews and focus group discussions, they find a widespread perception of citizenship as a significant force in the everyday lives of their participants. In contrast with the post/trans- national literatures (Soysal, 1994; Falk, 1993; Bauböck, 1994) which propose the decoupling of citizenship rights from the nation state, national citizenship status is here widely perceived as a highly salient marker, operating both as a formal guarantee of personal security and the right to mobility, and also as a prerequisite for equal participation in the ‘receiving society’ (Soysal, 1994: 1624).

However, alongside comments on the formal, legalistic rights conferred by attaining citizen-status, many of the participants in Leitner and Ehrkamp's (2006) research also express more complex and conflicted interpretations of citizenship acquisition in which they note their own marginal positionalities within the 'host polity' and remark on the exclusions and discriminations they have experienced, regardless of status. This resonates with the critique of Marshall's work offered in the Introduction in which I noted that his conceptualisation of citizenship fails to account for the multiple exclusions experienced by citizens in the everyday. For whilst acknowledging that citizen-status may (appear to) offer access to certain protections, many of Leitner and Ehrkamp's participants also note the discrepancies between these formal rights and their everyday experiences and perceptions of inequity, and the complex processes through which they negotiate their participation in, and sense of affiliation to, their 'new' national community. In Colombo et al's (2011) comparable research with second-generation migrants in Italian secondary schools, the young interviewees similarly emphasise the multi-faceted nature of citizenship. Again, the participants widely perceive the acquisition of citizen-status as a protective measure, a bureaucratic device which ensures legal recognition of their admittance to the nation state; however, they also view citizenship as a more complex and symbolic concept, as a resource with which an individual can, in principle, achieve the *recognition* of others (339). For Colombo et al (ibid), citizenship in this sense plays a crucial role in their participants' conceptions of who they feel themselves to be, and where/how they feel themselves to belong.

This conceptualisation of citizenship as inextricably linked with questions of belonging and identification is particularly interesting in light of the 'thickening' of citizenship apparent in more contemporary UK discourse (see section 1.4.1). As I argued in the opening chapter, the attempt to bolster the formal institution of citizenship as part of the wider politics of security involves an increasing preoccupation with the promotion of national identity, and, within this, the incorporation of demands for certain subjects to feel, and indeed, display (as in the citizenship ceremony, as I will explore particularly in Chapter 7), an explicit sense of belonging to the national community. This coheres with my comments on the

citizenship regime as part of a domopolitical project. And yet, as Leitner and Ehrkamp (2006) in Germany and the US, Colombo et al (2011) in Italy, and Waite (2011) in Britain have all found, the individuals implicated in this discourse do not necessarily perceive the acquisition of citizenship as either guaranteeing, or indeed promoting, this sense of belonging in such a straightforward way. For many of Waite's (2011) participants, naturalising is viewed in pragmatic terms as a method by which to ensure a degree of personal security; at the same time, however, many feel either disinclined, or in fact '*debarred*' (ibid: 360, original italics) from identifying with a unified British identity in the manner they perceive in official citizenship policy. Commonly, this is due both to their own complex, transnational identifications, which inevitably leads to multiple and multi-faceted affiliations, but also to a sense of alienation from the polity due to perceptions of exclusion and discrimination at the everyday scale.

In much the same way, Ghorashi and Vieten's (2012) work with 'new' citizens in Britain and the Netherlands similarly finds a clear distinction between the legal protections offered by the acquisition of citizenship status, and the experiences and perceptions of their participants, many of whom feel 'discursively excluded' (2012: 728) from their (new) national communities. For their Dutch participants in particular, the official articulation of a singular Dutch national identity into which 'non-Western migrants' (ibid: 738) should assimilate is entirely antithetical to the complex and dynamic ways in which the women themselves construct their own senses of belonging. And in fact, for many of Ghorashi and Vieten's participants, the acquisition of citizen-status does not guarantee a feeling of affiliation with the national community; rather, again, this sense of attachment is more directly related to their experiences and perceptions of discursive and structural inclusion/exclusion.

The scholarship examined in this section certainly foregrounds the voices of the individual subject, and offers important insights into the ways in which individuals from migrant backgrounds narrate their understandings and experiences of holding citizen-status. These studies do thus avoid the construction of a totalising citizenship

narrative and allow space for moments of resistance to élite articulations of belonging and identification. However, within these studies, naturalisation appears to be conceived of as a discrete lego-political ‘event’, the inevitable culmination of a process positioned at one specific temporal point; there is here little comprehensive exploration of the ways in which the citizenship regimes in question are actually practised and experienced in the everyday. Indeed, in analysing the (undoubted) complexities of *being* a citizen, what is missing from these studies is a clear engagement with the actual processes and practices of *becoming* a citizen. In this, I refer not only to the broad legislative changes on naturalisation which may affect aspiring citizens, but rather the multiple practices and processes which *constitute* the citizenship regime – the test, the ceremony, the application documentation – in their specificity. As Fortier (forthcoming: 4) argues, analysis on these terms involves a re-articulation of naturalisation not simply as a legal and political event, but rather as a ‘social ontological process’. As she explains, this then requires a methodological and theoretical shift, away from an institutional approach to naturalisation policy as occurring at a discrete moment, and towards an exploration – a ‘studying through’ (Wright and Reinhold, 2011) – of the ways in which ‘citizenisation’ (Fortier, forthcoming: 4, drawing on Wallace Goodman, 2014) practices are ‘framed, enacted and experienced’ in the everyday.

2.3 The citizenship continuum: citizenship actors, local spaces

Thus it is on this point that I note the gap in the existing research which this PhD seeks to explore. Drawing together the concerns raised in sections 2.1 and 2.2, I note that contemporary scholarship on citizenship has either tended to take a rather abstracted approach to citizenship as articulated in the élite discourse of politicians and policy makers, or has foregrounded the voice of the (new) citizen as abstracted from citizenship policy practice. In order to address this gap then, I look to the enactment of the national citizenship project in the everyday. As I noted earlier, I depart from traditional political scientific investigations of policy which take a managerialist approach to the state as a singular, rational (Darling, 2011) entity ‘up there’ (Ferguson and Gupta, 2008: 983), responsible for the conferral of policy upon

a receiving public, and instead draw on the Foucauldian insights raised in Chapter 1 to see policy *making* as complex and contingent, as, as Jones (2015: 13) puts it, ‘involving *people* and happening in *places*’. In doing so, I follow Bigo’s (2000) assertion that academic research too often neglects to consider the multiple, heterogeneous spaces in which, in his case, the ‘security continuum’ (Bigo, 1994) is currently enacted, and support his contention that an understanding of the research object, in his case securitisation practices, can only be fully achieved by interacting with and observing the agents or ‘professionals’, for instance military personnel, customs officers, and police forces, who participate in the production of (in)security throughout the state. Similarly, I note Côté-Boucher et al (2014) assertion that it is the everyday routines of a plurality of local, transnational, and private actors, each operating in distinct institutional fields which possess their own standards, regulations, and ‘political stakes’, which are pivotal to the practice of contemporary bordering.

In taking insights from these projects then, this thesis contends that the contemporary citizenship regime is enacted and produced not simply by a central state power, but through the decisions and practices of multiple (non)state agents, operating within their own distinct local and institutional contexts. These include both the ‘institutional actors’ (Fortier, forthcoming: 5) – the individuals involved in the administration of the test, and the actors responsible for the organisation and delivery of the citizenship ceremony – *as well as* those individuals from migrant backgrounds who seek to acquire citizen-status. In order to grasp the nuances of the naturalisation regime as it is constructed and articulated therefore, research on this account must look to the ‘social life’ (Fortier, forthcoming: 5) of policy, examining the ‘experiences, realities, subjects, and objects’ that these policy measures ‘enact’ (ibid: 6). It must thus be situated and contextual, drawing on direct observation and analysis of the actors, the events, the spaces, and the material artefacts which contribute to the realisation of the citizenship regime in the everyday.

While there is as yet scant research taking a similar direction, there are several projects which inform this thesis. Aptekar (2012), commenting on the notable dearth of research on this event, focuses on ceremonies in the US and looks to the ways in which ceremonial speeches articulate the migrant figure. She sees both the recontextualisation and the contradiction of discursive strategies employed in wider public discourses around migration, noting a particular orientation to the ‘Good’, deserving migrant within the ceremonial text. In a UK context, Andreouli (2009) and Andreouli and Dashtipour (2013), working in the field of social psychology, conduct research both with citizenship officers in the Greater London area and with naturalised British citizens, seeking to examine the meanings attributed to citizenship and the ways in which individual actors experience the naturalisation process. Here they focus on the degree to which the attitudes of citizenship officers tend to cohere with official state policy, again finding the repeated recontextualisation of the Good citizen trope in many of their interviews. Similarly, MacGregor and Bailey (2012) also draw on insights from a number of actors, this time working with both new and aspiring citizens as well as a small number of citizenship officials including city councillors, registrars, and support workers. Unfortunately, they use their interviews with citizenship officials as background to the project and thus do not present this data in their report. However, their analysis from new/aspiring citizens is more revealing as it notes a particular resistance to governmental articulations of belonging.

Finally, Byrne’s (2014) work is particularly informative for this PhD as it involves extensive analysis of citizenship ceremonies, including comment on the physical spaces in which the ceremonies take place, and direct interactions with (new) citizens themselves. Her analysis builds a comparison across six countries, including the US, Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, the UK, and Ireland, and within this work, she explores the ways in which both the nation and the Good citizen are imagined in these ‘hyper-visible’ (Rai, 2010) ceremonial events. Byrne draws on scholarship in the fields of critical security and migration studies, and thus follows a similar theoretical framework to the one constructed in this thesis; her work is therefore of particular interest in this project. However, her attention in this study

rests solely on the ceremony. In fact, as Fortier (forthcoming) and Bassel et al (2017) note in their recent research project, this singular focus is generally the case in the few empirical studies which do explore the specifics of the citizenship process, with attention given *either* to the test *or* to the ceremony; as such, there is a notable dearth of research which takes a more comprehensive approach to the whole naturalisation regime, looking to the ways in which themes are both articulated and disrupted across written, symbolic, and material – ie discursive – practices.

From this overview then, it appears that a small amount of broadly comparable literature does exist on which this project can usefully draw. In particular, the scholarship considered thus far offers important support for the contention that official discourse on the subject of citizenship is not necessarily adopted, rehearsed, and unquestioningly repeated by actors ‘on the ground’; rather, the individuals involved in the production of citizenship have some space in which to negotiate and articulate their own practices and meanings. Indeed, as Fairclough et al (2006: 101) contend, individuals do not simply act out ‘pre-constructed scripts’ but rather ‘generate their performances of citizenship in relation to these’. However, as mentioned, the literature which does look to the actual spaces in which citizenship is brought into practice is a significantly smaller body of scholarly input than the abundance of abstract theoretical and content analytical research, and the few studies that do foreground the individual and the local take a less comprehensive approach to the national citizenship regime than this thesis project seeks to adopt.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I argue here that the growing body of scholarship on the *Life in the UK* test offers useful support for the theoretical framework I constructed in the opening chapter; here, the test is seen to operate as a governmental technology in the realisation of the legitimate, desirable citizen, and thus as a powerful bordering practice. However, and in acknowledging the danger of articulating a totalising narrative, I note the importance of existing research in the fields of social psychology and sociology which seeks to foreground the voice of the individual him/herself, and

thus acknowledges the space for resistance and contestation in any governmental project. I argue however, that these studies do not engage with citizenship policy enactment as a situated practice. And it is here that the research gap lies – in examining coherence and disruption across the multiple individualised and localised practices in the test, the ceremony, and the application process, which constitute the citizenship regime.

Chapter 3: Methodological considerations: the whys and the hows

In the following chapter, I turn to the methodological considerations informing the research strategy with which I sought to investigate these localised citizenisation practices. I begin by considering the ‘whys’, outlining the ontological and epistemological principles underlying the study and noting the ways in which these philosophical presuppositions inform the overall research approach, and the choice of particular research methods. I then go on to consider the ‘hows’ of data collection, or rather, *construction*, outlining the sites and the individuals involved in the project, considering theoretical and procedural questions regarding each research method, and exploring the process through which I analysed the data.

3.1 The whys: research strategy

3.1.1 The research principles: ontological, epistemological, and methodological concerns

Section 1.5 has already noted the ontological presuppositions underlying this research, the key principle being that the social world does not simply exist ‘out there’, waiting to be discovered, but is rather discursively produced. That is not, of course, to say that material reality does not exist; rather that its ‘meaning’ cannot be said to lie outside the horizon of human meaning-making (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987). In this sense, this project takes a post- rather than anti- foundationalist approach, arguing not for an idealism in which there are no foundations, i.e. there is no ‘natural’ world, but rather for an approach that views an understanding of any foundation as fundamentally ‘contingent, partial and political’ (MacGilchrist, 2014a: 388). Given this ontological basis, it follows that I oppose positivistic conceptions of truth and instead draw on insights from the broad tradition of critical qualitative inquiry to foreground an interpretative approach to social inquiry in which knowledge is not *discovered* but rather *constructed* (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 7; Crotty, 2003: 9).

On this account, meaning does not inhere within the object of study, waiting to be drawn out by the neutral researcher; rather, the knowledge ‘produced’ through the research endeavour is contingent, situated historically, spatially, and culturally, co-constructed through interactions between actors operating within complex social contexts. Taking this epistemological position, this project eschews claims to objectivity and truth, rejecting Hammersley’s (2008: 11) contention that acknowledged subjectivity is ‘damaging’ both to qualitative research and to the social sciences in general, and arguing instead that all social research is, inevitably and inherently, value-mediated (Guba and Lincoln, 1994: 110), that there can be no neutral, de-contextualised base from which to make any ‘truth-claims’ (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: 186). As Wetherell (2001: 384) usefully puts it, the research process is, on this account, ‘always interpretive, always contingent, always a version or a reading from some theoretical, epistemological or ethical standpoint’.

Certainly this approach has a number of significant implications. Firstly, it requires an explicit acknowledgment of the researcher’s own positionality, a clear recognition that I, as the researcher, cannot be seen as an objective, detached bystander positioned *outside* the research object, but am instead fundamentally positioned *within* the research, ‘complicit [...] and framed’ (Tierney, 1988: 139) within the making of the research endeavour. As Usher and Edwards (1994) then argue, this philosophical commitment necessitates reflexivity on the part of the researcher, both in terms of considering the ways in which the methods used may work to construct a version of reality, but also, and perhaps more deeply, in interrogating the epistemic community/ies in which the research is located. That is not to say that the researcher must become so absorbed in contemplating the complexities of their own positionality that they fail to see how any substantive contribution can be made which is not somehow ‘flawed by the contaminating influences’ of their own institutional contexts (Humes and Bryce, 2003: 182). However, it does require an awareness of the ways in which the particular assumptions, practices, and logics of British academe inevitably shape the research process, the knowledge that is deemed to be ‘worth knowing’ (Wetherall, 2001:

397), and the power relations constructed throughout the study. I will comment on my own positionality in particular in section 3.3.

Secondly, alongside this reflexivity, the ontological and epistemological principles underpinning this project also have implications for the criteria by which it is judged. For research endeavours – both qualitative and quantitative – which ‘cling to the guardrail of neutrality’ (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005: 323), their ‘success’ or otherwise may be measured through the lens of validity, replicability, and falsifiability; and yet, these are concepts which cannot reasonably be applied to a project which rejects positivistic principles and the notion of objective truth. Indeed, as Gubrium and Holstein (2001: 15) point out, a study cannot be said to be ‘inaccurate’ if it is subjectively and dialogically co-constructed, with the account not so much *found* as ‘*narrated* into being’ (Wetherell, 2001: 396) by the analyst. However, that is not, of course, to say that such studies cannot be evaluated; rather that the criteria for this judgement will be different. On this point, Tracy (2010: 839) proposes eight markers of quality in qualitative research, including ‘a) worthy topic, b) rich rigour, c) sincerity, d) credibility, e) resonance, f) significant contribution, g) ethics, and h) meaningful coherence’. Certainly, these end goals may offer a useful set of guidelines; however, as Tracy herself admits, any attempt to conceptualise universal criteria is controversial; indeed, a research project may be powerful and relevant without satisfying all eight conditions. For Jørgensen and Phillips (2002: 186), research in a constructionist paradigm could instead be judged by the degree to which it is ‘solid’, ‘comprehensive’, and ‘transparent’, and this may indeed be a less restrictive approach to assessing quality. However, perhaps the most convincing argument is Howarth’s (2000: 130) simple contention that it is the community/ies of scholars to which the work is addressed that will ultimately judge its ‘validity’. For Howarth then, a study’s adequacy can essentially be judged on the basis that it engenders a ‘plausible account’ of social phenomena which is persuasive to the community/ies it addresses.

Finally, in terms of overall research aim, and again in accordance with the philosophical framework underpinning the study (and indeed much qualitative research (Dörnyei, 2007), this project does not seek to make generalisations across the population, nor to suggest that the participants within the study are somehow ‘representative’ of a particular community; rather, it looks to develop a ‘thick’ (Geertz, 2003) description of a complex and multi-faceted social issue; to focus on an in-depth understanding of the ‘meaning in the particular’ (Dörnyei, 2007: 27). Methodologically then, it seeks to privilege grounded perspectives, looking to provide an analysis of the contextualised practices of the actors involved, the logics and justifications they espouse, and the meanings they give to their actions. As such, and in keeping with these central principles, this project is informed by the case study approach (Yin, 2009; Dooley, 2002), to which the following section now turns.

3.1.2 The research approach: case studies and ethnographic insights

Although there is some debate as to whether the case study approach should be regarded as a methodology, a method, or rather as a choice of what is to be studied (Yin, 2009), one of its most widely-published proponents, Yin (ibid; 2012), views it as a distinct research method with its own particular methodological and procedural considerations. He defines the case study as an empirical inquiry which ‘investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context’, noting its relevance particularly for situations in which ‘the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident’ (Yin, 2009: 18). Both Luck et al (2006) and Dooley (2002: 335) similarly comment on the case study’s relevance for ‘detailed contextual analysis’ of a specific, complex issue. Central to the case study approach then is the commitment to an in-depth, thorough exploration of a complex and multi-faceted social phenomenon, not necessarily in order to produce generalisations, although this may be an outcome for some, but rather to focus on the particularities of the case itself (Stake, 2003: 140).

Looking practically to the research design, the majority of scholars appear united in the view that the case itself must be an entity of some description (a person, an

institution, a programme), which has clearly defined boundaries (Dörnyei, 2007; Yin, 2009). For Yin (ibid), these boundaries may be spatial, or temporal, or may refer to some other ‘concrete’ bounding features which delineate, for instance, a specific programme, or a particular event. Within this bounded case, there may of course be one, or multiple, units of analysis. From this description, the core principles of my research project are compatible with the case study approach. I describe the *phenomenon* under investigation as the broad subject of citizenisation practices in the contemporary UK and the *case* as the City in which the research is conducted. The *units of analysis* then include the individual participants, the official documentation, and the ceremony and testing sites in which naturalisation ‘events’ take place. Temporally, the study restricts its specific focus to the time period 2012-2015, thereby excluding those who acquired citizen-status before the coalition government came to power and further legislative changes were introduced, and those who began their application process post-Brexit. In this sense, the case is bounded both spatially and temporally.

The literature on case studies is therefore a useful body of work on which to draw. However, it is important to acknowledge several complexities in this comparison. Firstly, the spatial, and in fact temporal boundaries of this research project cannot be as clearly delineated as case study scholarship may dictate. While I restricted my research sites to those which fell within the borders of the City, the individual actors involved were inevitably less static. As such, although I identified participants that were currently living in the City, certain participants had completed *part* of their application process in a different location, and occasionally at a point prior to 2012. This does not detract from my interest in interrogating the specifically local decisions and practices that constitute citizenship practices in the City; it does however, highlight the inevitable complexities in bounding ethnographic research projects such as this.

Further, along with the difficulties in bounding the *case*, I am also doubtful about the efficacy of defining the *approach* to case study research in terms of certain fixed

characteristics. Yin (2009) for instance differentiates between exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory case studies, arguing that the former is particularly useful for the pilot stage of an investigation, the second aims to provide a detailed description of a case, and the latter is relevant for a causal analysis. Stake (2003) on the other hand, notes the difference between intrinsic and instrumental case studies, viewing the former as relevant to a researcher with a particular interest in a case in and of itself, and the latter as relating to a case which is examined in order to provide an insight into a wider issue or concern. On this point again then, I would choose to blur the boundaries somewhat, seeing the particular context of my own project as both relevant and interesting intrinsically, and as significant on an instrumental level for the exploration of the wider phenomenon of citizenship. Further, while description certainly plays a part in my project, I have also taken an exploratory approach in which findings and analysis informed the theoretical framework as the project progressed. In doing so, I found that the processes of gathering data, interpreting, reflecting, and writing took place in an iterative manner (MacGilchrist and van Hout, 2011). This iterative approach will be considered in more detail in section 3.4.

Finally, as Lincoln and Guba (1990: 54) note, one of the most notable strengths of the case study approach is its commitment to the use of a number of different methods through which to capture a ‘thick’ description; in fact for Yin (2009: 18), the method ‘relies’ on the collection and interrogation of multiple sources of evidence. However, for many scholars, the purpose of this approach is to ‘triangulate’ the findings: Dooley (2002: 341) sees this as significant for the increased ‘validity’ of case study research, while Yin (2012: 13) notes the importance of triangulation in order to ensure consistency. And yet, in my own case, the purpose of employing a number of qualitative methods was *not* to triangulate in order to ascertain the most ‘truthful’ account; indeed this is clearly incompatible with the philosophical assumptions on which the project is based. Rather, I used a number of methods in order to establish detail and to allow space for the complex, ‘messy’ (Law; 2003; Jackson, 2011: 58), polyphonous voices of the participants to be explored. I note here that in employing the term ‘mess’ I was influenced by

Law's (2003: 9) rejection of the 'common-sense realism' he sees reproduced in research which seeks to elide the necessarily 'ephemeral' and 'elusive' character of the everyday; indeed, I found his call for ways of 'enacting non-coherence' (ibid: 11) on the research method fitted well with the ontological presuppositions informing my own research approach. In this sense, the project still operates within the central tenets of the case study approach, upholding Yin's (2009: 2) aim to investigate 'the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events', and Stake's (1995: 12) intention to 'preserve the multiple realities' of a particular case, but without following the potentially problematic methodological commitment to triangulation.

Adopting a comparable research design, Jackson (2011) sees her approach as following the principles of mixed methods research. Certainly, the phrase 'mixed methods' is typically associated with studies which combine both qualitative and quantitative approaches – Morse (2003: 190) specifically defines mixed methods as the incorporation of 'various qualitative or quantitative strategies' within a project that is oriented principally in one or other direction. However, Jackson's project adopts a broader understanding of the term, moving away from the traditional focus on qualitative versus quantitative methods, and instead following Greene's (2007) conceptualisation of mixed methods as a way of exploring the social world which 'actively invites us to participate in dialogue about multiple ways of seeing and hearing, multiple ways of making sense of the social world'. Elwood (2010: 95) takes a similar approach, looking to disrupt 'traditional groupings' of techniques as inherently qualitative or quantitative, and instead defining mixed methods as referring to 'some degree of integration across data types and modes of analysis'. For Elwood, as for Jackson (2011), employing a mixed methods approach involves the use of a number of methods to answer the same research question(s) in a way which facilitates 'multi-faceted and multi-scalar explanations' (Elwood, 2010: 96), thus enabling the complexities and contradictions of voices to be expressed.

Given the commitment to affirming the 'messiness' of social practice, the avowed recognition of researcher positionality, and the construction of a number of different

data types, my approach to this project can be said to draw on ethnographic principles. I am not claiming here that the study should be described using the noun form ‘ethnography’, as, although I recognise that this term itself has somewhat ‘fuzzy semantic boundaries’ (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 1), I share Swales’ (1998) and in turn MacGilchrist and van Hout’s (2011) concerns about applying this label to projects outside the discipline of cultural anthropology. Indeed, I did not immerse myself in a particular field over a significant period of time in order to produce a representation of a specific culture or cultural group, as ethnography is typically described (van Maanen, 2011: 1). In fact, I am reticent to make the assumption that the individuals involved in this research should be described as a collective with a ‘shared conceptual world’ (Smart, 2014: 147). However, I am seeking to interpret a particular set of situated discursive practices, to explore what these practices mean to the people directly involved, and to construct a ‘thick description’ of the research object in its complexity; thus, I have drawn on insights from a range of scholars who have applied ethnographic principles to their discourse research, for instance MacGilchrist and van Hout (2011), Tsui (2014), Cassels Johnson (2011), Oberhuber and Krzyżanowski (2008), and Krzyżanowski (2011).

As such, and in the reflexive spirit of ethnographic work, the next section will give a brief outline of the main decisions I took in terms of research focus from the PhD’s inception. It will then introduce the research questions before moving on to the ‘hows’ – the individual methods employed to collect, or rather *construct*, the data.

3.1.3 The research focus: responding to policy changes

By way of context then, when I started the project in September 2012, the 2-strand naturalisation system was still in existence: as explained in the Introduction, this meant that citizenship applicants could *either* satisfy the Knowledge of Life and language requirements by taking the *Life in the UK* test, *or* they could attend an ESOL with citizenship course. I hoped in the study, therefore, to take into account both of these routes – not in order to conduct a comparative reading of the different paths to citizenship as this would require a normative or evaluative set of research

questions and a larger sample size – but so as to include a broad spectrum of participants with whom to examine the diverse practices around the citizenship acquisition process in the UK. Further, I intended to examine the ESOL *classroom* as a key site in the pedagogisation of citizenship. As an English language teacher by training, I planned to draw on my own experiences inside the classroom, taking inspiration from Kumaravadivelu’s (1999) critical classroom discourse analysis (CCDA) to examine the curricula, the state-sanctioned materials, and the practices I observed, seeing the classroom as a key space in which ideas, ideologies, policies, materials, teachers, and learners intersect, producing ‘exclusive and at times explosive environments’ (454). I conceptualised the academic institution not solely as an instructional site, but as a ‘cultural aren(a)’ in which ‘heterogeneous ideological, discursive, and social forms collide in an unremitting struggle for dominance’ (McLaren, 1995: 30), and drew therefore on insights from critical pedagogy scholars such as Freire (1970) and Gur Ze’ev (2005). Alongside a series of classroom observations through the academic year 2013-2014, it was my intention also to recruit 6 focal participants from within these ESOL with citizenship courses in order to interrogate more deeply the ways in which a small number of individual learners responded to the citizenship programme. I hoped that my own experience as an EFL and ESOL teacher would provide useful background skills and knowledge on which to draw, and I expected to use the contacts I had built up over several years teaching in the region to gain access to relevant sites.

During the initial ‘recruitment’ stage however, the government withdrew the 2-strand system, meaning that, while citizenship applicants may still have continued to attend ESOL courses in order to satisfy the minimum B1 language proficiency criteria, training for the Knowledge Of Life component would no longer officially take place in an ESOL setting; instead, all citizenship applicants would be required to take the *LUK* test, and, crucially, to prepare for this examination independently. This was an interesting development, both for my own research project, and also in light of the emerging body of research into the increasing politicisation of ESOL in the contemporary securitised state and its positioning at the nexus of a number of policy concerns including security, immigration, integration, and adult education

(see for instance Baynham and Simpson, 2010; Simpson, 2011; Han et al, 2010; Phillimore, 2011; and Khan, 2014). Indeed, I considered the possibility of maintaining a focus on the ESOL context, particularly after ESOL teachers at an FE college and a migrant support centre in the City suggested that, despite the removal of the ESOL with citizenship programme, some citizenship materials could potentially continue to be brought into the classroom as supplementary resources in 2013.

However, I ultimately decided to discard this angle on the project for two main reasons: firstly, the repeated government modifications to the ESOL curriculum along with the frequent interventions from external bodies such as Ofsted meant that the teachers in the FE college I had hoped to work in were under particular pressure in 2013/2014 to satisfy certain internal and external stipulations. I sensed a good deal of anxiety and concern on the part of the staff at the college, and therefore felt that my presence in the classroom might be an unwelcome distraction in an already pressurised context. Further, and perhaps more importantly, I decided that my avowed commitment to an understanding of the social world as dynamic and contingent should, where possible, encourage me to engage directly with new policy directives as they emerged. From this premise, I determined that I could certainly continue to examine the theoretical implications emerging from the removal of the ESOL context as an official ‘training’ site for the *LUK* programme (as examined in particular detail in Chapter 5), but do so without including the ESOL classroom as a research site in the project.

3.1.4 The research questions: an emergent and iterative process

In light of this reconsideration of the research focus, and given my own commitment to an iterative research approach, it is perhaps unsurprising that the research questions therefore underwent significant reconstruction. Fundamentally, this project was, from its inception, oriented to the exploration of citizenship for those from migrant backgrounds who seek to formalise their status as citizens of the UK. From the outset, I was also interested in the articulation of citizenship in *élite*

discourse, and the ways in which a heterogeneous group of individuals oriented to these articulations. However, as the project developed and I, by necessity and by choice, responded both to new official policy directives and, significantly, to the decisions and practices within each individual research site, I found myself increasingly persuaded by the large body of scholarship which rejects a managerialist view of the state as a totalising power (as discussed in Chapter 1) and thus seeks to foreground the conformities, resistances, and complexities in everyday practice. As such, I shifted my focus increasingly further from an analysis of official texts and towards the actual practices and discretionary decisions of actors on the ground.

In doing so, I constructed the central research question:

- How is citizenship for naturalisation purposes brought into practice in a particular urban setting in the UK?

My central aim in this broad research focus was to interrogate the national citizenship project from the critical standpoint of participants within the regime. As I constructed the theoretical framework and began to analyse the data, my specific research questions began to coalesce and can now be articulated as follows:

1. (How) do naturalisation practices work to realise the nation state/the citizen?
2. (How) do naturalisation practices work to realise the nation state/citizen relation?
3. (How) do individual actors produce and navigate the citizenisation process?
4. What counter-hegemonic spaces exist for contestation/resistance to dominant discursive formations?

In order to answer these questions, I looked to the processes and practices that constitute the citizenship application process. This involved an exploration of key ‘moments’ – the citizenship ceremony and the *Life in the UK* test – and the official

documentation with which citizenship applicants and officials interact, alongside an examination of the ways in which the individuals involved orient to, and contribute to the discursive articulation of these practices.

3.2 The hows: constructing the data

The following section outlines the research methods I employed to construct the data in this study and the ways in which these methods relate to the research focus. As explained, this PhD includes data from a number of sources including direct observations of ceremonies and testing centre activity, field notes from each site, analysis of official documentation, and interviews with a number of actors – both citizenship officials and citizenship applicants. Clearly, I have therefore drawn together a wide variety of data, including material artefacts such as Home Office letters and certificates, symbolic aspects such as the layout and lighting in specific spaces, and spoken data reconstructed as written transcripts. However, despite their variety, it is important to clarify that I conceptualise each data source as part of the broader discursive practice of citizenship – in this sense, the written, the material, and the symbolic can all be analysed as ‘discursive’. It is necessary therefore to begin by commenting on my understanding of the term ‘discursive’, before considering in more detail the theoretical and practical considerations I took in employing each individual research method.

3.2.1 Discursive practice: incorporating materiality

While multiple definitions of the term ‘discourse’ exist, a significant body of social research uses ‘discourse’ to refer to language, or perhaps more specifically, ‘language-in-use’ (Blackledge, 2005: 8). For scholars adopting this understanding, it is taken that language can be ‘recruited [...] to enact specific social activities and social identities’ (Gee, 2005), or that language works not only to produce meanings, but also to produce particular kinds of subjects ‘upon whom and through which particular relations of power are realised’ (Luke, 1999). On this account then, discourse analysis is commonly concerned with the ‘linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures’ (Titscher et al, 2000: 146), a standpoint which has

provided a rich and productive orientation for scholars from a broad range of fields, including various manifestations of Critical Discourse Analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics, and traditional text-based studies (Wodak, 2008), enabling in-depth analyses of the ways in which, for instance, media and élite discourses may work to position certain subjects, or to stabilise certain power structures (Wodak et al, 2009; Krzyżanowski and Wodak, 2009).

Certainly, these are useful bodies of literature on which I draw. However, and in keeping again with the ontological position informing this project, my understanding of the discursive is not restricted to language. Instead, I share Glynos et al's (2009: 9) argument that discourse can be said to function as 'an ontological horizon', and that, following this claim, 'practices', and indeed 'any other object which can be qualified as meaningful' is 'by definition discursive in character'. On this account, every object is constituted as an object of discourse, but, significantly, this is not purely through linguistic phenomena, but also by the 'multifarious institutions, rituals and practices through which a discursive formation is structured' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 109). On this understanding then, the discursive is seen to include, but also to go far beyond, language use. There has, over the last decade, been some attempt to draw, if not foreground, this non-linguistic dimension into discourse analytical scholarship, with Barad (2007) offering the term 'material-discursive' as one way in which to highlight the incorporation of materiality in discourse research, and MacGilchrist (2014b) removing the hyphen to argue that the term 'materialdiscursive' could be employed without carrying the attendant presumption of a realist ontology. However, while I acknowledge West's (2011: 417) point that post-structuralist scholarship might benefit from a clearer engagement with materiality, I am not convinced that 'material(-)discursive' is a necessary neologism for me to employ given the clarity with which, as expressed above, Laclau and Mouffe unproblematically appear to accept the 'material density' (1985) of any discursive formation.

On this account then, I employ the term ‘discursive practice’ throughout this PhD, with this taken to mean both the linguistic – i.e. text-based – dimensions of citizenship practices, and also the wider material and symbolic elements such as space, light, visual imagery, and ritual through which citizenship for naturalisation purposes is brought into practice within the City.

3.2.2 Accessing knowledge: the data set

The following table draws on Yanow’s (2000: 39) approach to ‘accessing local knowledge’ and is intended to provide an accessible snapshot of the data set in this thesis. The columns on the left indicate the methods through which I accessed each piece of data, including observations, interviews, and document analysis, and the ‘sources’ of data, for instance citizenship applicants, or citizenship officials. The third column presents the volume of data in terms of time or quantity. The final column indicates the specific questions I asked myself as I constructed the data, and notes which overall research question(s) (RQs), as set out in section 3.1.4, these concerns relate to. As the research questions (1-4) underwent significant modification throughout the course of the project, so these specific concerns (a-k) necessarily coalesced over time. I found that these subsidiary questions offered an accessible breakdown of the RQs, helping me to restate the central foci as the project progressed.

Methods of accessing data	Sources of data	Volume of data	Specific concerns as related to Research Questions (RQ)
Observations/ Participant-observations	Citizenship ceremony <i>Life in the UK</i> test	10 observations 10 hours total One test Approx. 1 hour	a. What does the ceremony/test involve? (RQ1, 3) b. (How) is the state materialised in these ceremonial practices? (RQ1) c. (How) do these practices work to articulate a citizen-subject? (RQ1, 2) d. What decisions are made by local actors in the production of these events? (RQ3, 4) e. How do participants appear to orientate to these practices? (RQ3, 4)
Observations and semi-structured interviews	Citizenship 'officials'	11 observations (at ceremonies and testing centre) 11+ hours total 8 interviews with ceremony officials Approx. 40 mins each 1 interaction with testing official	f. How do participants both construct and reflect on the ceremony/test and the application process? (RQ1, 2, 3, 4) g. How do participants articulate a notion of the state/the citizen? (RQ1, 2, 3, 4)

Methods of accessing data	Sources of data	Volume of data	Specific concerns as related to Research Questions (RQ)
Observations and semi-structured interviews	Citizenship applicants	12 interviews with citizenship applicants Approx. 60-90 mins each	h. How do participants both construct and reflect on the ceremony/test and the application process? (RQ1, 2, 3, 4)
Focus group	Citizenship applicants	Focus group with 7 citizenship applicants Approx. 1 hour	i. How do participants articulate a notion of the state/the citizen? (RQ1, 2, 3, 4)
Document analysis	Official documentation	4 official sets of test material; letters and official documentation – approx. 25 documents	j. How is the state/the citizen articulated and materialised in official documentation? (RQ1, 2, 3, 4) k. What legitimating mechanisms can be read in the documents? (RQ1, 2)

Table 2: Data set

3.2.3 Constructing research artefacts 1: observations, field notes, official documentation

In the following sections, I outline the key issues considered in each of the methods employed to access the data, as outlined above. I begin by focusing on the ethnographic data I constructed, examining the processes of conducting observations, taking field notes, and accumulating official documentation; in section 3.2.4 I examine interview and focus group concerns. To begin this section however, I take a moment to dwell on some of the complexities I encountered in accessing the field as this was a particular challenge in the early stages of the research and it is, in itself, of interest to this project.

3.2.3.1 Identifying and accessing research sites

Gaining access to the key research sites – the citizenship ceremony and the *Life in the UK* test – was surprisingly difficult. I began first of all with the ceremony, approaching the City council over the telephone in late 2013. After some initial confusion, I was put through to the most appropriate contact, Sarah, in the council offices, who explained to me that the ceremonies were *not* open to the public, and it was not typical for individuals other than attendees and their guests to attend a ceremony. At this point I feared that the project may need a complete reconsideration; however, fortunately, Sarah and I appeared to develop a mutual sense of trust during our telephone interaction, and, after some consultation with other council representatives, she invited me to attend a citizenship ceremony the following week. During this ceremony, I met the incumbent Lord Mayor and two registrars with whom I had some informal interaction after the event. At that stage, all three individuals agreed in principle to the possibility of a more formal interview once I was at the appropriate stage in the research process. Unfortunately however, when I called again in mid-2014, I was told that the Lord Mayor had since left his post to be replaced by a successor, and that things were rather hectic in the council offices. There followed a period of approximately four months during which time I feared again that the project might have stalled irrevocably. However, finally, I was

passed on to Amy, a Senior Administrator at the council who was partly responsible for organising the ceremonies. She and I again exchanged numerous emails. After then providing the 'governance team' with further information about the project, I finally managed to secure a date to attend another citizenship ceremony in late-2014. From there, I met Amy and other officials in person and was able to present my research more clearly, and to secure more definitively further observations and formal interviews with each of them.

In terms of accessing the testing centre, this provided yet more challenges. During the course of my research, I made several attempts to access the City's *Life in the UK* testing centre. I began in 2014 by visiting the City's central library, where I had been told that tests took place, but was informed that the examination was now overseen by a company called *Numidia*. The woman on the helpdesk handed me a very small, scuffed slip of paper with the company's contact details, and a booklet with information about ESOL support. When I asked for more information about *Numidia*, she was unable to tell me anything, except to say that people do come to the library fairly frequently to ask about the test and that she gives them the same information she gave me. The following day I attempted to contact *Numidia*, only to find that their website was 'under review' and that, although it did publicise its ESOL classes, there was absolutely no mention of the *Life in the UK* test. However, I rang the number I had been given and was told that the test did indeed take place at the *Numidia* centre but that bookings must be made online. I explained that I was trying to find out more about the testing process as part of a PhD project and asked if I could visit the centre. In response, I was told that this enquiry would need to be passed on to management as they would make decisions like this. Perhaps unsurprisingly, no phone call was forthcoming. After a number of follow-up calls, I was finally informed that I would need to contact *learndirect* as they were the official test provider. There followed a rather frustrating telephone interaction with an automated *learndirect* machine which offered me options based on my position as a learner, as a provider, or as a business, but did not seem able to accommodate a research request. The individual I was finally put through to appeared somewhat confused by my situation, explaining that she had never received a request for

research such as this, but passed my details on to the customer service team. A week later, I received an email from ‘the *learndirect* team’ informing me that visits to the testing centre would not be feasible as they may compromise the ‘integrity of the test’. A screenshot of the email is included below:

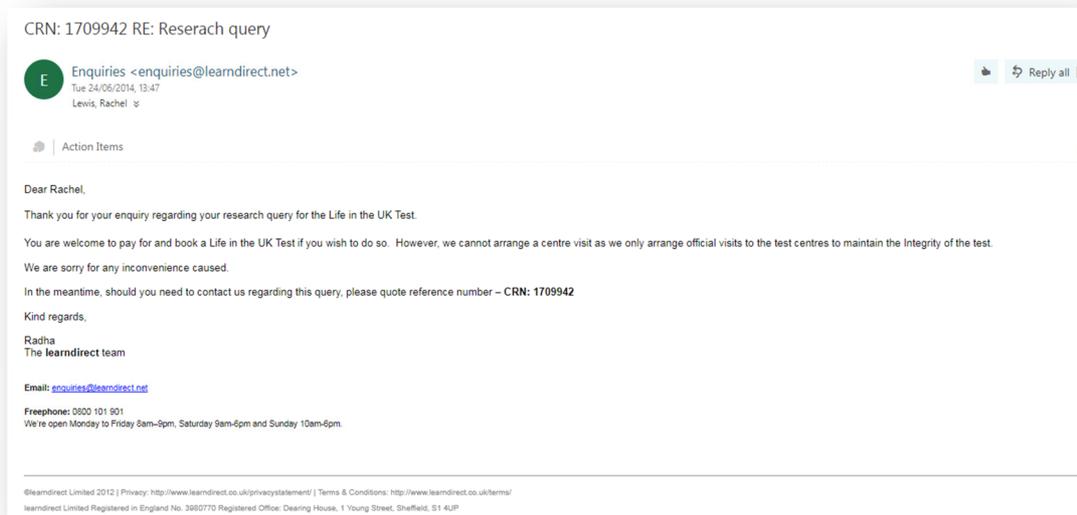


Figure 4: Email response from *learndirect* (24.06.14)

In order to access the centre therefore, it was, somewhat bizarrely, necessary to book (and pay) to take the *Life in the UK* test myself – more on which in the next section.

3.2.3.2 Practicalities and considerations in the field

Turning now to the processes and practicalities of gathering observational data, I conducted ten observations of citizenship ceremonies, between December 2013 and July 2015. Non-ethnographic research may regard the first observation in December 2013 as a pilot observation since I was less clear at that point as to the central foci of the study and it was my first substantive encounter with this research site. However, given the complexities I encountered in entering the field, and in light of the fact that much ethnographic research blurs the chronological boundaries between establishing access, orientating oneself in the field, ‘collecting’ data, and interpreting encounters and practices (Oberhuber and Krzyżanowski, 2008), I chose to include this initial

observation in my data set, particularly as it is both interesting as data for the PhD focus, and as an insight into my own position as researcher.

It is worth dwelling on this issue of positionality a little more at this point, as it relates both to procedural considerations, and also to the nature of the data I constructed. I note that the ritualistic nature of the citizenship ceremony made it unlikely that my presence in the room would directly affect the content of the ceremony itself; however, conducting multiple observations allowed me to build a more nuanced and complex picture of this event, enabled me to note broader or more subtle atmospheric changes, and affected the ways in which I perceived the ceremony and the insights I took from the event. In the first observation, I operated as an ‘unobtrusive observer’ (Gorman and Clayton, 2005), taking no part in the ceremony and sitting throughout with a notebook in which I took detailed records of both linguistic and extra-linguistic features. My field notes included lengthy transcriptions, as *verbatim* as I could manage, of the language the Lord Mayor and Superintendent Registrar used during the ceremony, along with diagrams representing the layout of the room. I also took photographs once the ceremony had finished and the room was empty of attendees: (these photographs are not intended to assert a reality, to declare that ‘this has been’ (Stanczak, 2007: 7); but again rather to construct a visual image of ‘what I felt I saw’). I was very much an ‘outsider’ to this event: although I was seated in a row alongside one other attendee, I experienced the ceremony through the pages of my notebook, attempting to gather as much detail as I possibly could in case access was withdrawn for future ceremonies. In fact, this ‘outsider-ness’ was evidenced by the fact that, at the end of the ceremony, one attendee requested that I take a photograph of himself and his family before asking if I was a journalist.

The second ceremony however, was quite different. This time I had arranged to meet the registrars before the ceremony began. I was ushered in almost as a friend or colleague, and spent around thirty minutes helping to set up the room, looking through the paperwork, and discussing each registrar’s role in the event. As

attendees arrived, Bernie, the Superintendent Registrar, asked me to work alongside her, helping to direct attendees and guests to their seats, and ensuring, on her request, that attendees were seated in such a way as to give the impression of a fuller congregation. Although I was not dressed in the registrar's uniform, the attendees appeared to look upon me as another official in the event, following my 'instructions' and asking for reassurance that they had sat in the most appropriate positions. I should note that my own appearance, as a white woman, may have led attendees to perceive me as occupying a similar subject position to the registrars. My role had thus shifted fundamentally from an observer to a participant-observer, and I was unable to take out my notebook until the ceremony had begun and I was seated (again alongside the attendees, although I was offered the option to sit with the registrars if I chose). Even once seated, I was aware that my position had changed and I no longer felt it possible to spend the entire event making notes as I felt that this might appear strange, both to attendees, and in fact to the registrars as well, given my apparent role as 'insider'. I was also more secure in terms of future access and thus felt it unnecessary to take down every detail, preferring to experience the ceremony as it happened rather than as I wrote it.

In subsequent observations I varied the degree to which I participated, on some occasions 'collecting' attendees from the waiting area, sitting at the registration desk as each individual presented their paperwork, and handing out oath or affirmation cards to each attendee; on others sitting alone in the viewing gallery above the ceremony room. Despite any differences in my role, however, I followed the same procedures after the event, returning to a computer and immediately typing up my field notes. I made comments on the structure of the ceremony, the language used, the atmosphere I sensed, the ways in which the participants appeared to be responding to the ceremony, and my own feelings as I sat in the pews. I also noted comments on the town hall building itself, the space between the waiting room and the ceremony room, the structure, layout, and lighting in the ceremony room, and again, my own feelings towards each of these elements. Appendices B1 and B2 include extracts from the field notes I took during my first and second observations of the ceremony. The analytical process with which I explored these features will be

discussed in more detail in section 3.4. The following table indicates the time period during which I conducted these observations, and notes the number of events I attended in each month.

Date	Dec	Sept	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	May	July
	2013	2014		2015				
No. of observations	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1

Table 3: Ceremony observation schedule

In terms of accessing the *Life in the UK* test, this was a rather solitary affair, without the useful support of an official gatekeeper. I began the process of arranging to sit the test for myself in January 2015, embarking on the gov.uk online test booking form. Having inputted my personal data and agreed to the lengthy terms and conditions, I was sent a link to the five nearest testing centres. I was surprised to note firstly, that *Numidia* no longer existed as a testing centre – between July 2014 and January 2015 the centre had changed once again, and the tests now took place at *learndirect*'s own offices (I will explore this more fully in Chapter 5). Secondly, I noted with some surprise that the nearest available test date at any of the five centres on offer was at least six weeks away, perhaps indicating the level of demand for tests in the local area. The entire booking procedure was conducted online with no human interaction at any point; indeed, the only communication I had was a series of automated emails reminding me that my test date was approaching, that I would be required to arrive 15 minutes before the start of the test, and that I should bring appropriate ID. These emails were signed 'The Life in the UK team'.

Despite attempting to satisfy all the necessary stipulations, it transpired that I was, in fact, barred from taking the test. This was not due to my existing nationality, although this was queried with some bemusement by the test administrator. Rather I had failed to provide paperwork deemed appropriate by the Home Office as evidence

of my ID. I will explore this in much further detail in Chapter 6. However, I should note here that despite being refused entry to the test itself, I was able to gather a rather rich set of observations and notes from every space in the testing centre. The ethnographic experience was inevitably very different from the ceremony as I was positioned as a participant in the event until the moment at which I was refused entry to the examination. Although I noted a raised eyebrow and the occasional quizzical glance from test officials, my presence was not explicitly questioned and I believe that other candidates viewed me as a fellow test-taker until I mentioned my research role once the event was complete. I arrived early for the test, so took detailed notes in the early stages of the event. However, once I and other candidates were moved through to the waiting room, my notes became less descriptive and somewhat more emotional – I noted my feelings and the atmosphere I sensed in the room, and the interactions I was party to with other test-takers. It was only once the event was over and I had left the testing centre that I was able to add more detail to these field notes, expanding my records with further comment and reflection on the event. An extract from these field notes is included in Appendix C.

Finally, in terms of accumulating written documentation, I bought the testing materials – the *Official Study Guide*, the *Guide for New Residents*, and the *Official Practice Questions and Answers* book – and downloaded the citizenship application forms from the gov.uk website. I also conducted Internet searches for further official documents using the keywords ‘*life in the UK*’ and ‘*UK citizenship*’. Along with the paperwork I identified for myself, I also accumulated a good deal of documentation from my discussions with Amy – the Senior council Administrator – who provided me with letters, official certificates, documentation from the ceremony such as the oath of allegiance, and Home Office documents. Finally, one of the citizenship candidates in this study, Evelyn, had kept every piece of paperwork used throughout her application process and was happy to share these with me. As such, I was able to accumulate a comprehensive corpus of the key citizenship documentation used and referenced throughout the process.

The next section will explore the process of identifying participants in more detail, and will outline my approach to carrying out interviews.

3.2.4 Constructing research artefacts 2: interviews and focus group

3.2.4.1 Identifying and accessing participants

I used a number of routes to identify and access participants, although this again was a significant challenge as the removal of the ESOL with citizenship route meant there was no longer a specific site at which naturalisation ‘training’ took place. In mid-2014, I began working as a voluntary advisor at the City’s main refugee and migrant support centre, a role which involved giving advice and support on a range of issues including asylum support applications, housing, and benefit entitlements. The people that I saw in the centre varied significantly, and included newly arrived asylum seekers, undocumented migrants who had been living ‘illegally’ in the UK for many years, and naturalised citizens. I took the decision to work at the centre due to my own particular interest in working with and advocating for asylum seekers in the City; the decision was not, therefore, related to the PhD project. That said, individuals at various stages in the process of naturalisation did attend the centre for advice, making it a useful site at which to meet participants. Given my responsibilities as an advisor however, I sought to keep my position as researcher distinct from my role at the centre, principally because I did not want people to feel pressurised to take part in the research in return for my support with their queries and anxieties. As such, rather than trying to ‘recruit’ participants at my desk, I put posters up in the reception area of the centre outlining the project and giving my contact details (see appendix D for my advertisement).

Along with this, I discussed my research with the small group of lawyers from the City’s law centre who visit the refugee centre once a week to run free advice sessions on legal issues. Occasionally, individuals arrived seeking support with their naturalisation applications and, as such, I left posters and flyers in their office, and asked the lawyers to circulate these when they thought it appropriate, and to take a set of flyers back to the City’s law centre for further circulation. I also made a short presentation at the weekly staff meeting at the refugee centre, introducing my

research and asking staff at the centre to pass my contact details on to anyone they felt may be able to take part from within their own networks.

The FE College in the City at which I had previously planned to conduct classroom observations was also a useful site for identifying citizenship applicants. Having been employed there as an EFL teacher for some time in 2009, I was familiar with the processes and structures at the college and also had access to the appropriate gate-keepers with whom to engage. As such, I contacted the Programme Area Manager and other teachers responsible for ESOL provision, asking for their support in identifying individuals who were going through the process of naturalising. Through this process, I was invited by the staff in April 2015 to meet with seven citizenship applicants. While I had intended at this meeting to find individuals with whom to conduct 1:1 interviews, it transpired that these ESOL students were in fact keen to discuss their citizenship applications there and then. There followed, therefore, an impromptu but very informative focus group discussion, lasting approximately one hour. This was unrecorded but I wrote notes as the discussion progressed and added to these entries as soon as our discussion was over. I have not included all the individuals in this focus group as participants in the thesis; however I have drawn on some of the content of our interaction in my analysis.

The final, principal sites for meeting participants were the citizenship ceremony and the test, where I spoke to individuals as they mingled after the events. I felt that it would be inappropriate to try to recruit participants in the midst of a tense or 'high-stakes' situation, and thus exercised a good deal of caution, waiting until the events were complete before I introduced myself. I certainly found a willingness to interact, and I believe that attendees tended to invest a degree of trust in me, perceiving me as non-threatening perhaps on account of my gender, my presentation as middle-class, or my demeanour. However, I did note a definite reticence on the part of many individuals to take this interaction any further. Some declined to take part in my research there and then, while others shared their email addresses but then chose not to pursue my subsequent message. One woman even arranged a meeting

on two separate occasions and both times failed to arrive. Certainly this reticence is inevitable to some degree in all research; however, I note that Byrne (2014) encountered similar difficulties in recruiting participants for her comparable study, and find her conclusion – that individuals involved in the citizenship process can experience a real sense of unease around perceived officialdom – rather persuasive. Indeed, several of the people who agreed to interviews with me did admit to a feeling of anxiety in doing so, and my contact at the FE college told me that he had had to give significant assurance to the ESOL students that I was not a government officer attending to verify their immigration status.

In terms of the interview data, I conducted 1:1 interviews with twenty individuals in total. This included eight officials – the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor, two Superintendent Registrars, one Deputy Lord Lieutenant, one Administrator, one Senior Administrator, and the Administrator to the Lord Mayor; an unrecorded interaction with one testing centre Administrator; and in-depth interviews with twelve citizenship applicants. Although this is a relatively small number of participants, my intention (as explained in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2) was not to identify a representative sample from which to draw generalisations, and I believe that I was able to gather and construct a detailed insight into the phenomenon even from a small but heterogeneous group of participants. Further, from my time in the field, I ascertained that the eight citizenship officials with whom I interacted were in fact the key actors within the ceremony and testing sites: these were the individuals who made the procedural decisions, who presided over the events, and with whom applicants were likely to interact. They were, therefore, the main figures central to naturalisation practices within the City.¹²

¹² I should note that I did endeavour to contact individuals from the Home Office for this project. In 2014, I spent several months conducting an internship at the Department for Communities and Local Government, through which I met several key policy advisors working on issues around integration and migration. However, while a number of DCLG colleagues were willing to take part in an interview (I have not included this data in the PhD as it is not directly relevant to this study), I found it impossible to secure any interviews with individuals at the Home Office.

In terms of interview location, this was dependent on the requirements of each individual. I conducted interviews with citizenship officials during work hours and our interactions therefore took place within their offices. As regards citizenship applicants, this varied depending on their own particular requests: interviews either took place in a public space in the city, for instance a café, or, if preferred, at the participant’s home. With each participant, I outlined the project verbally and emailed the information sheet and consent forms (more on which in section 3.3) prior to the interview, giving each individual time to ask questions and clarify concerns before organising a date and time to meet.

3.2.4.2 Research participants

The following table gives basic information about each of the participants in the study. All biographical notes are accurate as of 2015.

Citizenship officials	Brief biographical note
Bernie	Superintendent Registrar, she presides over the citizenship ceremony and has taken a role in suggesting changes to the ceremony script. She is in her 50s.
Deputy Lord Mayor	Deputy Lord Mayor, he presides over ceremonies and is in his 60s.
Deputy Lord Lieutenant	Deputy Lord Lieutenant, he attends ceremonies regularly as an official representative of the Queen. He is in his 60s.
Jane	Administrator in the Lord Mayor’s office, she was involved in formulating the original script for the first citizenship ceremony in 2005, and still takes a role in script alterations. She is in her 50s.
Lord Mayor	Current Lord Mayor, she presides over the citizenship ceremony on most occasions and is in her 60s.

Amy	Senior Administrator in the City council for several years, her role is to organise the paperwork for each citizenship ceremony. She is in her 40s.
Sharon	Superintendent Registrar, she presides over the citizenship ceremony and has taken a role in suggesting changes to the ceremony script. She is in her 50s.
Test administrator	Administrator in the testing centre, she is responsible for verifying test-takers' ID. She declined a formal interview but spent some time talking to me informally at the testing centre. She is in her 40s.
Citizenship applicants	Brief biographical note
Alex	In her 40s, Alex has been living in the UK for over 18 years since leaving Italy. She is in the early stages of the application process, and recently passed the <i>Life in the UK</i> test.
Antje	Antje, in her 40s, works in academia and has been in the UK since she came from Germany to begin her MA in the late 1990s. She was granted citizen-status in late 2013.
Bahadir	In his 30s, Bahadir arrived in the UK from Turkey with his Turkish/British wife and their 2 children. He is currently completing a PhD and was granted citizen-status in 2014.
Cindy	In her 50s, Cindy came to the UK in 2008 from the US with husband Russ' job as a Christian pastor. Both were granted citizen-status in 2015.
Evelyn	Evelyn is in her 40s and has been working as a carer in the UK since leaving the Philippines in the 1990s. She was granted citizenship in late 2013 and is currently going through a legal process to ensure her children can stay with her in the UK permanently.
Gumaa	In her 30s, Gumaa joined her husband in the UK from Sudan several years ago and is currently in the early stages of a citizenship application.

Johannes	Johannes, in his 30s, came to the UK from Eritrea and sought asylum before being granted indefinite leave to remain. He attained citizen-status in 2013 and is currently supporting his wife through the citizenship process.
John	John, in his 30s, came to the UK from Eritrea as an asylum seeker in 2008. After a very lengthy wait, the HO finally granted him citizen-status in 2015.
Maria Elena	In her 40s, Maria Elena has been working in the UK as a domestic worker since arriving with her employer in 2009. She is currently on a domestic worker visa which must be renewed annually, but is now beginning the process of attaining ILR with a view to applying for citizenship in 2015.
Russ	Russ is in his 50s and came to the UK in 2008 from the US with wife Cindy, employed as a 'missionary' in the City. Both were recently granted citizen-status.
Saroj	Saroj came to the UK with her husband from India on a Tier 1 visa. They both went through the ILR process and were simultaneously granted citizenship in 2014. She is in her 20s.
Thandi	In her 60s, Thandi came to the UK from Zimbabwe and sought asylum in the late 1990s. She has been working as a carer in the UK and was recently granted ILR. She is currently in the early stages of her citizenship application but this has recently stalled due to issues with her paperwork.

Table 4: Research participants

3.2.4.3 Co-constructing accounts

Although interviews are very widely employed in qualitative research, particularly in studies aiming for an in-depth insight into participants' 'identities, experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and orientations' (Talmy, 2010: 128), their ubiquity in both research contexts and everyday life has led to a degree of inconsistency and ambiguity in terms both of the theoretical underpinnings and the practical applications of the method (Arksey and Knight, 1999; Mann, 2011). As such, it is useful at this stage to clarify the ways in which I conceptualised and employed interviews in this research project. A traditional view of the interview may have seen the interaction as a neutral and transparent means by which to access the inner beliefs and experiences of the participants (Roulston, 2010; Gubrium and Holstein, 2001), with the interview process thus likened to 'prospecting' as the interviewer sought to draw out the respondent's true facts and feelings (Holstein and Gubrium, 1997: 115). The problem with this conceptualisation, however, is its positioning of the respondents as 'passive vessels of answers' (ibid, 116) waiting to transmit their 'reality' to the interviewer, and its failure therefore to acknowledge the fundamentally social nature of the interview. Indeed, the theoretical commitments of a poststructuralist, constructionist, or ethnomethodological approach would hold that the idea of language as a neutral medium through which to represent the essential reality of the interviewee must necessarily be reconsidered. With this concern in mind, and befitting the philosophical presuppositions informing this project, the interview in this research is instead viewed as an essentially active process, a dialogic encounter between researcher and participant in which both interlocutors make meaning and co-construct knowledge (Talmy and Richards, 2011), with this process leading to a 'contextually bound and mutually created story' (Fontana and Frey, 2005: 696).

Given this core premise, I followed a semi-structured interview format in which the process was partly interviewer-led and partly informant-led (Arksey and Knight, 1999: 8). I therefore avoided a fixed interview frame, but began each interview with

a set of broad ideas and questions that I wished to explore. For both the citizenship officials and the interviews with applicants/'new' citizens, these ideas centred on three core themes: practical issues, for instance the application process itself; personal experience, such as the individual's own engagement with this application process; and finally insight into the broader issue of citizenship itself, i.e. the individual's personal response to the subject of citizenship for naturalisation purposes. Within each interview, I used prompts and open-ended questions to encourage interviewees to take the lead where possible and to elaborate on their answers; for instance I began the interviews with citizenship officials with the open question 'could you tell me a little bit about your role in relation to citizenship'? and allowed the conversation to develop from there. I opened the interviews with citizenship applicants with a similarly broad question about their life in the UK, and from there encouraged comment on their naturalisation application in more detail. The participants did, to some degree, determine the direction of the talk (Dörnyei, 2007: 136) and my experience broadly cohered with Wengraf's (2001: 5) assertion that, in a semi-structured approach, the interviewer may improvise up to 80% of the interview.

I approached the focus group in a similar way. As I mentioned in section 3.2.4.1, this was a somewhat impromptu and unexpected event, and has been used as preliminary rather than principal data. However it is still important to comment on the principles with which I approached this research method. My original research design had involved a set of focus groups and I had thus spent some time exploring the literature relevant to this research method in the early stages of the thesis. As with the interviews, I was persuaded by the contention that focus groups should involve a rather small number of 'loosely structured questions' through which to encourage 'extensive discussion' (Stewart et al, 2007) rather than a set of standardised, fixed questions from which the interviewer does not deviate. And I found useful comparative work in Leitner and Ehrkamp (2006) and Skop's (2005) research with migrants in Germany and the US in which the scholars took a rather exploratory, non-standardised approach involving 'minimal interference from the moderator' (Leitner and Ehrkamp, 2006: 1620). As such, I took a similar strategy in

the focus group to the interviews, beginning with a fairly open question on life in the UK and allowing the interaction to develop from there. I did find myself able to withdraw somewhat once the participants began to gain confidence, and on this point it certainly helped that the individuals involved already had some degree of familiarity with one another, either through shared classes or at least their shared learning context. During the interaction therefore, participants were able to engage with one another's comments, to question, seek clarification, and reflect on the views of others in the group (Finch and Lewis, 2003) without always looking to me for direction.

Finally, in light of the avowedly dialogic nature of my interviewing strategy, and the fact that both interviews and focus groups inevitably require a degree of rapport with participants in order to facilitate a constructive interaction, I reflected carefully on the ethical implications of such interactions for the individuals involved. The following section explores the question of ethics in more detail.

3.3 Ethical considerations: institutional guidelines, relational ethics, and reflexivity

Ethical concerns must inevitably be considered in all research projects but the issue seems particularly pertinent in research with groups of people who may be seen as occupying a marginalised or de-privileged position in society, and for whom English may not be a 'native' language. Certainly, at the earliest stages of the project, the Warwick University guidelines provided a useful entry-point into the subject, ensuring that I thought carefully about questions of consent, access, and confidentiality. The information sheet and consent forms, for instance, are central to the institution's ethical procedures and certainly raised issues that were useful to explore: in my case, for example, one particular concern was the manner in which to characterise my research to prospective participants in order to provide information which was both concise and accessible, but simultaneously avoided oversimplification and inaccuracy. While this is a challenge in all research, it was made more complex in this case by the differing linguistic proficiencies of the participants.

For this reason, I thought extremely carefully about the wording of all documentation, aiming to ensure that my language was clear and concise throughout (see Appendices E1 and E2 for information sheets and consent forms).

The ethics committee guidelines also demanded the completion of a standard application for ethical approval form, which required reflection on the issues of anonymity and confidentiality, as shown in Appendix F. Again, this is a complex issue. Certainly, I agreed that the participants' entitlement to privacy was key (BAAL, 2006; BERA, 2004), and I was aware that some participants in this study might require particular reassurance that their responses would not be prejudicial to their citizenship application. However, as Nespor (2000) notes, many qualitative methods make genuine anonymization difficult to achieve. While steps can be taken to ensure that no unnecessary disclosures are made public and that sufficient safeguards are put in place to maintain anonymity, perhaps by removing confidential information from transcripts, the tension still remains between conveying sufficient detail to accurately represent an account of the social world, and 'protecting the identities' of the individuals who inhabit that particular social context (Kaiser, 2009: 1639). This is an issue that cannot necessarily be resolved entirely, but with each participant, I offered them the opportunity to choose a pseudonym (some declined this offer, preferring to use their given names instead), and gave assurances that the specific city in which the research took place would not be disclosed. I also sent each participant the transcript of their interview, offering them the chance to clarify anything they feel they did not make clear or to remove anything they would prefer not to be made public. Although this was a potentially risky decision as participants could decide to remove comments that were particularly useful or relevant to the thesis, I felt that it was important to ensure all participants felt at least a degree of ownership over the process and the final product. Finally, I gave all participants the option, which none took, to withdraw from the research at any point up to three months after their interview, without giving any reasons, as I felt that this passed at least a degree of control to each individual.

In taking these steps then, I satisfied the institutional criteria for acceptable ethical process. However, my sense throughout the project was that these institutional practices are more centred on liability and accountability than they are on genuine concern for the individuals involved. Indeed, it would be naïve to presume that by ensuring informed consent and offering to anonymise names I could automatically resolve the inevitable power imbalance between researcher and participant within the context of a PhD research project. Thus, whilst I took efforts to enable member-checking and to allow participants (the very term *allow* being indicative of a hierarchical interaction) to redact comments if they chose in an effort to write *with* rather than *about* each individual (Sultana, 2007: 375), I cannot avoid the fact that each participant's words are inevitably removed from the social context in which they were constructed, and recontextualised as data for my own material and symbolic benefit (Kvale, 2006) in the written thesis. In this sense, it is then ultimately, inevitably, the researcher who takes the final responsibility for interpreting, for organising, and for presenting the participants' words, and as such, the researcher who holds the power in the research interaction.

With this in mind, my approach to ethical concerns throughout the project was not oriented principally to satisfying procedural demands, but rather centred on my relationship with the participants. I approached this ethical consideration in two ways. Firstly, I shared Phipps (2013) and Holliday's (2009) discomfort with the definitional aims of much research, in particular seeing as ethically questionable any attempts to construct a coherent and analytically 'valid' story about each participant in which the inevitable complexities of individual experiences are elided. This concern therefore added an ethical justification for my rejection of the concept of triangulation and my attempts not to downplay any 'messiness' in the data.

Secondly, I drew on insights from (critical) ethnographers interrogating the 'self-other conjunction' (Lincoln, 2009: 5), or, as Fine (1994) puts it, 'working the hyphen', who seek to explore a sound, theoretical, and practical approach to the ethics of the researcher/participant relationship. This did not lead me to (attempt to)

construct an intimate relationship with participants by foregrounding personal disclosure and mutual vulnerability, as in some feminist literature (Oakley, 1981; Behar, 1993), as I share Denzin's (2014) concerns that this can be both self-indulgent, and, indeed, potentially manipulative; however, I did work to interrogate the emergent intersubjectivity between myself and the participants in the study, recognising the importance of establishing a comfortable rapport with each individual, and aiming to construct, or perhaps rather encourage, a relationship based on mutual respect, mutual trust, and a clear and apparent sense of responsibility on my part for the welfare of each individual (Wong, 1998).

I believe that I was partly able to demonstrate this sense of respect and responsibility because of my professional experience as a teacher, through which I have spent time interacting with vulnerable or marginalised individuals and those for whom English is not a first language. I certainly drew on this experience as I constructed the participant documentation; indeed, I included the fact that I was an English language teacher on the research flyers and posters as I felt this might act as some reassurance to potential participants: reassurance both that I was a trustworthy person, and reassurance that I would treat them and their stories with respect. I was also aware that I graded my language as I would in the EFL/ESOL classroom during my interactions with the less proficient speakers of English such as Gumaa and Maria Elena. That said, however, I am aware that my orientation to the subject position 'teacher' is itself indicative of a somewhat hierarchical relationship, and, on reflection, I do believe that certain participants, particularly Saroj and Gumaa, may indeed have been conscious of this asymmetry in our interactions. Saroj, for instance, was keen to verify towards the end of the interview that she had not said anything which I had found personally offensive, and seemed relieved when I reassured her that I would not find any comments, critical or otherwise, at all troubling.

For other participants, particularly the citizenship officials, I believe that my presentation as a middle-class white woman was beneficial in establishing trust and a

sense of rapport. Certainly I think this helped in terms of gaining access to the ceremony site and to ‘backrooms’ such as the Lord Mayor’s office. However I do think it possible that this gender, race, and/or class positioning may have added a degree of complexity to my interaction with other participants, for instance John and Johannes. That said, it is impossible to speculate how our interactions may have been different if I were to occupy a different subject position, and neither John nor Johannes gave me any reason to sense that they felt particularly uncomfortable in my presence once the initial reassurances were given that I was not a state agent. And even if my own positionality did have an impact, that is not to say that our interactions were somehow less valid or ‘true’; rather to demonstrate again my awareness of the co-constructed nature of all interaction.

This awareness alone, however, cannot solve the asymmetrical power distribution inevitable in PhD research, and thus I return to the conclusions I drew in the opening section of this chapter – that an interrogation of my own ‘locations and investments’ (Springwood and King, 2001: 413) is a crucial factor in engaging with the ethical practices of research.

3.4 Analytical approach

This section now turns to the analytical processes in this PhD. In terms of overall analytical approach, I sought to foreground the processual and iterative character of the research endeavour, in this sense aiming to capture the ‘systematic interactions’ between data and ideas, to highlight the notion that research design and data analysis are ‘in constant dialogue’ (Atkinson and Delamont, 2005: 833). In taking this approach, I was informed by a ‘contextualist’ stance (Madill et al, 2000) in which the accounts of both researcher and participant are seen to be fundamentally situation dependent, and thus, given this premise, it follows that theories, interpretations, and understandings can all inevitably be altered by encounters, observations, and experiences in the field (Stiles, 1993: 602). As such, I did not employ a deductive logic in which I sought to ‘test’ the appearance of certain pre-established theories within the data, but rather aimed to foreground a more inductive approach in which

my practical engagements with the phenomenon in question guided the theoretical framework, and vice versa (Gibbs, 2007: 5). This commitment to inductive practices is particularly evident in the layout of the ensuing chapters in this thesis in which I present data and analysis concurrently. While I acknowledge that this may appear unconventional, particularly in an Applied Linguistics thesis, my intention was to generate new theory as I worked, with the result that I inevitably introduce new literature into each analytical chapter. I hoped that this method would work to counter the risk of subsuming individual actors' complex accounts and experiences under abstract theoretical frameworks, and would thereby correspond with my commitments to upholding the 'messiness' of social practice. Further, I felt that the standard separation of data and analysis would imply that the former could ever be read in a neutral way. On the contrary, however, I wished to make clear that the data itself only held meaning in this project in terms of my reading of it; that it could not somehow exist in isolation from my own analysis.

3.4.1 Analysing linguistic and non-linguistic artefacts

I now detail my analytical approach, commenting firstly on the linguistic, and secondly on the non-linguistic data, before going on to present my analytical procedures. Firstly, a large proportion of my data came from interviews, with spoken data reconstituted as written text. It is important here to emphasise that I see the construction of interview transcription data in much the same way as the field notes I take: as a fundamentally interpretive task. Certainly, I audio-recorded interviews in order to capture as much detail as possible, and in subsequently transcribing each interview, I included apparent redundancies such as fillers, grammatical errors, and repetitions. I also omitted punctuation marks, with the exception of question marks and ellipses [...] to indicate pauses, on the assumption that punctuating the participants' utterances would be to further impose meaning. However, as faithful as I attempted to remain to the recordings, I was conscious that the act of transcribing these interviews was inherently selective (Duranti, 2006; Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999). Indeed, the fact that I sent transcripts to participants following our interviews made me particularly wary of over-complicating these

documents, and I therefore edited out certain false starts and asides which I felt were unnecessary to the research purpose and may have been frustrating or alienating for participants to read. This acknowledgement does not detract from my intention to ensure a ‘rigorous and thorough [...] transcript’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 88) from which to work; however, it serves to emphasise further the necessary positionality of the researcher, and the degree to which this project acknowledges the inherently co-constructed and interpretive nature of social research. A sample transcript extract is included in Appendix G.

In terms of the written texts I accumulated, I followed Hull (2012: 257) in analysing the bureaucratic documents I gathered as ethnographic objects, considering them not simply as ‘vehicles of information’ but also as ‘tools’ in the construction of ‘fixed and shared meaning’. Here Hull draws on Latour’s (2005: 39) contention that documents should be looked ‘*at*’ rather than ‘*through*’, treated as mediators, as things that ‘transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning [...] they are supposed to carry’. I viewed this as a useful and productive approach to the analysis of official documentation. However, I was mindful of the need to avoid over-stating intentionality – it is not, as Darling (2014b: 493) notes, that these texts are necessarily ‘*designed*’ as mechanisms which convey specific meanings or produce particular social relations; rather their ‘power’ lies in their associations, their position in relation to ‘other things and other bodies’. And again, these associations and meanings are altered as they move, and as they are received by different social actors. Indeed, as Hull (2012: 239) notes, individuals are significantly more than simply ‘the instrumental objects of bureaucratic process’.

Turning to non-linguistic data, I drew directly on Yanow’s (2000; 1993; 1994; 2007) interpretive approach to policy analysis. As with Yanow’s work, I was keen to distance my research from traditional policy analysis, typically a technocratic exercise revolving around cost benefit analyses and oriented to the assessment of a policy’s success or otherwise (Fisher, 2003). Instead, an interpretive approach is highly contextualised – ‘situation-specific’ (Yanow, 2007) – and draws on grounding

from the philosophical traditions of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and literary theory, acknowledging therefore the researcher-analyst's participative experience in the research process; its resonance with my research principles is immediately therefore apparent. In her analyses, Yanow (2000: 62) foregrounds the contribution of built spaces to the communication of meaning, focusing on the ways in which certain settings are created or modified for policy purposes. Similarly, as with the written texts, it is important to note that Yanow (1993: 47) explicitly refutes uniformity of meaning, emphasising the fact that all artefacts – including material and symbolic elements – are 'read' by a particular person, in a particular context; thus, their meanings cannot be deemed universal or determinate. In much the same way then, my own analysis of particular 'citizenship settings' do not seek to presume that fixed meanings somehow reside 'latent' within artefacts (cf Gibson, 1986) and can thus be 'read' as fact by the analyst, but rather that my analyses of these built spaces are themselves situated accounts: for this reason, my own interpretations are juxtaposed with the accounts of the participants, thereby allowing space for multiple 'readings' to co-exist.

3.4.2 Analytical procedures

I now turn finally to the specific analytical procedures. I noted Corbin and Strauss' (2008) conceptualisation of the data analysis procedure as both artistic and scientific, agreeing with these scholars that the process with which I ordered and brought meaning to the data required a balance between imagination and 'scientific' rigour. In this sense, while I sought to acknowledge space for creativity and 'story-telling', that is not to say that I embraced analytical anarchy: structure and grounding were crucial.

I drew therefore on Corbin and Strauss' (2008: 66) account of the coding process: asking questions about the data, making comparisons across data sets, and gradually beginning to note patterns and themes within and across the data (Miles et al, 2014). I began by taking a manual approach to coding as that corresponded with my own personal preference for immersing myself in the data. As such, my first foray into

the complete data set involved pre-coding (Dörnyei, 2007: 250) – reading through all my field notes and transcripts and noting preliminary thoughts, reflections, and comments, and highlighting points that appeared initially pertinent in transcripts. From there, I moved on to the next stage of coding, reading each text multiple times whilst listening to the audio recording in the case of interview data, and highlighting features I regarded as salient. Following Harvey’s (2014) detailed explication of her analytical approach, I worked throughout in Microsoft Word, putting the original text on one side, and, in a separate but aligned document, a blank document in which I took notes – or ‘analytic memos’ (Fielding, 2002: 163) – alongside each highlighted segment: these notes summarised my insights into that particular utterance, any contextual detail I thought relevant (for instance any field notes I had taken or distinct memories I had of a notable mood, a gesture, or a change in atmosphere in that particular moment), and my reasons for viewing this utterance as salient. I hoped in this way to be able to take into account (at least some) extra-linguistic nuances and to thus avoid ‘flattening out’ (Jones et al, 2017: 64) the articulations of the participants. Figure 5 below is a screenshot of this working document:

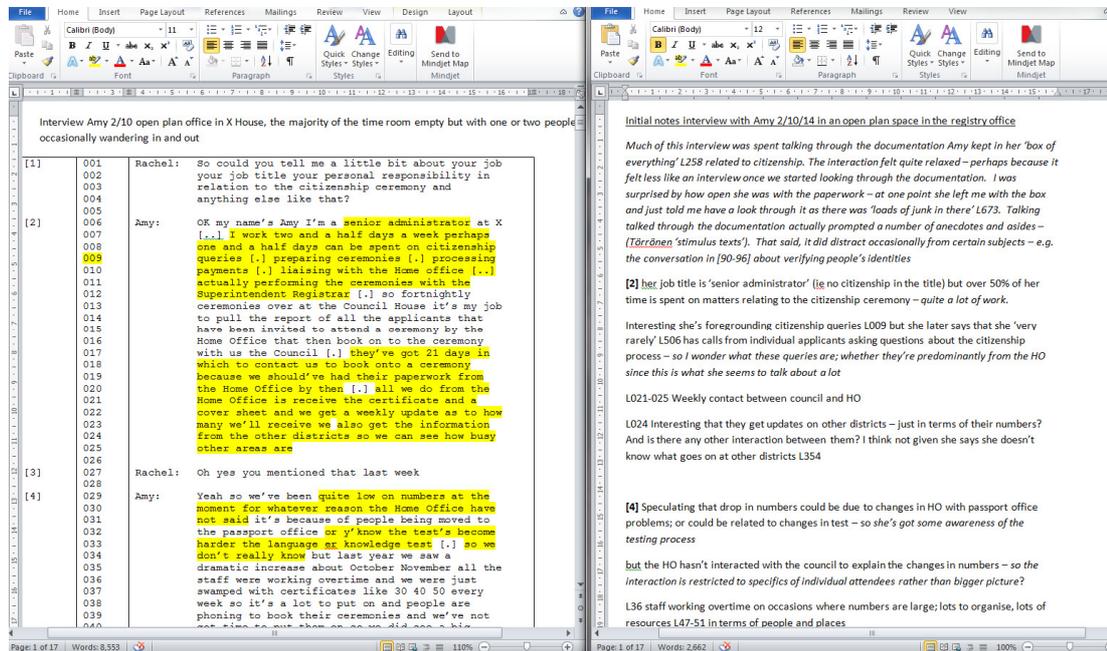


Figure 5: Analytic memos in Microsoft Word

This initial stage of analysis took place over a period of several weeks. I then began to draw out categories, or descriptive groups. Certain categories were quickly evident – for instance, the frequency with which issues such as cost were mentioned led me to believe that it would be salient to my analysis. Others took rather longer to become clear.

I should note that, as shown in Appendix G, my transcriptions included both line numbers and turn numbers, but that during coding I tended to use turn numbers, as shown in Figure 5 above: this forced me to return to the whole turn and therefore take into account the immediate co-text. In doing so, I attempted to resolve my discomfort with the idea of coding for ‘content’. I reject the assumption typical in much content analytical research that the participants’ language gives direct access to the content of their experience (Sullivan, 2012: 38), and I refute the idea that meaning is stable and consistent, directly represented through words which can thus be codified and quantified (Hardy et al, 2004: 20). Further, I assert that the ‘themes’ I constructed through this analysis did not simply ‘emerge’ from the data, but were instead actively produced and constructed by the researcher. For this reason, my intention throughout the analytical process was to maintain as much contextual data as possible, endeavouring as I coded to avoid isolating utterances both from their immediate ‘text internal’ contexts (Wodak, 2001), and also from the broader situational contexts in which they occurred.

On this account, my approach could be likened to a thematic discourse analysis (Taylor and Ussher, 2001; Singer and Hunter, 1999) which seeks to take into account the semantic content, the ‘ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations’ (Armstrong et al, 2011: 352) underpinning or informing this content, and the fundamentally situated and co-constructed nature of the accounts. This approach highlights the role of language as constitutive of meaning (Braun and Clarke, 2006) and foregrounds the dialogic nature of the research interview. It also facilitates an approach which looks to the texts (in the widest sense of the term) not as isolated units, but instead as interconnected and interrelated (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). In this sense, it enabled

me to uphold the importance of ‘intertextuality’, or the notion that ‘a text [...] cannot exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole’ (Still and Worton, 1990: 1), that all texts are both synchronically and diachronically related to other texts (Wodak, 2008). Taking this approach then emphasised the importance of constant comparison within and across different sets of data as it is through this comparative endeavour that I could recognise moments of reproduction, repetition, and dissonance.

Before beginning this next, comparative stage, however, I decided to complement my Microsoft Word-based analysis with a more technological approach, and therefore inputted all my data into NVivo. I initially saw this software package as an ‘electronic filing cabinet’ (Fielding, 2002: 170) rather than a distinct analytical tool. However, this NVivo analysis was in fact rather revealing, as I found myself on occasion reading something rather different in the data from my initial Microsoft analysis. While this may have been down to my familiarity with the data and the passage of time between readings, I do also feel that viewing my data in two distinct semiotic modes in fact enabled a more varied and complex reading. Figure 6 below shows the NVivo document during the coding process:

Name	Nodes	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
accessing participants	8	13	03/04/2015 10:41	RL	23/05/2015 20:43	RL
accessing the field	4	13	29/06/2015 20:44	RL	29/06/2015 20:51	RL
Alex 1 and 2	33	112	26/06/2015 09:12	RL	31/08/2017 11:52	RL
Amy	34	100	06/03/2015 09:29	RL	24/06/2015 17:01	RL
Anje	43	149	30/03/2015 17:15	RL	25/06/2015 12:23	RL
Bahadir	49	119	30/03/2015 17:17	RL	25/06/2015 16:35	RL
Bernie and Aileen	29	72	06/03/2015 09:49	RL	22/06/2015 16:50	RL
booking the test online	7	14	13/03/2015 14:55	RL	28/06/2015 23:28	RL
Cindy and Russ	49	112	05/06/2015 17:48	RL	31/08/2017 11:52	RL
Citizenship ceremonies fieldnotes	42	154	22/06/2015 14:43	RL	31/08/2017 11:53	RL
Deputy Lieutenant speech ceremony 28.1.15	10	12	13/03/2015 16:11	RL	30/06/2015 16:48	RL
DLL M	28	76	24/06/2015 17:23	RL	31/08/2017 11:52	RL
DLM H	15	39	24/06/2015 17:23	RL	31/08/2017 11:52	RL
Evelyn	36	74	30/03/2015 17:19	RL	26/06/2015 14:23	RL
Evelyn2	17	35	05/06/2015 17:50	RL	26/06/2015 15:16	RL
Group citizenship ceremony script October 2014	24	74	13/03/2015 16:11	RL	30/06/2015 16:28	RL
Gumas	26	61	05/06/2015 17:51	RL	31/08/2017 11:52	RL
Jane	10	22	05/06/2015 17:52	RL	25/06/2015 09:48	RL
Johannes	28	65	30/03/2015 17:34	RL	31/08/2017 11:53	RL
John	41	96	05/06/2015 17:48	RL	31/08/2017 11:52	RL
Lord Mayor N	35	115	06/03/2015 09:49	RL	25/06/2015 09:48	RL
LUK revision	4	6	13/03/2015 14:55	RL	30/06/2015 17:00	RL
Mania Elena	28	66	30/03/2015 17:20	RL	26/06/2015 21:44	RL
notes on testing materials	23	67	13/03/2015 14:56	RL	30/06/2015 17:46	RL
Private ceremony script	18	36	13/03/2015 16:12	RL	31/08/2017 11:53	RL
Saraj	43	94	30/03/2015 17:21	RL	28/06/2015 12:47	RL
Sharon	32	125	06/03/2015 09:49	RL	25/06/2015 09:48	RL
Taking the test fieldnotes 10.3.15	20	57	13/03/2015 14:56	RL	31/08/2017 11:53	RL
Thandi	35	71	30/03/2015 17:21	RL	28/06/2015 14:41	RL
step 1 at the NCS	13	20	22/06/2015 16:17	RL	22/06/2015 16:17	RL
step 2 HO acknowledgement letter	5	6	22/06/2015 16:17	RL	22/06/2015 16:17	RL
step 3 back of invitation to ceremony letter	9	16	22/06/2015 16:17	RL	22/06/2015 16:17	RL
step 3 invitation to ceremony	7	10	22/06/2015 16:18	RL	22/06/2015 16:18	RL
step 4 certificate of naturalisation	3	6	22/06/2015 16:18	RL	22/06/2015 16:18	RL
step 5 passport application acknowledgement note	0	0	22/06/2015 16:18	RL	22/06/2015 16:18	RL
step 6 info sent in new passport pack 2	0	0	22/06/2015 16:18	RL	22/06/2015 16:18	RL

Figure 6: Screenshot of NVIVO document

Having made initial notes in both data banks, I was able to begin the process of comparison across texts and to begin to draw out themes, or conceptual groups. By way of example, comments on cost soon came to be positioned in the broader theme of access (as explored in Chapter 5). Again I worked first in Microsoft Word, pulling together categories across data sets, before articulating these forward to the NVivo documents. As the latter allowed for clearer colour coding, I was then able to compare more clearly across my data, to see points at which certain utterances were coded multiple times, and to examine the ways in which these codes ‘spoke to’ one another. At this point, I began to work predominantly in NVivo, reconstructing my existing codes to take into account the themes I was formulating: in NVivo terms, renaming and reformulating nodes, and constructing ‘parent nodes’ under which to group key themes.

From here, I put together a code book in which I noted the code name, such as *access and exclusions*; a description – in which I noted things that may be included in this theme; examples from the data; and any notes, questions, or comments I thought relevant to this theme, as shown below. I found this particularly useful for bringing my data to tutorials in order to discuss themes with supervisors who did not have the same level of familiarity with the data. It also forced me to solidify my thoughts on each theme.

Code name	Description – what it might include	Example(s)	Notes
Access and exclusions	<p>Might include comments on:</p> <p>Issues surrounding access to citizen-status in a financial sense, and a cultural capital sense:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comments may relate to the overall costs of the process and the cost accessing support services (‘commodification’) ▪ May also include comments on finance unrelated to citizenship application – e.g. benefits ▪ May include comments on the construction of the test/application process as a barrier ▪ May include comments on responsibility (not just financial) 	<p>Money:</p> <p>Every participant talked about the cost of the process and the cost of the outside services required, e.g. John: <i>it’s all about money to be honest with you</i></p> <p>Thandi: <i>just a matter of waiting for the right moment because of the money of applying it’s too much</i></p> <p>Cultural capital:</p> <p>Johannes’ comment on his wife’s struggles with the <i>LUK</i> test – passed 3rd time:</p> <p><i>it’s completely new completely new completely new yes completely new [.] because if you come from somewhere different country you can’t get that story where is your origin [.] you can learn about English language but you can’t get the story of England so it’s completely different</i></p>	<p><i>Range of websites and support groups designed to help people take test – for fee of course, e.g. http://ukcitizenshipsupport.com/</i></p> <p>Consider neoliberal logics further – as central to articulation of Good Citizen</p>

Figure 7: Working codebook

I returned multiple times to my codebook over the next few months, revisiting each theme until they solidified into the four key chapters in this thesis – legitimacy, access, performance, and affect.

Conclusion

To conclude, this section has outlined the key philosophical presuppositions informing the research project, and has considered the ways in which these onto-epistemological principles influence the research focus, the methods, the ethical considerations, and the analytical approach. I have emphasised my commitment to an iterative approach to research, justifying this stance with reference firstly to pragmatic decisions in terms of policy shifts and complexities accessing the field, both of which have necessitated a somewhat ‘messy’ research chronology; and secondly to my theoretical commitments to a more data-driven approach which seeks to avoid the totalising imposition of a fixed theoretical framework. Following Harvey (2014: 152) in employing Sullivan’s (2012) useful terms here, I have given an outline of the ‘bureaucratic’ features of the analytical process, noting the procedures I followed in preparing and analysing the data, and have also explored the ‘charismatic’ features of this process, commenting on the beliefs and philosophical commitments I have brought to the analytical procedure. The following chapters, 4-7, will introduce the data, and my own interpretations and analysis of these ‘texts’.

Chapter 4: Legitimacy and (self-) legitimation: knowing the speed of the African swallow

“You really have to account for every single y’know date when you went in date when you went out [...] and because of the way that this kind of online form works you also have to have the exact date when you first entered the UK with a mind to staying [...] well y’know which date was that? And so me and my ma went back to the calendar and said was it the- cos we knew it was March 1997 but was it the 21st of March or the 28th of March? Oh we didn’t know”

Antje, January 2015

As I noted in Introduction II, and as encapsulated in this account from Antje, an academic of German origin, the application process by which citizen-candidates prove themselves suitable for the title of British citizen can be rather cumbersome. In order to demonstrate that they satisfy the necessary selection criteria, candidates must, for instance, submit suitable documentation to account for their length of stay in the UK whilst declaring any periods spent outside the country and noting every trip they have taken in the preceding five years. As Antje notes, these declarations must be made to a somewhat surprising degree of accuracy, in Antje’s case requiring a precise narration of all her trips outside the UK, and of her decision-making practices over 15 years ago. Further, in order to even begin the application process, candidates must also pass the *Life in the UK* test and document their English language proficiency, thereby providing suitable evidence of both their linguistic and their ‘cultural’ proficiency. Throughout this process, the citizen-candidate must therefore gather a mass of textual evidence sufficient to satisfy the state’s particular demands.

In this chapter, I examine this application process through the lens of the concepts of legitimacy and legitimation. In doing so, I argue that, through the application process, the citizen-candidate's legitimacy as potential citizen rests on their ability to prove themselves linguistically and culturally compatible with the apparent norms of the national polity. This is a two-way process: the state here articulates a definition of legitimacy and subsequently ratifies those deemed to meet these standards, while, in turn, the citizen-candidate is required to actively work on him/herself, to *self-legitimate*, in order to evidence their worthiness for a position in the body politic. In examining these processes of (self)-legitimation, I draw on Bourdieusian themes to consider the ways in which the notion of linguistic/cultural legitimacy may be read as an assertion of state authority, a powerful technique through which the body politic can be managed and those who fail to meet the state-defined boundaries of legitimacy screened out.

In the final section, I take insights from Foucault (2006) and Weber's (e.g. 2006) work on state bureaucracy, examining the bureaucratic practices central to the application process. Here I explore the ways in which the apparently mundane written practices central to the application process also play a crucial role in the production of the legitimate citizen, enacting certain normalising and disciplining effects through the materialisation of the state as legitimate authority, and the candidate as legitimate subject.

4.1 Legitimate language, legitimate culture

“Government alone cannot defeat extremism, so we also need to do everything we can to build up the capacity of civil society to identify, confront and defeat extremism wherever we find it.

We want to go further than ever before in helping people from isolated communities to play a full and fruitful part in British life. We plan a step change in the way we help people to learn the English language. There will be new incentives and

penalties, a sharp reduction in funding for translation services, and a significant increase in the funding available for English language training.

We will seize the opportunities provided by the internet to promote British values. We will support civil society organisations who want to fight back against extremism online”

(Home Secretary Theresa May, March 2015)

In a speech entitled ‘A Stronger Britain, Built On Our Values’, delivered in March 2015 and, notably, archived in both the gov.uk ‘Community integration’ and ‘Counter-terrorism’ sections, then Home Secretary Theresa May set out the government’s latest, and ‘completely new’ counter-terrorism strategy. In it, she articulated the threats supposedly faced by the British population from ‘terrorism and extremism’, and outlined the Home Office’s commitment to building a partnership between government, individuals, families, communities, internet companies, and civil society to defeat the danger posed by the so-called ‘spectrum of extremism’ – ‘violent and non-violent, ideological and non-ideological, Islamist and neo-Nazi hate and fear’. Her central position, and the ‘starting point’ of the new strategy, was to emphasise ‘the proud promotion of British values’, the position that rule of law, democracy, equality, free speech, and respect for minorities are the core principles of British life, and that, significantly, *extremism* should be defined as ‘the vocal or active opposition’ to these, ‘fundamental’ British values.

After outlining the government’s intention to promote these values actively and systematically, May then turned to the importance of constructing a stronger civil society, building its capacity to ‘identify, confront and defeat extremism’. Here she made the connection with English language learning, announcing plans to incentivise and penalise those with insufficient language proficiency levels, to reduce funding

for translation services, and to increase the funding available for English language training.¹³ Certainly, this is not the first time that UK administrations have voiced concerns around English language proficiency amongst newer arrivals and more settled communities; indeed this was a central feature of the Labour government's Community Cohesion agenda, with successive White papers (Home Office, 2001a; Home Office, 2001b; Home Office, 2003) pointing to language expertise as a central plank in the construction of a cohesive society. Where May's more recent speech perhaps differs however, is in the unambiguous association between English language proficiency and national security. Within this speech, the non-English speaker is not simply positioned as a potential non-contributor to Britain's 'economic, social and political life' (Home Office, 2001b), but is rather marked as a potentially isolated figure, separated from the British community and, as such, a potential risk to the very safety and security of the nation state. Indeed, in a comparable 2015 speech, David Cameron in fact levelled threats specifically towards Muslim women to either demonstrate their English language proficiency or risk deportation (Payton, 2016). In these pronouncements, the (racialised) individual who does not prove themselves capable of demonstrating both their values and their English language skills is articulated as a threatening Other, a non-integrant of existential concern to the nation.

And this focus on both British Values and English language proficiency is consistent with the changes introduced in the citizenship process in 2013, as discussed in section iii, in which all applicants must now demonstrate *both* their knowledge of life in the UK and its values *and* their English language skills. It is this stipulation that I will focus on in the following sections, drawing on Bourdieu's (1977; 1991) notion of 'legitimate language' to consider the ways in which the demonstration of a certain type of both linguistic and cultural knowledge now operates as a marker of legitimacy, as evidence that the citizen-candidate has verified their willingness to

¹³ It is worth noting here that the government has simultaneously made significant cuts to Further Education institutions, and, as such, this promise to increase ESOL funding appears rather disingenuous (Sykes, 2017).

integrate into a certain cultural and linguistic norm and can thus reasonably be granted a place within the national group, and the title of citizen. I will begin by examining the English language criteria before drawing on interview data from citizenship applicants and citizenship officials to examine the ways in which these individuals themselves articulate a notion of linguistic legitimacy. I will then turn to an analysis of the Knowledge of Life in the UK criteria, examining the ways in which the *Life in the UK* test operates as a marker of cultural legitimacy.

4.1.1 Evidencing linguistic competence 1: *what English is legitimate?*

In order to embark on the citizenship application process, potential candidates must provide suitable evidence to demonstrate that their English language proficiency accords to level B1 or above. As I noted in footnote 2 in section iii, allowance is made for those who wish to demonstrate their proficiency in Scottish Gaelic or Welsh instead, although, as Anderson (2013: 105) points out, this is largely symbolic – as of 2010, there had in fact been no applications for tests in either of these languages, and there is no information on Gaelic or Welsh on the gov.uk website. In its opening section – ‘check if you can apply’ – the gov.uk website, which all the participants I spoke to in this study relied on heavily, carries links embedded within links, directing the reader to multiple pages and sources which detail the various ways in which candidates can satisfy this particular criteria. Here, applicants are informed that they must provide evidence to prove either that they have attained an English language qualification at level B1 or above, or that they have completed a degree taught or researched in English. In both scenarios, an appropriate certificate must be submitted demonstrating both that the qualification itself is Home Office approved, and that it was attained at an accredited testing institution.

If they wish to provide an English language qualification, candidates can follow a link to a 19 page document which specifies every single approved test centre and qualification, both in the UK and abroad. The list of acceptable qualifications has been revised (again) recently with the guidelines introduced on April 6th 2015 limiting the range of certificates accepted by the Home Office; now the only

qualifications deemed to satisfy the Secure English Language Test (SELT) criteria are those awarded by either the Trinity or Cambridge awarding bodies. And it is somewhat surprising to note that there are only 25 accredited test centres across the whole of the UK, at least 8 of which are in London, meaning that individuals can undertake language training wherever they choose, but may be required to travel many miles in order to take the test required to evidence this training. If applicants want instead to provide evidence of previous academic training in an English language medium, they must include both their original degree certificate, and either:

- a printout from the [points-based calculator](#) with the equivalent level of your degree and the level of English
- an original letter or certificate from [UK NARIC](#) confirming the equivalent level of your degree, plus an official letter from your university with your name and degree confirming that your degree was taught in English
- an original and official certificate from your university confirming the degree was taught or researched in a majority English-speaking country (except Canada)

Figure 8: Evidence of academic training in English

Figure 8 above, adapted from the gov.uk website (2017), indicates the three pieces of documentation available to evidence language proficiency. I should note that the ‘points-based calculator’ is a somewhat complex webpage which currently offers information for four different tiers of visa application but, as shown in Figure 9 below – a screenshot from the gov.uk website on 22.12.15 – makes no clear mention of citizenship applications.

- Points-based calculator
- Contact us

Points-based calculator

This tool allows you to calculate how many points you may get, and indicates whether you may be eligible to work or study in the UK under the points-based system.

You should read the Help link below to determine who can use the points-based calculator and the terms and conditions of this site before using the tool.

If you are applying under Tier 2 or Tier 5 you must have a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS). If you are applying under Tier 4 you must have a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). If you do not have either a certificate of sponsorship or a confirmation of acceptance for studies you may not have enough points to pass this tool, but you can still use it to calculate your points.

If you are a national of a country from within the European Economic Area (EEA) you do not need to apply to work in the UK. See the section of the GOV.UK website on [EU, EEA and Commonwealth citizens](#) for more information (opens in a new window).

The points-based calculator should take about 10 minutes to complete, and your points for each section will show at the top of the page. Your session will time out after 30 minutes of inactivity.

Disclaimer

We make every effort to make sure the points-based calculator is accurate, but it is designed only to give an indication of the number of points you might score. We do not guarantee that the points shown by the calculator reflect the full policy or that they are fully up-to-date. The points-based calculator and accompanying web pages do not guarantee a successful application and should not be taken to mean that you will score the points shown. If you wish to make an application under the Points Based System, you must always refer to the latest relevant policy and guidance documents for the full details. We will make a decision once we have received a full application and supporting evidence. This decision will include calculating the number of points your application scores in accordance with the current rules and policy.

Your application

Select the Tier for which you are applying.

Please select

- Please select
- Tier 1 (High-value migrants)
- Tier 2 (Skilled workers)
- Tier 4 (Students)
- Tier 5 (Youth Mobility and Temporary Workers)

Next

Figure 9: Points-based calculator

Given that, as shown above, there is no explicit direction here for those applying for *citizenship*, the site may prove rather difficult to navigate. If candidates choose instead to use the UK NARIC service to ratify their qualification, they must pay a potentially prohibitive fee for this facility, currently standing at £59.40 for a 10-15 day (approximately) service but with a fast-track, 24-hour option costing £196.80. I will examine the impact of these hidden citizenship costs further in Chapter 5; of significance here however, is the lengths candidates must go to in order to attain the evidence necessary to secure Home Office approval; indeed, for those who studied many years previously, or in a less bureaucratically engaged institution, it may not in fact be possible to acquire suitable certification and a separate English language test may be the only option.

As is clear here, the particular evidence required from applicants to document their language proficiency is carefully policed; only certain qualifications and documentations are officially regarded as legitimate, and anything outside these boundaries will be summarily rejected. Notably however, these impositions are not absolute; indeed, there are three categories of candidate who may not be required to evidence their language proficiency: those who are over 65; those who have a ‘long-term physical or mental condition’ (no further details on this exemption are provided on the gov.uk platform, except that medical evidence is necessary to certify the individual’s condition); and finally, those from a national background exempt from the criterion, as detailed in Figure 10 below:

You won't need to prove your knowledge of English if you're a citizen of:	
Antigua and Barbuda	Jamaica
Australia	New Zealand
The Bahamas	Republic of Ireland (for citizenship only)
Barbados	St Kitts and Nevis
Belize	St Lucia
Canada	St Vincent and the Grenadines
Dominica	Trinidad and Tobago
Grenada	USA
Guyana	

Figure 10: National exemptions

Notably, several of the UK’s former colonies, including Zimbabwe and India, are excluded from this list, despite the fact that many individuals from these countries will have been educated significantly, if not entirely, in an English-language medium. I will explore this anomaly further in the next section.

In examining the association between perceived, or rather ‘evidenced’, linguistic competence and assumed suitability for the title of British citizen, theoretical insight

can usefully be drawn from Bourdieu's work on legitimate language. In his critique of Linguistics as a discipline, Bourdieu counters a view of language which centres on concepts of grammar, accuracy, relations of communication, and competence, with a focus instead on sociological concerns, on issues of power, symbolic capital, and legitimacy. He speaks not of "the" language', but rather of the '*legitimate language*' (1977: 646) by which he argues that 'the' *official* language of a political unit is not simply an a-political fact, but is rather bound up with the state and its social relations, codified and imposed by those with the authority to do so; the language here 'impos[ing] itself on the whole population as the only legitimate language' (1991: 45). This imposition, part of the construction of a linguistic community, relies on coercive instruments such as educational institutions, grammar authorities, bodies of jurists and the like, and is central to the establishment of 'relations of linguistic domination' within a given society (1977: 652). And, as Bourdieu goes on to argue, diplomas, certificates, and other forms of academic qualification then confer on their holders a certain 'legally guaranteed value' (1986: 88), known and verified as recognised symbolic capital (1989).

While Bourdieu's focus rested more specifically on language varieties, with his object of study particularly the dominant language of the *élite* and the attendant suppression of non-official dialects (e.g. Bourdieu, 1977), his work still offers a useful theoretical account on which to draw here. In the case of the language criteria in the citizenship regime, the Home Office's insistence that citizen-candidates demonstrate a particular level of English language proficiency, and, crucially, that increasing restrictions are now placed on the specific language qualifications accepted, speaks to the imposition by the state of a linguistic norm upon the national community. English, or rather, a particular form and type of Trinity- or Cambridge-certified English language proficiency, becomes a marker of legitimacy, a signifier of an individual's suitability for access to the body politic. And, as Theresa May articulated in her March 2015 speech, those who cannot prove (in the Home Office's strictly defined terms) their language skills, are deemed unfit for membership of this national community. Where, in the past, an individual's ability to communicate in English would simply be assessed informally by a state official, as discussed in

section iii, this competence is now standardised, ratified by only two sanctioned bodies accorded the authority to decide what is, and who demonstrates, the appropriate phonological, lexical, grammatical, and communicative skill (Trinity, 2015).

And yet, of course, language competence is no neutral descriptor, and the training ESOL learners receive does not necessarily revolve solely around tangible elements such as grammatical formations but can include a rather more subtle and intangible focus. John, who came to the UK as an asylum seeker from Eritrea, points this out in our interview when he explains his understanding of the test:

one test man or examiner is coming I don't know in 2 weeks or 3 weeks he's coming in there and he ask you [...] he just observe you when you conversation each other and I think he's he's observing 'is he using the proper English? Is he using the body language? Is he talking a good thing?' something like that so that's what they do

The 'proper English' in John's description may include formal features of the language – the grammatical, lexical, and phonological elements found in all ELT materials – which are generally viewed as relatively neutral formalities. However, these formal features are themselves ideologically based with only an élite few accorded the right to decide what is 'correct' language and what is not. The locus of Standard English has long resided in the South East of England, and this so-called 'BBC English' may not correspond with the grammatical, syntactical, or phonological practices of those outside the South East. As such, while this aspect of the language testing criteria may appear at first glance relatively unproblematic, Bourdieu's notion of legitimacy still applies.

Further, on John's understanding, the examiner in his English language test not only attended to these points of accuracy, but also noted both body language and 'talking a good thing', aspects which may be encompassed in Trinity's

undefined 'communicative competence' category but which are rather more problematic to determine. Crucially, there is a suggestion in John's account here that a normative element may be present in the assessment, that individuals may be measured not only on their ability to use the 'correct' form of the language, but also on the content of their speech, the degree to which the content of their conversation conforms to Trinity/Cambridge sanctioned beliefs and ideas.

While John's comments could simply be dismissed as mere misunderstanding of the assessment criteria, there is a growing body of research contending that the ESOL classroom is increasingly being co-opted as a space in which government policy agendas can be enacted (Baynham and Simpson, 2010; Ullman, 2010; Cooke and Simpson, 2009; Han et al, 2010). And in light of both Foucauldian (e.g. 1977) and Bernsteinian (1996) comments on the construction of the pedagogic subject through the regulative technologies of the classroom, this leads to the rather uncomfortable suggestion that, in Bernstein's terms, the very 'consciousnesses' of ESOL participants are here controlled, measured, and trained; the proper individual thus constituted within this pedagogic site. In this sense, certain forms of reasoning, character, conduct, and particular social values are then legitimated as, in John's terms 'good', while others are rejected. Returning to the theme of the chapter then, the legitimate language here encompasses not only a particular grammatical or lexical form, but may also include a rather more complex set of values and behaviours, trained and assessed through the citizenship regime. On this account, the English language criteria can thus be viewed as a method by which the state can enact control over both the communicative and perhaps even the moral practices of the national community, and screen out those who lack access to, or cannot prove, this particular linguistic capital.

4.1.2 Evidencing linguistic competence 2: *whose English is legitimate?*

For those applicants able to draw on their national background to satisfy the language requirement, there is, of course, no imposition here. Russ and Cindy, both from the US, passed through this part of the application process without question and, although much of our conversation was actually spent remarking on the many differences they have noticed between UK and US language practices, they are able simply to laugh about the multiple confusions and miscommunications they have encountered since arriving in England, as Russ noted:

[it's the] same language but different idioms and
different rules yeah the little things and different words
[.] we have lots of humorous stories about confusions

In contrast, however, and in accordance with the national exemptions set out in Figure 10, Thandi and Saroj, both of whom were raised and schooled in an English-language medium in Zimbabwe and India respectively, were required to prove their legitimacy as English language speakers. This discrepancy speaks back to the racialised practices through which Commonwealth citizens were excluded from British citizenship, as discussed in section 1.4.1. Indeed, while for several decades linguists (Kachru, 1986; Jenkins, 2006; Kumaravadivelu, 2012) have been discussing questions around the notion of World Englishes and the inclusion of diverse voices from so-called Outer and Expanding Circle contexts, an assumption of 'native' speaker authority clearly still underlies the language proficiency requirements in the citizenship regime. As Pennycook (1998) notes, there exists an 'indissoluble link' between ELT and colonial practices, with the continuing recapitulation of neo-colonial relations in English language training and testing resulting in a narrow, perhaps indeed discriminatory version of what is deemed 'standard' English. Here, English is 'owned' by British and North American speakers, and, as such, Thandi's Zimbabwean English and Saroj's Indian English are automatically deemed non-standard, or illegitimate.

This apparent inequity provides further support for Bourdieu's (1991: 43) criticism of the myth of 'linguistic communism', the illusion he perceives in much linguistic theory in which language is deemed a 'universal treasure' to which all have equal access. This, he argues (ibid: 55), fails to recognise the social nature of language whereby those speakers who lack the '*legitimate* competence are de facto excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required, or are condemned to silence' (*my italics*). In Thandi and Saroj's case, their English does not correspond to the version of the language legitimated by the Home Office, and, as such, both women are required to pass through the legitimating process of ESOL training and examination in order to be afforded the right to speak, and the right to membership in the national community.

Saroj's case is particularly notable as she had, in fact, gained a degree in an English-language speaking institution and should thus have been exempt from the language requirements on account of her educational background, if not her language background. And yet, this particular element of the application process is beset with inconsistencies and contradictions. As Saroj explains, both she and her husband attained Bachelors and Masters qualifications at the same Indian university. However, her husband was exempt from sitting an English language examination because his BA programme lasted 4 years followed by a 1 year MA, whereas Saroj's qualification was a 3 year BA programme followed by a 2 year MA, and this difference in Bachelors time-scale meant that she was required to evidence her English language proficiency while he was not. She was sanguine about the apparent inequity, simply saying 'yeah y'know I've studied more than my husband but I had to do the English language test', and later:

er [...] I didn't feel too upset about it it was ok but
yeah if they can recognise all the Bachelor degrees it
would be beneficial

I was surprised to hear so little frustration from Saroj on this matter, although I note the concerns she expressed to me lest she offend me in our interview (as noted in

section 3.3), thus some of this positivity may have been due to politeness. However, it seems somewhat absurd that Saroj found herself paying both for a language test and for a package of books and CDs prior to the test, all of which, as an expert speaker of English, she admitted she found rather basic. And yet, Saroj accepted this as a necessary part of her own self-legitimation in the application process, submitting to the seemingly arbitrary whims of state bureaucrats by accepting the decision that her existing degree did not demonstrate her legitimacy as an English language speaker.

I do not wish here to elide Saroj's agency entirely: acquiescing to these demands is not necessarily indicative of absolute submission. Saroj is a highly educated individual with an expert level of English language proficiency, thus it seems possible that she could have found ways to challenge these bureaucratic discrepancies had she wished; indeed, she declared herself broadly unperturbed by the imposition. That said, however, it may take significant confidence to challenge the demands of the elusive state, and for many reasons – both in terms of personal character, but also broader structural issues around gender, race, and lack of citizen-status – Saroj may have found it impossible to consider making such direct contestations.

On the question of agency however, I note here that the bureaucratic inconsistencies experienced by Saroj are indicative of exactly such agentic practices amongst citizenship officials. Indeed, the legitimating practices of the citizenisation process are not enacted by a totalising structural apparatus within which the human subject disappears (Giroux, 1983), but are rather a decidedly human endeavour, subject to the particular decision-making practices of the individual civil servants involved. With some luck, I was able to acquire a copy of the citizenship application guidelines published for Home Office staff rather than the public (Home Office, 2015), and there it is clear that discretion is both available and in fact necessary in certain applications where exemption may be possible. Regarding mental and physical conditions, for example, Home Office staff are informed that they 'must

exercise discretion' if the applicant suffers from a long-term illness or disability that 'severely restricts their ability to learn English' (ibid: 9). No actual medical conditions are listed here; rather, 'each application must be considered on its own merits' (ibid: 9). For the age requirement, whilst public sites state that exemptions are available for the over-65s, it in fact appears that this may be rather more flexible: Home Office staff are told (ibid: 7) that those aged between 60 and 64 may, in fact, also be eligible for exemption *if* it is deemed 'likely' that the time they will require to reach the English language standard will take them over the age of 65. Finally, there is the somewhat remarkable provision for the Secretary of State *her/himself* to ratify that an applicant has sufficient knowledge of English to be exempt from the requirements; s/he simply has to 'confirm in writing that a person has sufficient knowledge of language and life in the UK' (ibid: 12) and the requirement is waived. While the guidelines note that no such exemption has yet been made, the fact is that legal provisions for such discretion clearly exist in the documentation. Here then, there is space for negotiated acts of agency amongst citizenship officials, who carry the authority to decide whose legitimacy as an English language speaker must be evidenced, and whose can be left unquestioned.

4.1.3 Articulating the national culture: *what* 'cultural' knowledge is legitimate?

Along with proving their English language proficiency, all citizen-candidates must now also demonstrate their Knowledge of Life (KOL) in the UK; however, exemptions on this requirement are only possible for two of the criteria outlined in the previous section – age and disability – not nationality. The vast majority of candidates must therefore meet the KOL requirement by passing the *Life in the UK* test, issued and overseen nationally by *learnirect* and administered at a small number of accredited centres (more on which in Chapter 5). As with the language qualifications described above, this 'cultural' knowledge is also carefully policed: regardless of the length of time candidates have lived in the UK, the lives, relationships, careers they have forged, and indeed any qualifications, work experience, or other documentable achievements they may have made in that time,

only tests taken at *learnirect* centres and documented by the single piece of paper produced at the centre on passing the test will be accepted as evidence of their knowledge of national life.

The following section will outline the test itself, and consider again the processes of self-legitimation candidates must undertake in order to prove they can understand, accept, and reproduce this imposed cultural narrative.

As I explained in section iii, candidates can prepare for the test by purchasing up to three books – the *Guide for New Residents*, the *Official Study Guide*, and the *Official Practice Questions and Answers* book – and the content covered in these training materials and in the test itself includes, as of 2013, five sections. The content of the *Guide for New Residents* is laid out in the table below, along with a brief commentary on each section and the number of pages dedicated to each:

Contents
<u>The values and principles of the UK: 6 pages</u>
Covering the ‘responsibilities and privileges of being a British citizen or permanent resident of the UK’, this section introduces the five ‘fundamental principles of British life’:
<i>Democracy</i>
<i>The rule of law</i>
<i>Individual liberty</i>
<i>Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs</i>
<i>Participation in community life</i>
These are the so-called ‘values’ which the Home Office deems crucial to British life, and to which, as discussed in section 4.1, any opposition is considered

extremist. Since 2014, these values have also been drawn into the mainstream curriculum and must now not only be ‘respected’ but also ‘actively promoted’ (DfE, 2014: 3) at all educational levels, from nursery upwards.

The section also presents the words of the pledge of allegiance to be made in the citizenship ceremony (more on which in Chapter 6), and lays out the ‘responsibilities and freedoms [...] shared by all those living in the UK’:

The reader is told they ‘should’:

respect and obey the law; respect the rights of others, including their right to their own opinions; treat others with fairness; look after yourself and your family; look after the area in which you live and the environment

And that, ‘in return, the UK offers’:

freedom of belief and religion; freedom of speech; freedom from unfair discrimination; a right to a fair trial; a right to join in the election of a government

What is the UK?: 2 pages

This very brief section states the four countries which constitute the UK, but unapologetically goes on to declare that the words ‘British’ or ‘British Isles’ will be used throughout the book to refer to everyone in the UK.

It also makes the unequivocal claim that several British overseas territories exist, including St Helena and the Falkland Islands. There is no mention throughout the book of any dispute or complexity in this matter.

A long and illustrious history: 56 pages

This is the lengthiest section of the book and includes a broadly chronological account of selected events in the UK's historical development. Sub-sections are entitled:

early Britain; the Middle Ages; the Tudors and Stuarts; a global power; the 20th Century; Britain since 1945

Each sub-section includes multiple short paragraphs outlining supposedly key events and figures, all of which the reader is required to memorise, and is presented entirely as unambiguous fact, including such unexplored comments as 'since 2000, British armed forces have been engaged in the global fight against international terrorism and against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction' (68). The slave trade is mentioned, with a brief comment on the 'horrible' conditions and 'terrible treatment' slaves received, and a longer paragraph on Britain's abolitionist movement (43). There is, however, no mention of the role of slave resistance – the abolition of slavery presented as a 'white initiative' (Aradau, 2015) – and no single question on this particular subject in the Official Practice Questions and Answers book so I am unsure if the area is ever actually tested.

While a historical chapter was included in the two previous versions of the *LUK* guidebook (more on which momentarily), history was not actually tested in the examination itself until this most recent, 2013, iteration. Questions from this history chapter now typically account for approximately 1/3 of the whole exam (Brooks, 2013).

A modern thriving society: 48 pages

This section includes a broad range of comments on issues such as: population growth, demographics, and equality in the UK; religion – including the constitutional link between Church and State; various Christian and non-Christian religious festivals; sports; arts and culture, including stanzas from several UK poets; leisure – people in the UK seemingly enjoy gardening, shopping, cooking, film, and television; and places of interest.

The UK government, the law and your role: 46 pages

Sub-sections here include:

The development of British democracy: including brief comment on the expansion of the franchise following the Chartist campaign, and the inclusion of women in the franchise;

The British constitution: with comments on the role of the monarchy and the parliamentary system;

The government: including information on the civil service, local government, and devolved powers;

The UK and international institutions: the Commonwealth, EU, Council of Europe, UN, and NATO;

Respecting the law: differentiating civil and criminal law and the role of the police and courts;

Fundamental principles: mentioning Britain as a signatory to the European Convention on Human Rights, and including specific sections on equal opportunities, domestic violence, FGM, and forced marriage;

Your role in the community: unsurprisingly beginning with values and

responsibilities, noting ways to be a good neighbour and volunteering opportunities, and including a final section on ‘looking after the environment’ – with recycling and shopping locally given as key practices.

Interestingly, although the section begins with an outline of the UK as a democracy, followed by detail on its system of government, there is a somewhat surprising concurrent focus on the Crown; indeed, the photograph chosen for the chapter’s title page is of the Queen in ceremonial regalia at an unspecified event, and the reader is later told that the Queen ‘provides a focus for national identity and pride, which was demonstrated through the celebrations of her Jubilee’ (122).

The section also includes some rather more practical information on the electoral register and ways to vote, on the legal advice available from the Citizens Advice Bureau, on National Insurance numbers, and on the taxation system, and is the first and only point at which English language is mentioned in the whole preparation book with the comment that voluntary activities can give people a chance to practise their English.

Figure 11: Content outline from the official *LUK* Guidebook (2013)

Within this text then, ‘Britishness’ and British life are defined, the knowledge deemed fundamental to UK life here codified. And yet, of course, any attempt to produce a single text encapsulating a nation’s ‘history and culture’ (David Cameron, 2011) is an inherently ideological act, inevitably requiring certain choices and decisions in its production. Indeed, this version of the text and its associated preparatory materials is, in fact, the third iteration of the *Life in the UK* texts: after the first manifestation in 2004, the content was updated in 2007 following the attacks on the London underground, and again in 2013 after the coalition government took office. Certain content has remained relatively consistent within each version, for instance all three editions contain a profile of the UK population, and a section on

the British constitution which outlines the role of the monarch and the system of government. However, with each new edition, and particularly the most recent, significant modifications have been introduced.

It is not within the scope of this project to conduct an in-depth content analysis of the 2004, 2007, and 2013 versions;¹⁴ however, it is certainly worth noting the somewhat surprising removal in the 2013 version of information about ‘the NHS, educational qualifications, the subjects taught in schools, (and) how to report a crime or contact an ambulance’ (Brooks, 2013); and Brooks (ibid: 26) notes an 85% reduction in information about education in the 3rd edition. These more everyday concerns are noticeable in their absence, replaced instead, as explained in the table, by a prioritisation of Britain’s supposedly ‘illustrious’ history. Interestingly, the government’s response to a direct query on this matter was to declare that individuals taking the test should have been living in the country for long enough to accumulate knowledge on everyday issues such as ‘public transport, credit cards, and job interviews’, and, as such, these facts should be excluded from the test in favour of information that migrants living in the UK would not necessarily be expected to know (Brooks, ibid: 24). In this, there is an explicit acknowledgement that the purpose of the test is not to ascertain the candidate’s awareness and understanding of the everyday, but to examine their ability to absorb and reproduce a rather different sort of knowledge.

Given this statement, it is perhaps unsurprising some of the test-takers themselves appeared bemused, if not irritated, by the content of the test. Alex, an academic who describes herself as a ‘citizen of the world’, (unlike in Theresa May’s comments quoted in the Introduction, this title is invoked in a positive tone) expressed real anger and frustration with the test when she said: ‘you have to forget your background knowledge and you have to forget common sense and you have to memorise the answer to the stupid questions’. Here,

¹⁴ See White’s (2008) in-depth comparative analysis of the 2004 and 2007 tests; and Brooks’ (2013) examination of the 2013 edition and the differences between this and previous versions.

she articulated resentment towards the very construct of the test, as she went on to say:

basically the way to pass the test forget everything you actually know about y'know culture and society everything you know in the real world just forget that memorise the text but above all memorise the example questions

For Alex, there was a sense that the content of the test, the presumed ‘culture’ of the UK, is arbitrary, totally unrelated to the cultural and social practices she had experienced in her 15 years living in the country, and simply imposed on the learner who has no option but to accept and memorise this essentially useless information. Indeed, for several interviewees, such as Johannes, John, and Evelyn, much of the test was, in Johannes’ words ‘completely new completely new completely new yes completely new’. Here, Johannes, who entered the UK as an asylum seeker from Eritrea, was describing his wife’s engagement with the testing materials and the difficulties she faced in attempting to pass the test, despite having lived in the UK for several years. His repetition of the phrase ‘completely new’ indicates the strength of feeling here and his sense that the test content does not, in fact, relate to the sorts of knowledge they had acquired in their everyday lives and interactions. In Johannes’ view, the test serves no practical purpose – as he said with some exasperation: ‘it’s not helping me as well [.] if you tell me what’s in Norman days what’s gonna help me?’ – and should instead be replaced by a comprehensive programme of education to give newer arrivals an ‘idea how the people living’ now. In much the same way, Bahadir, an academic of Turkish origin, dismissed the entire test with the words: ‘so y'know I memorised all the irrelevant stuff’. Although he did not specifically state a preference for questions relating to more practical, everyday knowledge, there is a clear sense in Bahadir’s words that the content of the test bears little direct relation to his actual life.

And corroborating this perception of the test content as fundamentally inconsequential to their lived reality in the UK, several of the individuals I spoke to in the focus group, and those I interviewed directly, had taken the test to their British-born friends, assessing their knowledge of the content and finding, in every case, that this was lacking. Evelyn, who came to the UK from the Philippines to work in a nursing home, commented: ‘I have since tried a number of these questions on various English friends and they all fail miserably’, and Alex: ‘I tried some of these questions on English academics and they didn’t answer correctly’. Bahadir took this one step further, recounting with great delight his decision to throw a party after being granted citizen-status in which he invited several British-born friends and held a pub quiz with his *Life in the UK* test materials (more on which in Chapter 8). While he could not rebel against the test itself, his moment of contestation here was possible through mockery; indeed, he rather pertinently noted: ‘I think we handled it in a very British way by mocking the whole thing taking the mick out of it’.

Further, it is not solely the seemingly arbitrary content but also the *way* in which this cultural knowledge is tested and candidates must thus prepare themselves that bears further comment. Although the test-taker is informed that the Guidebook (TSO, 2013) will ‘help the reader integrate into society and play a full role in your local community’, the actual worth of the test in achieving these aims may be regarded as limited at best. The test itself consists of only 24 questions, from which candidates must achieve a minimum of 75% (or 18 out of 24 correct answers) in order to pass. Given the length of the preparatory book – 163 pages – and the sheer volume of information included within the guidebook, this seems a remarkably scant number of questions. Candidates are given 45 minutes to complete the test; however in my conversations with test-takers and my own experience at the testing centre, it appears that the majority complete the test within 10 to 15 minutes, again indicating its rather insubstantial nature.

In terms of the test questions themselves, these may appear in four different forms, which the *Official Practice Questions and Answers* book (Mitchell, 2013) summarises with corresponding examples, as follows:



1) Select **one correct answer from four options**, for instance:

Which is the most popular sport in the UK?

A Football

B Rugby

C Golf

D Tennis

(The correct answer is A.)

2) Decide **whether a statement is true or false**:

Is the statement below TRUE or FALSE?

The daffodil is the national flower of Wales

(The correct answer is TRUE.)

3) Select **the statement which you think is correct** from a choice of two:

Which of the following statements is correct?

A Shakespeare wrote 'To be or not to be'.

B Shakespeare wrote 'We will fight them on the beaches'.

(The correct answer is A.)

4) And finally, select **two correct answers from four options**:

Which TWO political parties formed the coalition government in 2010?

A Conservatives

B Labour

C Communists

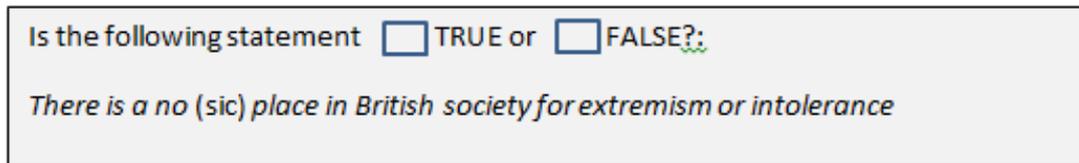
D Liberal Democrats

(The correct answer is A and D.)

Figure 12: Sample *Life in the UK* test Questions

Both the first and second questions here would be found in the 'Modern, Thriving Society' chapter, while the third cuts across the 'Modern, Thriving Society' chapter and the History chapter where Churchill's (in)famous beaches speech is introduced. The fourth example question, with the remarkable 'Communists' option, would be found in the final, UK Government chapter.

Questions on issues such as the values and principles introduced in the first chapter of the Guidebook and so prioritised by the current administration include such examples as (Mitchell, 2013: 77):



Is the following statement TRUE or FALSE?;

There is a no (sic) place in British society for extremism or intolerance

Figure 13: Sample question on British values

Here candidates would be required to navigate the somewhat surprising typographical error to determine that the correct answer should apparently be TRUE, as the example book goes on to explain ‘there is no place for extremism or intolerance. British society is founded on fundamental values and principles which all those living in the UK respect and support’ (Mitchell, 2013: 80). Interestingly, candidates are not required to pledge their support for these values, or to make any statement regarding their own attitudes towards the principles outlined; instead they are simply obliged to recognise which so-called values the government has defined as fundamental to British life.

As a brief aside on this point however, test-takers are informed on the gov.uk website that they can re-take the test as many times as they wish (at a cost of £50 per test; see section vii for an outline of fees). Interestingly, however, the document issued for Home Office *staff* introduced in section 4.1.2 does state that the number of attempted tests will be recorded on an individual’s Home Office records. Although it does not elaborate on the purpose or potential use of this information, and caution is certainly needed in speculating as to why the Home Office may wish to retain this data, I found this admission remarkable: it does lead me to consider whether a candidate who fails the test several times, or who fails repeatedly on certain, specific questions, could find their application delayed, examined in more detail, or perhaps even declined.

4.1.4 The *Life in the UK* test as reassuring, ritualistic project

Whether this speculation is accurate or not, the rather insubstantial nature of the test itself, and the Home Office's own admission that the intention is to test candidates on issues they would not necessarily have learnt through daily life in the UK, leads me to draw two related conclusions: firstly, that the test can be described as a ritualistic project designed to impose a certain version of UK life rather than a learning tool constructed with pedagogic concern; and secondly, that the test operates as a powerful 'technology of reassurance' (Fortier, 2008b: 101), a means through which to reassure 'established nationals' that citizenship is not available for *all* – that, as Byrne (2014) notes, access to citizenship is not easily attained. This public declaration in turn works to comfort the concerned polity that all new citizens are willing to work on themselves, to take the time, effort, and money to prove their credentials before being accorded access to the body politic, a point I will return to again in Chapter 5.

To illustrate this point, the entire test consists of multiple choice questions on 'facts' about the UK, giving examinees no opportunity to elaborate, question, or contest the content of the examination, the statements within presented as incontrovertible fact. Certainly, questions on the birth dates of certain key figures or the number of parliamentary constituencies may appear relatively incontestable (although, as Brooks (2013) notes, a number of factual errors have in fact been made on such topics in each version of the test, for instance, the claim that Northern Ireland is part of Great Britain in the 2004 text); however, the choice of which (or rather whose) UK history to include, which 'key figures' to reference, or which 'values or principles' to define as British, is somewhat more complex. As Chisari (2012) contends in her analysis of the Australian citizenship test, the particular version of history constructed within their most recent test omits any detail about colonisation and indigenous dispossession, thus rendering any perspective other than the dominant 'Anglo' narrative deviant. In much the same way, the *Life in the UK* test presents a fixed version of 'truths' about the nation which are defined and coded as

indisputably correct (Blackledge, 2009b) thus allowing the state to ‘objectify’ (Löwenheim and Gazit, 2009) the histories, values, and truths it chooses to affirm.

Through the test and its associated materials then, certain knowledge is positioned as legitimate, as demonstrating the test-takers’ understanding of the UK and their willingness to study, absorb, and reproduce this particular articulation of UK culture. And despite the fact that these apparent truths may be open to contestation, that there are inevitably competing and alternative knowledges within the broad areas of national life included on the curriculum, any opportunity for critical reflection is elided, and any answers which do not cohere with the official narrative are marked incorrect; as Aradau (2015) points out, the possibility of ‘symbolic conflict’ around issues of politics, history, culture, and society, is hereby erased. This discursive space thus defines one single notion of ‘Britishness’, the knowledge of Britain and the values deemed to unite ‘the British’ thereby ‘codified’ (Darling, 2011: 263) as indisputable truth. And in my interviews with test-takers, I did indeed encounter some articulations of the test as corresponding to an external truth in social reality. Gumaa for instance, who came to the UK from Sudan several years ago and had only recently begun her test preparation, talked about her plan to book the examination as soon as she felt ready, even if this meant travelling to a test centre far from her home town. When I asked why she felt this urgency she replied: ‘because when I feel ready because y’know you hold British history in your head and you want to y’know [...]’. Gumaa did not articulate any doubts here that the content of the book corresponds to *the* historical development of the UK; that, by reading the preparation book, she would absorb the incontrovertible facts about Britain which must then be regurgitated quickly, before they are forgotten. In much the same way, Johannes referred to the testing materials as giving you ‘the story of England’, his use of the definite article here notable.

In contrast however, others were much less persuaded by the absolute version of reality presented in the text. Antje, for instance, recounted her own concerns as she read the guidebook, saying:

Antje: y'know the something being true or false obviously being the kind of person you want to go hmm that depends actually

Rachel: yeah how did you cope with that?

Antje: yeah that's kind of very contrary to how you work usually at least in this kind of field isn't it [.] and especially if you have something that is it true that y'know Scotland is ruled from Edinburgh or Scotland is ruled from London and I'm saying well that depends on what you mean by ruled or obviously governed cos I think you really want to know [.] well what do they mean by that?

Here, she articulates a counter-discursive position, expressing a clear sense of frustration with the lack of nuance in the materials and the lack of opportunity for test-takers to engage in a more critical way with the content presented.

Interestingly, despite the length of time taken to prepare for the test, most of the people I interviewed told me they had little or no memory of the test content, even just a few months after sitting the exam. John, who as I mentioned came through the asylum system from Eritrea, found the test extremely difficult and failed on his first attempt. He then spent several weeks working carefully through each section of the guidebook until he was able to pass at his second attempt. And yet, despite the work he put in here, he told me he had forgotten the majority of the content: 'some questions yes I still remember it but most of them it's gone now yeah it's gone because as I told you I just read it to get that test'. And Maria Elena, a domestic worker from the Philippines who also trained hard to pass the test, practising every evening after work for several months, explained that all the information was new for her, and that she had, just a short time afterwards, forgotten everything she had learnt:

I forgot already what's inside it this is about the war about the rules neighbourhood something like that yeah so and er all the wars 1 and 2 something like that the stories and about that you need to respect about the queen

Indeed, in a rather amusing interaction, she recalled the *answer* to one of the questions she was asked but clearly had no recollection of the event this answer referred to: 'what else I just remember it's 1954 or 1935 something like that I don't know what is the question but I answer 1935'.

While this comment may be viewed simply as an amusing aside, it does point to the rather more powerful contention that, in its content and design, the test operates simply as a symbolic project, a gate-keeping device through which to enforce a certain sort of self-training rather than a method through which to enable the citizen-candidate to understand more about their local and national context; a position encapsulated in Antje's wry aside: 'you can only get in if you whatever know the speed of the African swallow'. And yet, despite Antje's acknowledgement of the test's irrelevance to her everyday life, and the perception amongst many of the interviewees that the test content is both arbitrary and indeed rather illogical, the prospective citizen-candidate can only resist in their verbal dismissals and their mockery; they have no option but to memorise, if not accept as truth, the preparatory materials. Again, as with Saroj's acquiescence to the perplexing bureaucratic demands she faces, this is not to elide the agency of the individual candidate – there is a decision-making process here in which candidates are actively choosing to suppress their feelings of frustration in order to pass through the process as required. However, as discussed in the opening chapters of this thesis, the decision to attempt the citizenship process is not taken in isolation from the broader social landscape: the hostility now explicitly realised through the migration system may lead many to perceive the acquisition of citizen-status as less a choice than a necessity (more on which in Chapter 7); thus these hurdles must be navigated regardless of their perceived fairness.

This being the case, those wishing to attain the status of citizen must submit to the will of the state, undertaking a process of self-legitimation through which they demonstrate their willingness to reproduce the state's version of legitimate cultural knowledge, regardless of whether or not they agree with, or recognise, this account. As Löwenheim and Gazit (2009) contend, the test may then be said to operate on two levels: both as a symbol of authority, establishing an irreversible hierarchy between the examiner and the examinee (more on which in Chapter 6); and also as a disciplinary tool – an instrument with which to manipulate the knowledge, and even the practices of the test-taker; or, as Löwenheim and Gazit (ibid: 152) put it, to 'socialise examinees into specific norms and behaviours and to steer them towards certain goals and objectives'. On the first point – the construction of authority – the *Life in the UK* test provides a particularly interesting case since, in this instance, the state is simultaneously the examiner *and* the object of the test. Just as Salter's (2008) analysis of the border examination at airports and other frontier sites contends that this bordering performance inevitably forces the individual to both recognise and acquiesce to the sovereign, so, in much the same way, the *Life in the UK* test thus demands that the candidate is both examined by, but also plays tribute to, the state in the process (Löwenheim and Gazit, 2009: 152). For Perchinig (2010), the content of the test, with its 'trivial pursuit' (Brooks, 2013: 4) style content, does not in fact prepare the test-taker to participate in the polity; however, in sitting the test, the 'presumptive citizen' is required to 'symbolically affirm their readiness to obey the state power' (Perchinig, 2010).

And on the second point, this speaks to the central contention in this chapter that the practices of the citizenship regime both enable the state to legitimate a certain version of linguistic and cultural knowledge, and also enforce a certain process of *self*-legitimation amongst citizen-candidates in which they are required to work on themselves, training themselves to both pass the necessary tests, and to provide documentary evidence that they possess the cultural and linguistic knowledge deemed legitimate. Here, the purpose, or at least the result, is not to encourage and enable the non-citizen to feel confident and settled in the UK; rather, the test works as a mechanism by which the state can reassure itself and its existing citizens of the

citizen-candidate's commitment to its authority and his/her willingness to submit to the official articulation of the legitimate British citizen.

And this process of self-legitimation can be read particularly visibly in the *bureaucratic* practices central to the citizenisation process, as I will now go on to explore.

4.2 Intextuation and self-legitimation: 'sometimes it [...] gives me a headache'

It was during my third observation of the citizenship ceremony, in December 2014, that I noticed a practice which struck me as remarkable and which I went on to witness in each subsequent ceremony observation. Once they have passed through the application process and been deemed worthy of citizen-status, applicants are 'invited' to attend their 'compulsory' citizenship ceremony. At this point, they receive a standardised council letter informing them that they must bring their Citizenship Invitation letter and some photo identification to the event, as shown in the screenshot below:

- You need to bring with you your 'Citizenship Invitation' letter from the Home Office and some photo ID such as your passport or photo card driving licence. These documents will be checked on your arrival before the ceremony begins. The absence of these documents may mean the postponement of your ceremony with the resulting delay in obtaining your naturalisation certificate.

Figure 14: Screenshot of ceremony invitation letter (2015)

On the day of the ceremony, before entering the ceremonial room, every attendee's invitation letter and photo ID is verified by one of the City's registrars (a process I will describe in a little more detail in Chapter 6). Surprisingly, however, although attendees are unmistakably only asked to bring *two* pieces of paperwork with them, I noticed that a large proportion would approach the registrar's desk holding identical brown A5 envelopes containing a rather larger number of papers.

Occasionally, attendees would offer these envelopes to the official for inspection, and yet none of these extra documents were ever even glanced at let alone examined by any of the registrars – they were entirely superfluous to the verification process.

It struck me as notable that, even at this stage of the process, having passed through all the manifold ‘technologies of identification and filtering’ (Byrne, 2014: 108) and been told their citizenship application had been successful, some individuals still decided to carry such bundles of extraneous paperwork to the ceremonial event. It is as though their right to attend the ceremony, indeed their very legitimacy as new citizens, resides or is made manifest within these texts. And this contention resonates with the scholarship on documentation discussed in section 3.5.1 in which documents are themselves viewed as instruments through which meaning can be constructed, transformed, and modified (Latour, 2005); these texts work to reiterate, substantiate (Hull, 2012), and indeed ‘literalise’ (Das, 2004) the individual as citizen.

Part of this process, however, also involves the state substantiating its own legitimacy, realising and affirming its own position as the body with the authority to pass decisions and ‘shape the horizons’ (Darling, 2014b: 487) of the citizen-candidate, determining who can, and who cannot, enter the national community. I argue in this final section then that, alongside the realisation of certain cultural and linguistic norms, the bureaucracy of citizenship operates as a final mechanism in the (self)-legitimation process: through these texts and documentation both the state and the citizen-candidate see their own legitimacy realised and made manifest.

4.2.1 Realising state legitimacy: bureaucratic regularity and distancing mechanisms

To begin with an analysis of the state, certain legitimating mechanisms can be read in the documentation sent from the Home Office to the citizen-candidate throughout their citizenship application process. Here, as Darling (2014b) notes in his examination of UKBA letters to asylum seekers, these texts construct the state as legitimate authority, and those receiving these documents as indisputably subject to

the decisions of this authorising body. The letter below, sent to Evelyn when she first began her application in late-2013, is the first written correspondence applicants will have with the Home Office and confirms receipt of their application form and payment:

Home Office
UK Border Agency

UK Border Agency
North West Region
Nationality Team
PO Box 306
Liverpool
L2 0QN

Our Ref NFE11

Your Ref N/A

Date 10/11/2013

This is to acknowledge receipt of your application(s) and the following document(s):

Our Ref : Type of Application - AN6(1) + Ceremony	No. of Applications - 1
Application Forms - 1	Photo-copied Documents

We also acknowledge receipt of direct credit payment(s) totalling £874.00.
A total of £874.00 has been received.

The fee has been paid in full.

For British Citizenship and Right of Abode telephone enquiries please contact the Nationality Customer Contact Centre on 0845 010 5200. The Contact Centre is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays. When telephoning or writing please quote our reference number.

From 1 April 2010 adult naturalisation (AN) and child registration (MN1) application forms will only be available as downloadable versions from our website at www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/britishcitizenship/. Please do not contact us for these forms.

Thank you

WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC

Figure 15: Copy of initial letter on receipt of application form (Nov 15)

Certain features are worth pointing out here, for instance the inclusion of a UKBA logo in the top left-hand corner of the text, along with the tagline '*working together to protect the public*' as a footer; these are symbolic features which work to signify stability, durability, and authenticity (Navaro-Yashin, 2007). And I note here that the use of the term 'protect' explicitly embeds citizenship with security practices, as discussed in Chapter 1. Although both logo and footer have undergone multiple alterations over the years, these are the official markers of the state, and, as such, are recognisable imprints of authority on the text. The fact that there is no signature, no name in the final salutation, renders the text writer(s) invisible, their authority lying solely with the logo and address provided at the top of the text. This absolute de-personalisation is itself a further strategy, a 'distancing-mechanism' (Darling, 2014b) through which the text appears somehow autonomous, part of a disinterested system isolated from the whims of the individual decision-maker. And while Evelyn's name is included in the address box on the top-left of the letter (elided here), there is no opening salutation in which her name appears, and only a case number, beginning NF, by way of identification. In fact, this use of case numbers can be read as a further, 'dehumanising' (Weber, 1978) technique through which traces of the personal are removed and emotion eliminated from the supposedly rational application system. Of course as I note in section 4.1.2, the application process does not, in fact, fit this image of neutrality, being (at least to some degree) subject to the agentic decision-making practices of the individual human actors at the Home Office; and yet the various methods through which the Home Office is rendered abstract and impersonal lend the application process an image of incontestable authority.

Once their application is complete and has been ratified, during which time there is no standard correspondence between HO and candidate, individuals will receive the following 'citizenship invitation' letter (as discussed above, they need to bring this with them to their ceremony):

UK Visas and Immigration
The Capital Building
Liverpool
L3 9PP
Tel
Email
Web www.gov.uk/uk-visas-immigration

Home Office Ref: R125 [redacted]
Your Ref:
Poll/Cover Note No: 96 [redacted] 60 [redacted]
Date: 25 November 2013

**CITIZENSHIP INVITATION
APPLICATION FOR BRITISH CITIZENSHIP BY**
[redacted]

I am pleased to tell you that this application for British citizenship has been approved. To complete the process of becoming a British citizen, you will need to attend a citizenship ceremony to receive your certificate. In the ceremony you will take an Oath or Affirmation of allegiance to the Crown and a Pledge of loyalty to the United Kingdom. This is a formal promise to Her Majesty the Queen and the United Kingdom.

What you must do now

1. The ceremony will be arranged by the Local Authority whose details are shown below. Please contact the authority using these details within 21 days of the date of this letter to book your ceremony. Please note that documentation may take up to 2 working days to arrive.

2. The personal details below will appear on the certificate. If the details on your certificate are incorrect you should still arrange a ceremony, and return the certificate to us for amendment afterwards. You should also send a copy of your passport or birth certificate as evidence of the correct details.

Certificate details

Full name [redacted]
Name at birth [redacted]
Date of birth [redacted]
Place of birth [redacted]

The ceremony

Please read the enclosed guidance notes as soon as possible. These give important information about the ceremony and the words you need to say for the Oath/Affirmation and the Pledge.

Please note that once you become a British citizen you will lose any refugee status you may hold in the United Kingdom.

3. If you change your name after becoming a British citizen, we will not amend your certificate of citizenship to show this. If you need to produce your citizenship certificate for official purposes, e.g. an application for a passport, and you have changed your name since it was issued, you should present documentary evidence of your new name, e.g. your marriage certificate, a change of name deed, alongside your citizenship certificate.

You must bring this invitation to the ceremony, if you do not your ceremony will be postponed. The registrar may request evidence of identity including a photograph.

Figure 16: Ceremony invitation letter on confirmation of citizen-status (2013)

Notably, this letter appears to have been sent in November 2013, which would give only a two week window from receipt of Evelyn's paperwork (apparently on the 10th November) to ratification of her application (seemingly on the 25th of the same

month). Interestingly, Evelyn herself was rather unclear on the amount of time she had waited from start to finish of the process but certainly it seems to have been longer than two weeks, suggesting there may be an error with the dates recorded in one or both of the letters. This does raise a rather interesting point on the control of time and the level of precision enacted by the Home Office – they alone have the power to define the temporality of the application process, their own delays, inefficiencies, and indeed errors going unchallenged; in contrast, the applicants themselves are required to submit entirely to the state’s temporal demands, for instance arranging a ceremony within 21 days of receipt of this letter, or ensuring their own paperwork is provided on time and error-free lest it be rejected. Once again then, the authority of the state is here evidenced through this temporal inconsistency.

It is also notable in Figure 16 that the UKBA stamp has disappeared from the logo, and, with the shift from UKBA to UKVI, the address is now different at the top right-hand side of the letter, indicating a further layer of complexity and anonymity within the system. Although the text this time begins with the first person pronoun and an expression of pleasure, there is again no final salutation or signature; again the text writer(s) themselves remain hidden. Evelyn’s reference number has also changed, and she now has a poll/cover note number as well, inscribing her further into a complex and somewhat impenetrable network of impersonal writing through which she is, in Foucauldian terms (1977: 189), captured and fixed. In fact, as the City’s Senior Administrator Amy explained to me, each ceremony attendee will be recorded using *several* different case numbers when they go on to book their citizenship ceremony, including a poll number, a cover note number, a certificate number, and a Home Office reference number, highlighted here:

Number _____ of _____

 Home Office	CERTIFICATE COVER NOTE	Key: M = Minor; R = Reprint					
<small> If any of the certificates detailed in this certificate cover note have not been received you should contact us immediately. This cover note should be signed and dated when you have confirmed receipt of the certificates shown. The completed cover note should be returned to the Citizenship Ceremonies Support Team, Home Office, Nationality Group, PO Box 306, Liverpool L2 0QN e-mail: Citizenship.Support@ind.homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk </small>							
Poll number: 9	HO Ref Number	Poll date: 01/09/2014 12:50:56	Central Point:	Cover note: 6			
Certificate Number	HO Ref Number	Certificate Received	Applicant Name	Application Raised Date	Ceremony Required By	Flags	Fee

Figure 17: Screenshot of the ‘cover note’ sent by the HO (Oct 2014)

As Fuglerud (2004) notes, a ‘case’ is not so much a person as a series of issues ‘materialised in a set of documents [...] carrying a particular registration number’, thus again, the human subject – in fact, both state and citizen-candidate – is elided, while these mechanisms lend the Home Office an authority through which to enact decisions upon the necessarily passive, de-humanised applicant. On this account then, the state, in its abstract form, is thus materialised, its position as neutral decision-making authority legitimated, bureaucratic power here operating as an instrument of regulation and domination (Brown, 2006a: 201).

4.2.2 Documenting legitimacy as a citizen: ‘the proof that you have become a British’

Certainly it is crucial not to overstate intentionality here – it is not necessarily the case that these letters are actively *designed* for such a legitimating purpose; however, as can be read in both the practices and the comments of the recipients, these bureaucratic practices do enact certain governmental effects (Darling, 2014b: 489). As I noted in section 4.2, ceremony attendees regularly bring all of their paperwork with them, whether it is necessary or not, and for many of the individuals I interviewed, the practice of providing masses of superfluous documentation was typical even from the start of the application process. Although she recognised it was entirely unnecessary, Antje, for instance, described her decision to include ‘a huge wodge of bank statements with my address on’ when she began her application, just in case this extra paperwork might be useful in confirming her eligibility as a suitable citizen-candidate. Similarly Bahadir returned several times to the issue of his paperwork in our conversation, explaining that:

you want to pretty much provide everything that you can possibly put in the envelope because you never know what’s gonna be sufficient

While this comment points to a lack of clarity and perhaps indeed an apparent arbitrariness in the system, it also indicates the degree to which these networks of

documentation operate as a key legitimating mechanism for citizen-candidates. Providing much more documentation than is actually demanded or required is here a means by which candidates can actively work to self-legitimate.

And given the perceived importance of this paperwork, it is perhaps no surprise that all the individuals I interviewed articulated a sense of insecurity and concern lest they made an error in their paperwork and therefore found their application rejected. Every one of the individuals in this study, regardless of their level of income or educational background, had enlisted either legal advice, input from the City's refugee and migrant centre, or the support of the Nationality Checking Service – an organisation which, for a £70 fee, will verify that an application is complete and that all necessary documents have been enclosed (more on which in Chapter 5). Although several admitted that this extra layer of support was not entirely necessary, that they probably could have completed their application forms themselves, Evelyn was not alone in noting that the input of a third party was invaluable in providing 'peace of mind', reassurance that all the paperwork had been completed fully, accurately, and with absolute precision.

And yet, despite the efforts citizen-candidates may take to substantiate and evidence all possible criteria in as comprehensive a manner as possible, this is still no guarantee that their application will be successful, particularly given the legislative changes so often introduced by the Home Office. Thandi exemplifies this most powerfully: she was still in the process of applying for citizenship status when we met in March 2015, and, at that point, she was hopeful about a meeting with her lawyers the following day, telling me that she intended to bring 'everything' – all the documentation she could find that would substantiate her claim to citizenship. However, in a text interaction three months later, shown below, she informed me that her application had stalled due to bureaucratic changes beyond her control:

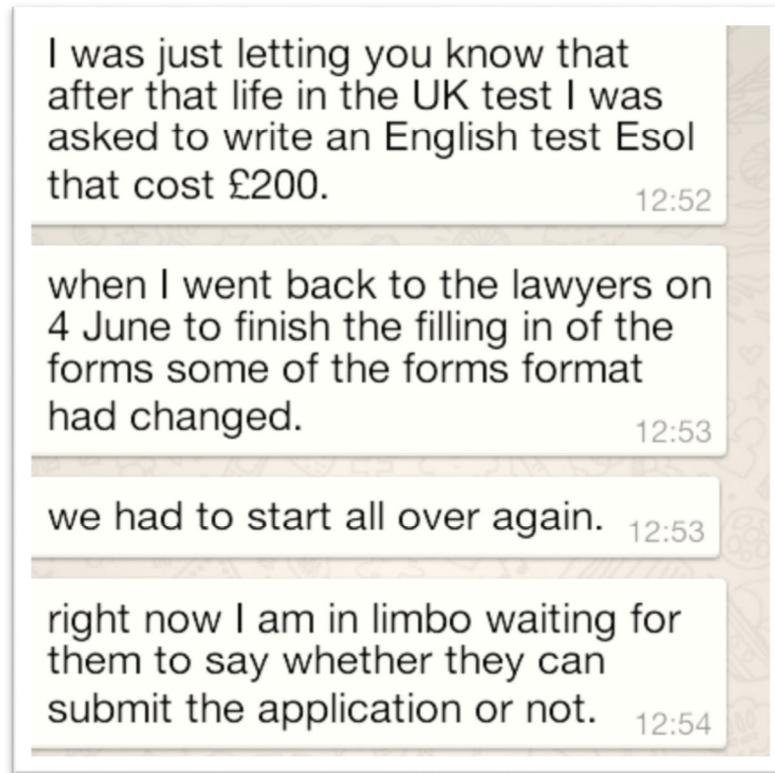


Figure 18: screenshot from text interaction with Thandi (June 2015)

While it may appear from the various legitimating mechanisms in the Home Office correspondence described in section 4.2.1 that the system is somehow unwavering and incontestable, Thandi's experience in fact points to a rather more inefficient and inconsistent process through which she is unavoidably subject to the whims and decision-making practices of state bureaucrats. As she articulated in the final message, she was now 'in limbo', unable to continue with the application until her lawyer could clarify exactly what evidence and documentation she must now provide; so while Thandi could go to great lengths to substantiate and evidence all possible elements of her documentable life, this paperwork may still be insufficient proof of her legitimacy.

Here, the degree to which her documentation had come to play a crucial and inescapable role in Thandi's life is made manifest. And similarly, the powerful

relationship between subjects and their paperwork is also exemplified in Evelyn's story, even though she had received her British passport three months before our first meeting in March 2015. For Evelyn, despite the sense of security which may be expected given her authorisation as a citizen, she had still retained every single piece of documentation used throughout her citizenship application:

I still keep all my forms for the British citizenship I have all [...] if you need them I can photocopy for you [...] how to apply everything all the details is there [...] if it will help you those forms I can give it to you [...] I have everything [...] it's complete

Indeed, when I met Evelyn again a month after our first interaction, I was astonished to see that she genuinely had retained every single piece of paper involved in the entire application process, including the envelopes in which each letter was sent. Evelyn's case was slightly unusual amongst the participants in this study as she was still in the process of a complex legal struggle to extend her husband's visa and ensure that he and their two children could live with her permanently in the UK. As such, she was required to attend various hearings at which certain paperwork was demanded. However, she was aware that her citizenship documentation was not necessarily required for this process; rather she felt compelled to keep it just in case it was ever needed at some point in an imagined future:

it gives me headache because I want to throw away y'know this yeah but because I still maybe need it in the future so I still keep them [...] not until my children are independent

Despite the impact this was having on her own health, Evelyn's documents were crucial to her as material proof of her right to live in the UK, her legitimacy as a UK citizen, or, as she puts it 'the proof [...] that you have become a British'.

In fact, for Evelyn, even the photograph taken on the day of her citizenship ceremony was deemed part of this web of documentation, a key text central to both securing and demonstrating her status as British citizen. She showed me the two glossy 8x10 prints taken by an official photographer at the end of her ceremony in which she stands alongside her husband and two children in front of a large union flag emblazoned with the words ‘citizenship ceremony’. In the photographs, Evelyn and her family are dressed smartly, Evelyn holding her citizenship certificate and looking intently into the camera. But as she explained to me, these photographs had not been framed and hung on a wall at her home, as may be expected with such ceremonial prints, but were instead kept within her folders of documentation, retained as further proof, should it be needed, of her citizen-status:

you can use this photograph as proof as well when you're applying the Home Office [...] to show you're really a British yeah it's very important to me a very important document [...] not because you have a nice photo [...] it's still a document you can use

Her description of the print not as a ‘nice photo’ but as a ‘very important *document*’ which can be *used* is powerful; it speaks to the sense that the material artefacts applicants collect along the application process – not simply their Home Office letters but also a range of other written and non-written texts – play a key role in their sense of legitimacy and their ability to articulate and substantiate themselves as verified and recognised citizens.

On this account, citizenship documentation can be said to form a central part of the ‘fabric of everyday life’ (Darling, 2014b: 419) for the individuals in this study, a literal expression of their relation to the state. Here then, the self-legitimation process takes place through the accumulation and presentation of texts; it is through this web of paperwork that the individual substantiates their claim as worthy citizen; as Kelly (2006: 90) thus argues, these texts ‘produce legibility and illegibility, stability and instability, coherence and incoherence’. And even once the procedure

is complete, I found that this paperwork is seldom discarded entirely but is rather retained until an unforeseeable point because, as Johannes put it, ‘you never know what happens’. In line with de Certeau’s (1984: 140) concept of ‘intextuation’, I argue here then that the individual is thus ‘packed into’ the text, articulated within a corpus of documentation within which their legitimacy is captured and realised.

Conclusion

To conclude then, I read three specific angles through which legitimacy is realised in the citizenship application process: in linguistic, cultural, and technological terms. The documentation collected and provided throughout the application process can be seen as central in the process of self-legitimation for both state and citizen-candidate: in working to position the Home Office as possessing the authority to designate the linguistic and cultural norms of the national community, and to position the citizen-candidate as necessarily submissive to these articulated norms. In this way, the mundane written practices of the application process work to materialise, or ‘literalise’ (Das, 2004) the power relations between state and citizen. These mechanisms are not to be viewed as totalising; indeed I have been able to identify opportunities for agentic decision-making by citizenship officials, points which reveal the inconsistencies, inefficiencies, and contradictions inherent in the citizenisation process as a social practice. However, the possibilities for such agentic practice amongst citizen-candidates are rather less apparent – although every person I spoke to had made certain decisions throughout the process, this most often involved an active resolution to disregard their own feelings of frustration and submit to the demands of the process.

Chapter 5: Access and exclusions: realising the neoliberal citizen

Having examined the practices through which the linguistic and cultural legitimacy of the citizen is realised, the following chapter looks to the (re)production and realisation of certain (classed, racialised, and economic) relations. In particular, I will claim here that citizenisation practices work to articulate legitimacy in terms of adherence not only to state-sanctioned linguistic and cultural norms, as described in Chapter 4, but also to certain neoliberal principles.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, some of the individuals I interviewed described their progress through the application process as relatively straightforward: their legitimacy as potential citizens appeared less uncertain, and they were able to avoid entirely certain bureaucratic demands as they documented their acceptability within the national community. In direct contrast, others found the application process a rather more complex affair, with particular anxieties in collecting the necessary documentary evidence, in preparing for and passing the *Life in the UK* test, and in paying the fees required for each stage of the process: despite the fact that they had both achieved their goal of attaining citizen-status, Evelyn described the whole process as ‘a trial’ and ‘a hardship’, while Johannes used the evocative phrase ‘I’m still fighting still fighting’ as he summed up his experiences thus far.

I read the diverse articulations of struggle and difficulty in these accounts as indicative of certain exclusionary practices at play in the citizenship regime in which particular subjects are more directly implicated than others. That is not to say that these practices are entirely repressive; rather, and in keeping with the Foucauldian principles discussed in Chapter 1, I argue in section 5.1 that it is through these practices that certain relations are (re)produced. And following this premise, I turn in section 5.2 to examine the contention that the contemporary citizenship regime works to legitimate certain neoliberal logics. Here, I focus in particular on three key areas: the commodification of the application process; the process of

responsibilisation through which the individual applicant is directed to work upon him/herself, as I mentioned in Chapter 4; and finally the realisation of the economic actor – *homo economicus* – the self-sufficient, financially independent economic agent.

5.1 Designing out the undesirable Other: exclusions and the (re)production of relations

5.1.1 Educational experience and cultural capital

“Oh we’ve done that! Oh we’ve seen that! Oh I know all about
[that]!”

Cindy, May 2015

Thirty minutes into our interview, Cindy raised the issue of the *Life in the UK* test. She began by stating that she had not enjoyed the content on sports as she simply did not care who won the Olympics rowing title and in what year, but she quickly countered this negativity by declaring that she ‘really loved’ the history and the sections on famous things to do in the UK. Russ interjected at the start of the sequence to affirm that he also felt the test ‘was fun I actually enjoyed that’. Given the negativity expressed towards the exam in the majority of my conversations with test-takers – in the focus group and the interviews I conducted – and in much academic research on the subject (Osler, 2009; Wodak, 2013; Löwenheim and Gazit, 2009), I was somewhat surprised by this enthusiasm. However, as Cindy and Russ went on to reflect in more detail their thoughts on the test, it became clear that their positivity related principally to their sense of affiliation with the content of this examination.

There were certainly gaps in their knowledge – they both candidly admitted that they had not known the difference between England, Britain, and the UK – and points at which they had had to work hard to absorb some of the information in the

guidebook; however, Cindy and Russ both had a clear frame of reference for much of the information they were reading: they could relate the historical content to their memories of school history lessons, to the information they had gleaned about their own ancestral connections in the UK and the Republic of Ireland, and to the various excursions they had taken since arriving in England. As an example, Russ, who works as a pastor in a local church, commented on their particular interest as practising Christians in the section outlining the historical rift between Protestantism and Catholicism. For Russ, learning about Henry VIII had given him a newfound understanding of the development of the Church of England, and in fact he drew on this information to explore his own observations of UK life, speculating that this rift may account for the ‘nonchalant attitude towards religion’ which he had previously perceived in British life.

A little later in the conversation, Cindy recounted a visit from her cousin, a History teacher in the US, with whom they had travelled to several sites of historical interest. She talked about their trip to Bayeux:

when we read about like the Bayeux tapestry that tells about the 1066 conquest and William the Conqueror y'know I knew that because we had been to Bayeux we went with my cousin we went

Independently of the test then, Cindy and Russ had chosen to visit this site and, for that reason, were already familiar with the narrative surrounding the tapestry prior to engaging with the testing materials.

This is at least partly a matter of cultural and economic capital – they had both the financial resources and the impetus to make such a trip, and, as a direct consequence, they were able to make links between the content of the *Life in the UK* test and their own lived experiences. Indeed, Cindy herself made this point when she enthusiastically declared:

the best part about it was we're reading through and it says this one 'oh we've done that! Oh we've seen that! Oh I know all about' and it made it easier to remember because we'd been there (Russ: we'd been to certain places) we'd been there and seen it and I really enjoyed that bit of it

As I explained in Chapter 4, the Home Office's decision to remove detail on everyday concerns around education and health alienated some of the participants in this study, who expressed their frustration with the seemingly arbitrary and somewhat abstract content of the test. Russ and Cindy however, as educated, middle-class, Americans with the socio-economic resources to take trips to Bayeux and Stonehenge, in fact shared an active interest in the exact areas of history included in the *Life in the UK* test. As Cindy's repetition and emphasis on the phrase 'we'd been there' indicates, and her animated exclamations as she recounted the moments of familiarity they had experienced whilst revising for the test, the content of the test was thus meaningful, accessible, and directly relevant to the couple's own lived experiences.

And it is not only the content of the test which resonated with some participants. Despite the anger they directed towards the test (as I discussed in Chapter 4), both Antje and Alex discussed the relative ease with which they had *prepared* for the test. Alex, who has a PhD and an established career in academia, found the learning process itself straightforward, as she noted: 'everything else was reasonably easy for me but then I'm very used to memorising information', and later 'I have no problems sitting an exam'. Her extensive educational experience thus prepared her for the test, even if she found much of the content irrelevant and inaccessible. And Antje, again a PhD holder with a research career, described a moment during the test itself when she had had to ascertain the answer to an unfamiliar question:

they are asking whether the 16th so-and-so Bible was the what was it? the official version the authorised version

the established version and then there was another one there was 4 but I don't remember the 4th one and so obviously you then start deducing you go 'ok it can't be the official version because that's not really like a y'know 17th century word so it's got to be between the authorised version and the established version because also the established church [...] I'm going to go for established

As she describes here, she was able to employ a relatively complex process of deduction involving her own linguistic intuition to reach her conclusion. Here then, these two highly-educated European women were able to draw on their own previous educational experiences and their familiarity with typical testing practices both to prepare for the exam and to resolve any obstacles they encountered in the learning and testing process.

In real contrast, however, John and Johannes, both of Eritrean origin, discussed at length the difficulties they had found with the test. Again, these difficulties revolved around both the content and the process of preparing for such a test. Johannes encapsulated this dual complexity when he explained why his wife had had such difficulty passing the exam:

Rachel: why do you think she failed the test?

Johannes: [...] er for the general knowledge really because if you ask her '1 century or 2 century where was British?' it wasn't easy for her [...] then in that kind of situation [...] it was very hard for her [...] so I said ok [...] from there I was trying to help her how to study how to take in that kind of facts

As he articulated here, it was not only that his wife had no familiarity with ancient British history, but also that 'how to study', 'how to take in that kind of

facts' – the very process of memorising information like this – was entirely unfamiliar to her. And many of Johannes' friends had found the same problem, as he explained: 'some people they don't have even any idea about it [...] even the exams how it works really strange'. Here then, whatever educational opportunities and experiences Johannes' friends had had in Eritrea diverged to such a degree from this form of self-directed learning, and from the processes and practices of this multiple-choice examination, that they offered little by way of constructive experience.

For John, it was not simply his educational experience but also, as he termed it, his own cultural background which led to a sense of alienation when preparing for the test:

I just came from different culture totally different kind of environment when you compare it with English one or with the Europe one so even if I tried to know it properly I can't

As he articulated here, it was not only a question of previous learning experiences, but also the broader cultural practices he had been accustomed to in Eritrea which were an obstacle in his ability to engage with the materials and prepare for the test. Indeed, he appeared to see this difference as a fundamental block, as something he could never truly overcome, no matter how much effort and time he put into the training process.

And finally, Gumaa, who has divided her time between ESOL classes and childcare commitments since arriving in the UK from Sudan five years ago, was just beginning the *LUK* preparation process when we met; however, she was already encountering two major obstacles: linguistic and temporal. As she noted:

I read the book but there is [...] many words is new words very new words and [...] I try y'know to found the meaning

in the dictionary and read again to know more understanding but y'know I can't do this y'know for just short time it will take long time because I take care of my children and [...] I come here (to ESOL classes) and sometimes I don't have free time to read y'know everyday but I try

As Gumaa explained in this extract, while her English language proficiency, and in particular her lexical knowledge, prevented her from engaging easily with the materials, her own personal commitments meant she struggled to dedicate the time she felt was necessary to really tackle this obstacle and prepare herself fully. During our conversation she spoke with real anxiety about the test and, given these concerns, told me that she felt unable to make any decisions as to when she would actually sit the examination and begin her citizenship application. It is worth noting here that these comments on childcare commitments may indicate a gendered dimension to these exclusions.

Certainly, the Anglophone and European participants in this study did articulate similar frustrations with the test and the time they were required to spend absorbing the materials. However, at no point did any of these individuals recount a moment at which they had feared they might fail the exam. Indeed, the sense of personal struggle, of real alienation and exclusion from the whole testing process, was absent from their accounts. And this resonates with both Turner's (2014) and Löwenheim and Gazit's (2009) theoretical analyses of citizenship testing regimes in which they argue that the *Life in the UK* test actively privileges certain, élite applicants who already have access both to the English language, and to comparable educational experiences and opportunities. Again, this is not to state a necessary intention on the part of the Home Office; however, it is to argue that the structuring of the testing process may work to limit, or at least make more complex, access to citizen-status for individuals from certain linguistic, educational, and class backgrounds for whom the process becomes a far more complex task, requiring far more time, effort, and personal dedication. Further, and in keeping with the principles outlined in Chapter

1, these exclusionary practices are not simply repressive; rather it is through the logics and practices of the *Life in the UK* testing regime that certain classed and racialized relations are actively produced and reproduced, as I will examine further in section 5.2.

5.1.2 Financial resources and government profit

Alongside the classed and racialised logics built into the testing process, a further key issue identified by all of the participants was the economic aspect of the naturalisation application process, which speaks again to the legitimisation of a certain type of citizen. As I noted in the introductory chapters, application costs for citizenship have risen exponentially over the decades. From a £40 fee in 1975, the cost rose steadily over the next thirty years to £200 in 2005. Over the last ten years however, the fee has more than quadrupled, with naturalisation charges now standing at £1431.20 for a single adult (gov.uk, 2017b). This of course does not take into account the other costs which some individuals will have incurred before even arriving at the citizenship stage – accessing visas to enter the country, securing Indefinite Leave to Remain or Permanent Residence, and paying the newly instituted healthcare costs demanded of all non-EEA citizens. Nor does it include the cost of the *LUK* test – £50, the ceremony – £80, the ratification of any educational documentation as described in Chapter 4, or of course any outlays associated with books, learning materials, clothing for the ceremonial event if people choose, or transport to and from these venues.

Every one of the people I spoke to raised the subject of money at some point during our interactions, although the degree to which this financial burden was perceived as a real obstacle did vary considerably. And perhaps unsurprisingly, the variety tended to fall along the same lines described earlier, with the European and North American participants generally commenting on the costs as a frustration rather than a real impediment. Alex, for instance, noted that potential failure in the test was not such a concern for her as she could afford the associated charges:

of course it's a lot of money because I paid £60 for the train and £50 for the thing but I can afford that kind of money so for me it wasn't such a big risk

In fact, she decided to leave her *LUK* training materials in the testing venue with a note saying 'please help yourself' for anyone less affluent than herself to take. And Antje made the same decision, donating her materials to the City's refugee centre in case they might be of use to others. While both Alex and Antje expressed anger with the cost of the process, with Antje laughing wryly as she said 'they fleece you at every step of the way don't they'? there was no sense that the financial demands had operated as a real impediment, or required these women to make any significant sacrifices.

In contrast, John and Johannes both mentioned friends who had been unable to embark on the citizenship process because they simply could not afford it. Johannes told me that, since attaining citizen-status himself, he had lent money to three or four friends to help them pay for the process, and later admitted that none had yet been able to repay him. John also commented on the difficulties his friends had had, particularly those who did not work. Although he himself is employed as a manual labourer on a low salary, he still regarded himself as fortunate compared with unemployed friends who simply could not begin the process:

it's all about money to be honest with you the good thing is I work but [...] for someone if you don't work like if you are in jobcentre you get I don't know 120 or 130 in 2 weeks how could you afford it this one? That's very very hard so but fortunately I work so I can get my money

While he was positive here about his own ability to pay the necessary costs, he did raise the cost of the application process repeatedly in our interaction, and noted later in the conversation that, despite the family's wishes, he could not yet afford to pay

for his wife and child to go through the process – that it would require some years of saving before they would be able to embark on their applications.

Thandi had also spent years saving before beginning the application process, putting aside money from her job as a carer into a special account dedicated solely to her citizenship application, as she explained:

it's a lot of money [...] yeah very expensive [...] but
whatever you want you can oh I saved I saved up I've got
1500 put aside for this;

and later 'I have saved [...] I saved whatever happened I'm not taking this thousand pounds out I'm just keeping it'. In her tone and in her exultations – 'oh' – and repetitions – 'I saved I saved' – there is an indication that this money was extremely precious and highly valued, a sense that Thandi would be willing to make choices and decisions, 'whatever happened', to ensure that this money remained untouched.

Finally, Evelyn described a similar experience, noting the difficulties in managing the costs of everyday life alongside the money she still sent back to her family in the Philippines, and the necessity to keep putting money aside for her citizenship application:

financially because of the rent it's so high the daily
expenses you also need to help your family back home
because at that time I'm the only one here my family's
still in Philippines so I'm still sending money there so
you need to save money for your British citizenship again

Again, there was a sense that saving for citizenship had been no easy task, that difficult decisions had been made and sacrifices required, and, crucially, that certain individuals would not be able to embark on the process simply because they do not

have the necessary financial resources to hand. And again this provides support for the contention that the contemporary citizenship regime actively privileges certain skills and socio-economic capital (Turner, 2014), thereby in turn ‘designing out’ those applicants who lack the educational, cultural, and financial resources to embark on and complete the lengthy process.

Significantly however, the fees incurred by citizen-candidates far outweigh the expense to the government associated with processing these naturalisation applications: in 2014, the Home Office itself conceded in 2015 that, per application, its own expenditure would be £144 as compared with a cost to the individual of £906 (*the Economist*, 2015). Indeed, a recent article in *the Guardian* (Hill, 2017) reported an 800% profit for the government from immigration applications, and speculated that the Home Office may in fact be incentivised to reject applications on technicalities in order to gain revenue from subsequent reapplications. I cannot make such speculations regarding citizenship applications in this project; however, it is certainly of note that that naturalisation fees in Britain exceed those in many other countries, in some cases by a significant margin, as indicated in the chart below:

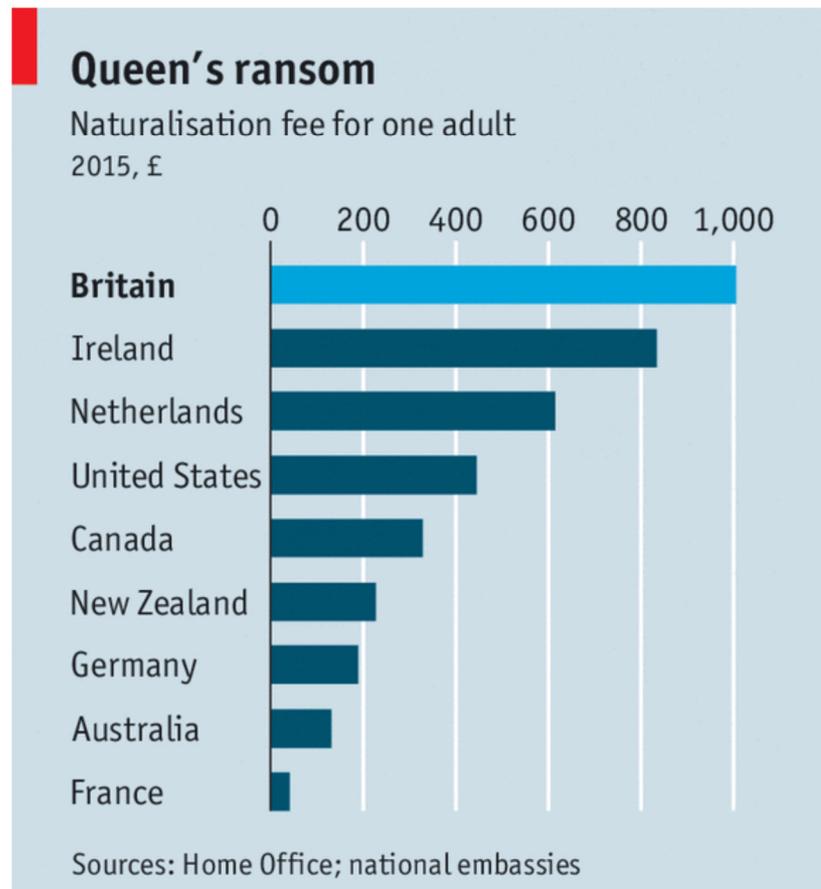


Figure 19: Naturalisation fees per individual adult in 2015 (the Economist, 2015)

I argue here then that not only are some people seemingly discouraged, disadvantaged, or even prevented from accessing citizen-status due to their financial position, but also that, as these figures suggest, citizenship itself has become a profit driven industry, a method through which the UK Home Office can raise revenue at the expense of the individual applicant. And, as I will explore in more detail in the coming sections, the UK government is not alone in profiting from the citizenship industry: several aspects of the process have now been outsourced to, or appropriated by, various providers who themselves gain revenue from those seeking to attain citizen-status. So it is this which leads to the second section of this chapter – a consideration of the ways in which the naturalisation regime can be considered to operate under certain neoliberal logics, and the ways in which these particular rationalities themselves work to produce a certain type of citizen.

5.2 Neoliberal logics: commodification, responsibilisation, and *homo economicus*

5.2.1 Commodification: “public company” is an oxymoron to me’

As I mentioned in section 4.2.2, every one of the individuals I spoke to for this project had enlisted professional support during their application process. Given their experiences with the asylum system and the support they had gained from the refugee centre in securing Leave to Remain, both John and Johannes had returned to the centre for further (paid) help in their citizenship applications. Thandi instead chose to go to a legal firm in the City who, again for a significant fee, would check her documents and ensure that everything was included as it should be. The rest of the participants in this study, regardless of their backgrounds, had elected to visit their local Nationality Checking Service (NCS) and have their documentation checked, their passports scanned, and their applications sent to the Home Office there and then. Across Britain, there are 133 NCS offices, 31 of which are in the Greater London area (there is *not* currently an NCS in the City so applicants were required to travel to a neighbouring town), and these services are provided by the local authority – the city/county council in the area. Despite their municipal status, however, they do not provide this service for free. As of 2017, the cost at the nearest NCS for an individual adult to access this support is £70, while the charge for children under 18 is £50. This cost is borne entirely by the applicant, regardless of their means.

During our discussion, Bahadir also told me that, for a significant fee, an option exists for a citizenship official to visit an applicant’s house and process their application for them on the spot; he laughed as he suggested that this may be the route chosen by a ‘petrol sheikh or tycoon of some sort’. This is a claim I have heard several times during the course of this research, although I am unable to find reference to the option on official government websites. However, regardless of whether the possibility does actually exist, the costs associated with citizenship, as outlined in the previous section and as epitomised by the NCS, point clearly to the

profit-oriented nature of the contemporary citizenship regime. Indeed, Bahadir quickly stopped laughing and told me in all seriousness how surprising he found this:

I mean this is really I find it really interesting because this is a public service this is not a private- well it's a public service [...] working based on the principles of private service I suppose

Here Bahadir expressed his clear unease at the apparent application of market values within the public realm.

Certainly, I am cautious about postulating an internally coherent and consistent neoliberal system at play here: in keeping with the ontological principles underpinning this research, it would be unwise to attribute a specific 'structural coherence' (Jessop, 2013: 66) to a project which is continually reconstructed and rearticulated through discursive practice. Indeed, I acknowledge Rose et al's (2006: 97) contention that the term 'neoliberalism' can be over-used, under-examined, and problematically taken to be a coherent and 'constant master category' rather than a 'highly specific rationality'. That said, however, the apparent commodification of the naturalisation process, as epitomised most clearly by the NCS service and expressed in Bahadir's comments, does resonate strongly with definitions of neoliberalism which note that practices formerly confined to the state are increasingly being refashioned in the image of the free market. As Brown (2005: 40) points out in her description of neoliberal rationality, this process involves the 'application of market values' not only to the economic sphere but 'to all institutions and social action'. Through this process, the needs which would previously have been met by public agencies, communities, or families, are now sold as services for a profit (Connell, 2010), and differentiated options exist for those with the financial resources to pay.

And this commodification is not only evident in the NCS, but can also be perceived in the pedagogic practices associated with the *Life in the UK* test. With the removal

of the 2-strand (ESOL or *LUK* test) system, as discussed in section iii, citizen-candidates can no longer rely on the support of a local FE college but are instead required to source their own support as they prepare for the examination. For all the people I interviewed in this project, this involved purchasing the Home Office produced materials at an overall cost of approximately £30. As the link on the gov.uk website indicates, however, there are in fact a large number of different texts available to test candidates, with a distinct lack of clarity as to the differences between each of these resources. The layout of the page reproduced below (Figure 20) is directly reminiscent of typical online shopping sites, with links to other recommended resources and immediate ‘add to basket’ options facilitating the purchase of a large number of (potentially unnecessary) items. In fact, John had been so confused by these possibilities that he had initially purchased the wrong book – just the *Question and Answer* book rather than the *Complete Guidebook* – and, despite his extensive preparation with this text, had thus failed his first test. It was only on the advice of an official in the examination centre after this failure that he realised he would be required to buy another book in order to prepare fully for the exam.

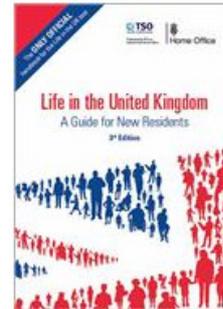
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Figure 20: A selection of Home Office produced LUK resources (2016)

And this comparison with typical online shopping sites raises a particular concern since, in this instance, the test candidate is not simply purchasing a commodity for their own satisfaction; rather, as Alex points out, they are buying a product which will facilitate their entry into a political community, their right to vote and to be constituted in legislation as an equal member of the polity. In fact, in a direct act of resistance, Alex chose to download the materials illegally, believing the commodification of the citizenship process to be fundamentally unjust:

since this is recorded but anonymous I can confess that I did manage to download a copy of the official textbook without paying [...] I do not believe that this is theft or a crime the thing is in order to get a civil right I have to take this test in order to take this test I need to read this book [...] you cannot charge me for the materials that I need in order to take the test [...] it is disgusting enough that I have to pay to take the test [...] it's not like a driving licence the right to vote is a civil right and there is no reason why I should pay for that so that is disgusting enough [...] but I refuse to pay for the materials on top of that

While she had expressed frustration at several points in our interactions, her anger was particularly palpable when she talked here about the testing materials, her repetition of the term 'disgusting' indicating her vehemence. For Alex, this was a question of fairness and affordability – as I mentioned in section 5.1 she was anxious on behalf of those who do not have the financial means to buy these resources; however, she was also making a much broader ideological point on the very idea of the state commodifying and thus profiting from something she deemed a civil right.

Further, alongside the apparent commodification of the test and the application process, the citizenship *ceremony* also contains an optional extra whereby, for £75 per citizen (on top of the £80 charged as standard for a group ceremony in their citizenship application), individuals can secure themselves an individual rather than

group event. While the group ceremonies are only held every third Wednesday, depending on demand, the individual ceremony is much more flexible, available Monday to Saturday, and takes significantly less time than the group ceremony. The content of the ceremonies are similar – the same oaths and affirmations must be made; however, the private ceremony is presided over by a registrar rather than the (Lord) Mayor, and, in the City, takes place in a rather small room in the council buildings rather than the Town Hall; there is, therefore, much less ceremonial pomp in the individual event (more on which in Chapter 6). In taking this option then, the individual is able to take some small degree of control of their ceremony – deciding the date on which they wish to attend, bringing up to 6 guests rather than the maximum 2 in the group ceremony, and taking some level of ownership over the speed and indeed overall atmosphere of the ceremony.

Of the individuals I spoke to for this research, only Bahadir had opted for a private ceremony, his reasoning being twofold: firstly, that he wanted to complete the process and secure his UK passport more quickly, and secondly, that he felt a sense of embarrassment at the public displays of happiness he expected to be part of the group event, as he explained:

I thought the public ceremony would be an embarrassment I would be embarrassed because because of how [...] enthusiastic all these other people were and I wasn't

Indeed, he went on to note that this sense of embarrassment really was his main motivating factor as he could have waited for his passport had he really wanted to attend the group ceremony. Here then, Bahadir took the option to withdraw himself from the communal experience, preferring instead to attend the ceremony alone and thus circumvent the celebratory spirit he expected from the group event.

The fact that he was able to make this choice is perhaps surprising, particularly given that the citizenship ceremony was originally conceived of as a public occasion 'memorable to all new citizens and as far as possible to the whole community'

(Home Office, 2003); in fact the original government paper outlining the new citizenship process – the New and the Old (ibid: 31) – makes no mention of a private option, highlighting rather the intention to make this a public ‘occasion of celebration’. It is certainly worth noting that the group ceremony could hardly be described as ‘public’ since access is not actually open to the wider City community, as evidenced by my own difficulties accessing the site (section 3.2.3.1), and as epitomised by the sign which sits permanently outside the ceremonial room:



Figure 21: Sign outside ceremonial room (Feb 2015)

However, there is a certain sense of communal spirit in the ceremony: occasionally, a local choir has joined the event, and there are several points throughout the year at which groups and individuals from outside the Council – schoolchildren, visiting scholars and dignitaries etc. – are invited to attend. The option to arrange a solitary ceremony is, therefore, an interesting development. Given the added cost of the individual event, it will inevitably only be available to those with sufficient financial resources to pay, and these individuals will in turn gain a degree of ownership over

the ceremony which others cannot or will not attain. In this sense, the availability of a private ceremony both provides the presiding council with an opportunity for further revenue raising, and, simultaneously, replicates a public/private dichotomy in the ceremony, thereby reproducing certain class relations into the realm of citizenship.

Finally, as I mentioned in the introduction to this section, it is not only the state and the public sector that profit from the naturalisation process; rather a plethora of other individuals and organisations now offer application/testing support, some operating without state backing, others specifically ratified by the UK government. Regarding the former, a large number of online *Life in the UK* support programmes have appeared in the last few years, many of which are free, others of which charge a fee for which the candidate gains access to online practice tests, smartphone versions of the materials, translation tools, and simulation tests.¹⁵ While such websites also tend to offer access to Facebook and YouTube fora where individuals can share ideas, doubts, and concerns without charge, some of their actual testing materials require a subscription and thus come at a cost to the candidate. Although none of the people I interviewed mentioned paying for online support, several did mention using online resources, with John in particular telling me about the hundreds of practice tests he had managed to download from a simple Google search. And the very existence of these sites does suggest that there must indeed be a market for this extra, paid support.

As for the latter, the official outsourcing of state concerns is epitomised by *learndirect*, the company which oversees the *Life in the UK* test. I described in section 3.2.3.1 the process by which I gained access to the testing site, but by way of brief reminder: the tests were historically administered and overseen by the City's central library but were moved in 2013 to a company called *Numidia* in their offices

¹⁵ See for instance <http://ukcitizenshipsupport.com/life-in-the-uk-practice-test/>, which provides all of the above for a charge of £29.

just outside the city centre. When, three months later, I began the online process to book my place on the test, I was surprised to find that *Numidia* had by this point also ceased to administer the tests; rather these now take place at the City's own *learndirect* offices. The map below marks the locations of the current and previous testing centres in the City as of 2015:

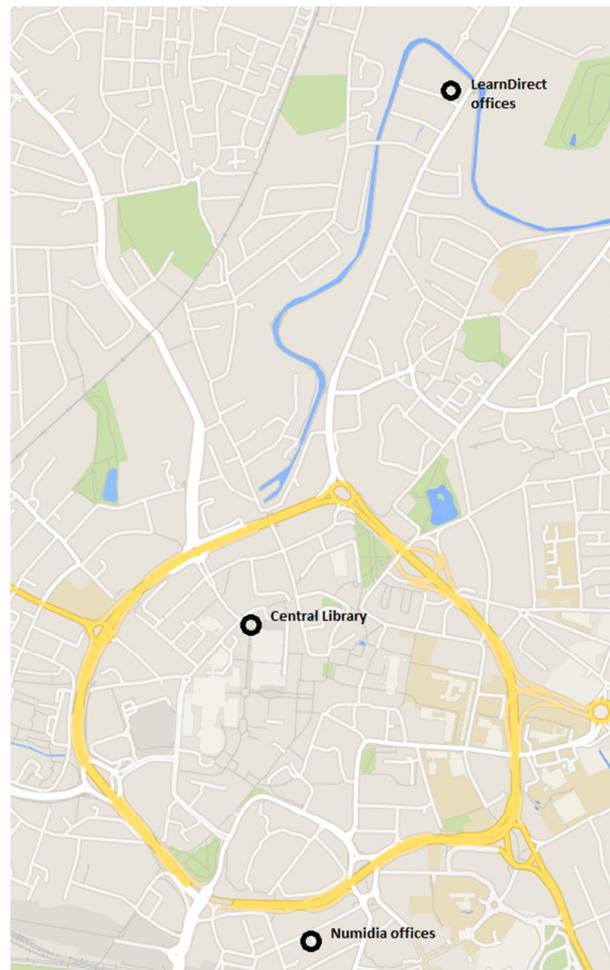


Figure 22: Locations of the City's 3 testing centres, previous and current (2015)

As I found whilst trying to access the site and as is clear in this map, the test, which had previously been held in a municipal building in a central, easily identifiable and accessible location, had moved twice in two years, firstly to a private provider located just outside the city centre, and then to *learndirect*'s own offices, positioned

in a suburb on the outskirts of the city at least 25 minutes on foot from the centre. I find this spatial distribution interesting; it offers a tangible indication of the shift away from a central, community-based service located firmly in the public sphere – the City’s library being a particularly visible example of an accessible municipal site – to a privatised system in which individual accessibility is of secondary concern. Indeed, in terms of the site itself, the *learndirect* building carries the signifiers of a typical corporate venue: a large office building with a spacious, modern foyer, two receptionists at a main desk, a *learndirect* logo on the wall, and a coffee bar to the left as you enter. Access in and out of the building is carefully monitored by the reception staff – all visitors must sign in as they enter – and there are very few spaces to wait, apart from a small seating area directly opposite the reception desk where all visitors are continuously visible.

In fact, my only movement was carefully monitored and controlled when I visited the site to take my own test: having arrived early, I waited in the coffee bar but was soon asked to leave the café if I was not planning to purchase one of their products. And, at the end of the test, I sat for some time in front of the main entrance doors talking to other test-takers as they emerged from the exam and observing the arrival of the next cohort of candidates. After some time, however, I was approached by one of the reception staff who asked me politely but firmly to move to the side of the building rather than standing at the front. In these moments of exclusion, I note that this new site is not a space designed principally for public use but is rather a corporate venue seeking to ensure maximum profit in the café, and maximum security and order both inside and outside the site. Just as MacDonald and Hunter (2013) found in their examination of Olympics venues, the securitised practices evident within airports and other border spaces are here reproduced elsewhere in the public realm.

And *learndirect* as an organisation also warrants some discussion: established by the Labour government in 2000, they describe themselves as the ‘UK’s largest provider of skills, training and employment services’ and were originally funded by the

government-financed Ufi Charitable Trust. In 2011, however, this not-for-profit organisation sold *learndirect* to Lloyds Development Capital (LDC), a private equity firm who have been running *learndirect* since. I am unable to speculate on the particular financial arrangements that may exist between the government and *learndirect*/LDC to run the *Life in the UK* test; indeed I note that the contract between the Home Office and *learndirect* was seemingly only made public following a Freedom of Information request in March 2014, and sections of the contract have, according to Aradau (2015: 4), been redacted in this public release. Regardless of the specifics, however, it is clear that, while the test may be constructed by the government and the materials Home Office-produced, the examination itself is essentially administered by a private corporation. During one of our conversations, Alex questioned me about *learndirect*, asking if I knew anything about the organisation. When I explained my understanding that it had been government and charity-run and subsidised before being sold to a private company, her remark – well, “public company” is an oxymoron to me’ – echoed the concerns expressed by Bahadir over the apparent application of market values to the testing process.

This is not to argue that an absolute market has now been constructed around citizenship – there is not the competition expected in a marketised system as the state ultimately maintains a monopoly over all aspects of the regime; it is only in the *Life in the UK* training materials that any real competition can be said to exist. However, I maintain here that a market structure has developed around the delivery of citizenship in which the regime is increasingly oriented towards the maximisation of state profit and, in certain instances, towards the withdrawal of the state in favour of private providers. As Sparke (2006) notes in his analysis of the biopolitics of citizenship, neoliberal ideals work towards the ‘refashioning [of] state practices in the idealised image of the free market’, and this articulation of neoliberal rationality does resonate with the practices examined in this section. While this commodification may work in an exclusionary manner, actively restricting some who wish to access citizen-status and resulting perhaps in the total exclusion of certain subjects from membership as citizens, it also sets up an economic

relationship between state and subject whereby the former seeks to follow economic ‘criteria of judgement’ in an arena previously governed by ‘bureaucratic and social logics’ (Rose, 1999: 146) and the latter are directed, willingly or otherwise, into the role of consumer and customer, thereby reproducing certain economic logics into the citizenship regime.

5.2.2 Responsibilisation: ‘I kept working working working [...] I prepared myself’

In the context of the practices described above, it is also revealing to note the apparent invisibility of the state at several points in the naturalisation process, evidenced in the difficulties many of the participants faced in accessing advice during their citizenship applications. While the gov.uk website was regarded by all the individuals I spoke to as a clear and helpful resource, difficulties arose when people required extra support or advice which was not covered in this online space. Bahadir expressed his frustration at finding that ‘you can't find any information from real people online or on the phone’ while Russ similarly noted that ‘there's nobody really to complain to’. Alex expressed more obvious irritation when she told me about her own attempts to contact the Home Office only to find that she was kept waiting in an automated queue for an hour and a half:

I think I told you before how long did I spend an hour and a half on the phone trying to get through an hour and a half of recorded messages until I hung up because I just couldn't get through

And similarly Evelyn also struggled to gain access to any individual with whom to discuss her application as she waited for it to be approved:

I had to call the [...] Home Office [...] then nobody can y'know [...] nobody [...] I didn't find anybody to talk to because it's like they're on a call centre y'know so you

don't know who's responsible and then you need to have a
[.] solicitor or something then they can give you advice
because they're not giving advice on this thing

As she explained here, the issue is not only the difficulty in actually finding an individual with whom to discuss citizenship concerns, but also that even if someone is available, they are not in fact employed to give advice on individual applications, thus expensive legal support is the only option.

For John, this was particularly problematic as he was forced to wait for an entire year before being told he had been granted citizen-status. He understood that this was due to his Eritrean nationality, that those individuals applying from an Eritrean background are subject to different checks from other applicants; however, he was never told this directly, rather he was forced simply to wait as the months went by with no response. He recalled a sense of extreme anxiety as he heard rumours amongst Eritrean friends that those who entered the country illegally as he had would be unable to secure citizen-status until they had exceeded 10 rather than 5 years of residence in the UK. And he described his incredible relief and happiness on finally hearing that his application had been successful – ‘oh! I can't tell you how happy I was’! It was not only the fact that he was kept waiting for so long which was significant here; rather it was the invisibility of the state throughout the process which was key as it forced him to turn to informal networks and unsubstantiated rumours to gain any information on the possible status of his application.

And it is not only in the application process that the state appears to have withdrawn, but also in the services offered at the citizenship ceremony. I was interested to learn from the registrars that, until 2013, a representative from the electoral services would be present at every ceremony in the City to explain to new citizens how to access the electoral register. This is not a trivial matter – Amy, the Senior Administrator, showed me a paper noting how important it is to be on the electoral roll as it can otherwise affect an individual's credit rating and their ability to access a mortgage.

Now however, there is no council representative at the ceremony; rather, a piece of paper is added to each new citizen's 'naturalisation pack' with instructions on how to register for themselves online. And in much the same way, previous ceremonies would also see the attendance of a representative from the fire service who would circulate free smoke alarms and discuss fire safety issues with attendees. As Amy told me, however, this post was made redundant three years ago and replaced with a simple note from the fire service on fire-prevention measures. Since I began observing the ceremony however, even this note has now disappeared and there is no mention of the fire service at all.

The result of this apparent withdrawal of the state, symptomatic of the austerity politics of the contemporary UK, is an increased responsibility on the part of the individual applicant. They themselves must deal with their own concerns and, if they encounter any obstacles, must source their own support, either through informal networks or through paid advisors. And this again speaks to the neoliberal logics at play in the citizenship regime. As Chopra (2003: 424) argues, indicative of a neoliberal rationality is the rejection of the social in favour of 'an atomistic fiction of individuals [...] (who) have to bear responsibility for the situations in which they find themselves', a process Miller and Rose, in their analysis of 'welfarism', term 'responsibilisation' (2008: 77). Here, it is through the individual's own responsibility and enterprise that their own well-being will be ensured; each individual economic actor thus becomes responsible for their own decisions and their own self-governance (Rose, 1999: 138). In this sense, the invisibility of the state can be read as a technique for government through which self-care, responsibility, and rationality can be inscribed on the citizen-candidate.

This process of responsibilisation is particularly evident in the removal of the pedagogic other in the *Life in the UK* test preparation process. Certainly, both the test route and the now-obsolete ESOL with citizenship programme each demanded active participation from the citizen-candidate. In both routes, the individual would pay, study, and 'improve' themselves in order to demonstrate their suitability for

acceptance as legitimate citizens (Turner, 2014), as discussed in Chapter 4. However, with the ESOL route, prospective citizens would undertake their ‘training’ within a specific pedagogic space in which they could actively participate and interact with other candidates (Kiwani, 2011), gaining support and advice from other learners, from teachers, and from the multiple networks available within an FE site. Certainly that is not to say that the ESOL classroom would inevitably be a positive setting in which learners could engage in critical engagement with the materials and tests; indeed, as is widely noted by critical pedagogy scholars (Freire, 1970; Gur Ze’ev, 2005; Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005), classroom contexts are often deeply hierarchical spaces in which certain truths are reinforced, and social inequalities and unequal power relations are reproduced (Lin, 1999: 394). However, with the removal of the option to both study and demonstrate ‘sufficient’ Knowledge of Life in the UK within a classroom context, any social interaction has been removed from the testing process; now, the responsibility for preparing for the test rests solely with the individual candidate. The test, as I described in section 3.2.3.2, is booked online by each individual through an automated system, and prospective candidates can choose to buy the preparatory materials discussed earlier if they wish, but this is not a requirement. There is no set time frame during which applicants should/must prepare for their test – they can book and sit the examination at any point they choose.

Rather than following a curriculum and the practices constructed within a classroom, the individual is therefore now required to act entirely on their own behalf, demonstrating their own self-motivation and self-sufficiency (Nyers, 2009). And several of the people I spoke to gave accounts of their test preparation in which they described an entirely individual process in which they worked alone over the course of weeks or months. Antje, for instance, carried the test materials in her bag to and from work, taking notes on every train journey for a period of months, her everyday life thus saturated with this particular pedagogic discourse. Maria Elena also described her weekly, sometimes nightly, revision sessions during which she worked alone, highlighting pages of the guidebook as she read it from beginning to end, a

process she described as ‘answer and answer and it’s always repeat repeat’.

For others, this was not an entirely solitary endeavour – the support of informal networks was key in their test preparation. Cindy and Russ worked together, reading the guidebook to one another, discussing points they find interesting, and testing one another on each section. Similarly Saroj and her husband also collaborated, the test encroaching on their mealtimes and weekends as they discussed the materials and tested one another over a period of several months. Amusingly, they frequently used the *Horrid Henry* children’s television series as a study aid.

Gumaa also relied both on the support of her husband and of the friends she had met who had themselves been through the citizenship process. And for Johannes, this support was particularly targeted as his wife took three attempts to pass the test. Indeed, he actually took numerous days off work to help her prepare, explaining to me that:

if I’m at home let’s go I had like this book name by name
date by date how to take it in her mind so then finally
she passed

Without these personal support structures in place, there is a sense that the individual burden may have been too great for Johannes’ wife, that she would perhaps have struggled to deal with this test preparation entirely on her own.

Indeed, for those who do not have the support of family and friends, this individual learning can be an arduous task. John gave a particularly pertinent account of his own revision which is worth dwelling on here:

I read it every er every chapter for example I read one
chapter a day and then the second day when I get time the
second chapter or something and then in the internet there

is a question and answer which if you go to google and ask 'life in the UK test question and answer' there is a lot of like 48 48 questions which is one question it includes I don't know 24 questions or something so it is 48 times that one so yeah it gives you a lot of confidence so when I finished this one that book I prepared myself I tried to answer myself how could I get it and like sometimes I got 20 out of 24 sometimes 24 out of 24 sometimes 18 sometimes so I kept working working working in that month then I know most of the time 90% I prepare myself I can pass now then I book the test and then I passed and so that's why I prepared myself to do that one yeah

From this extract, it is clear the extent to which John trained in preparation for the exam. As I mentioned, he had failed his first test because he had bought the wrong book, and he was determined to make sure this did not happen a second time. As such, and as he describes here, he read through every chapter of the guidebook before moving on to the multiple resources he had found on the internet for further help, working through 48 example tests. At a very conservative estimate, he is likely thus to have answered at least 1000 practice questions in preparation. And he recognised the time spent here, the repetition in the phrase 'I kept working working working' indicating the effort he put in and the reflexive 'I prepared myself' emphasising the personal responsibility he took for his own revision.

And his experience of the test itself, even the second time, was an anxious one – he described it as 'oh! very nerve-wracking' and 'very [...] scary'. Significantly, this was in marked contrast to the way he spoke about his English language test; in fact, when I asked if he was nervous as he waited for the English language results, he said 'no not really', going on to explain that:

we practised yeah we do practice more and more time in 3 weeks' time then the teacher told me 'you don't have any problem if you do like what I did now you gonna pass' then

after that on the test time I did it properly and I didn't have any problem

I read from this extract that one of the reasons for his lack of concern during the English test was his confidence and his understanding of the test. His teacher had coached the class carefully, practising ways to pass the exam, and John was therefore clear that he would be successful as long as he put into practice the training he had received. In marked contrast, for the *LUK* test he had had no pedagogic other to scaffold his learning, no one to support him through the process and provide examination advice; this had thus been a solitary and anxious experience for John in which he had taken sole responsibility for his own training.

I should disrupt this narrative slightly here to comment on the resistance I encountered from one particular test-taker to this self-directed process. While all the individuals who took part in a formal interview told me about the hours they had spent preparing for the examination, I was surprised to hear one testing candidate at the test centre telling another that he had bought the book but 'hadn't really read anything'. In fact, he appeared to have done very little research on the examination at all, asking if the test would be done on a computer, and how many questions he should expect to answer. And yet, I later discovered that he had passed the examination. When I asked him how he felt about that, he told me he was 'astonished'. Here then, there is only a partial accession to state impositions – while this test-taker had bought the materials, and had paid tribute to the state in sitting the examination and reproducing its truths, he had seemingly refused to 'work upon' himself (Turner, 2014) in the process, relying rather on luck and his own judgement on the day.

For the majority of the test-takers I encountered however, studying for the test could be said to operate as something of a 'self-steering mechanism' (Chisari, 2012) in which they were required to teach themselves both the requisite knowledge and the required conduct to become a British citizen. The proper citizen thus demonstrates their willingness to integrate into the polity by securing their own well-being through

active self-promotion and self-motivation (Walters, 2011; Gianni, 2013); in order to be granted access to the citizenry, candidates must thus actively participate in their own judgement, taking personal responsibility for their own self-improvement (Turner, 2014). This devolution of responsibility to the individual is again indicative of the neoliberal logics at play in the contemporary citizenship regime, the construction of a solitary, individualised pedagogic endeavour in the *Life in the UK* test working towards the legitimisation or ‘cultivation’ (Sparke, 2006) of a particular type of neoliberal citizen – responsible, rational (van Houdt et al, 2011), self-promoting and self-policing (Sparke, 2006).

5.2.3 Realising *homo economicus*: the deserving, contributing subject

Finally, in a context in which the social domain is refashioned in the form of the economic sphere, and the individual increasingly takes responsibility for regulating and advancing him/herself (van Houdt et al, 2011), so *homo economicus*, the economic agent, becomes, as Lemke (2001: 200) puts it, the ‘central point of reference’. Here, the individual is positioned as a rational actor seeking at all times and in all instances to further their own net wealth positions (Peters, 2001), whilst, simultaneously, the state increasingly withdraws itself from each individual’s personal financial concerns. The so-called welfare state, criticised as the epitome of excessive government, is thus necessarily dismantled as inefficient, interventionist, and indeed futile (Rose, 1999: 140), and, in turn, the subject who fails to maximise their economic worth is deemed to varying degrees illegitimate, undeserving of their place in the national community. As Anderson (2013) points out, this affects the citizen as much as the non-citizen, with the figure of the ‘Benefit Scrounger’ equally implicated in the articulation of the outsider as the non-citizen and the ‘Illegal Immigrant’. These naturalised categories of subject are then only contingently accepted, forced to struggle for recognition and legitimacy as members of the national polity.

And this notion of the accepted, or perhaps in this case deserving, citizen is epitomised by the decision to simplify paths to settlement, often a necessary pre-

condition before citizenship, for those with £2 million and over to invest in the UK (Anderson, 2013). As discussed in Chapter 1, this facilitation of settlement and thence citizenship for the so-called ‘brightest and the best’, seemingly here characterised by financial worth rather than any other quality, speaks to the legitimisation of the economic subject over all others. Indeed, Theresa May, in her foreword to a Home Office consultation on family migration (gov.uk, 2011), specifically declared that those who wish to settle in the UK as a spouse to a British citizen:

must not be a burden on the taxpayer. Families should be able to manage their own lives. If a British citizen or a person settled here cannot support their foreign spouse or partner, then they cannot expect the taxpayer to do it for them

Here, May was echoed by David Cameron’s 2013 pronouncements in which he stated that ‘*we’re breaking the link between work and settlement, so that only those who contribute the most economically will be able to stay long-term*’ (Cabinet Office, 2013). Within these declarations, the figure of *homo economicus* is made manifest, epitomised in the rejection of those who may be deemed a ‘burden’ in favour of the self-sufficient economic agent who asks nothing of the state and takes complete responsibility for their own fiscal affairs through their own personal endeavours. And this prioritisation of economic autonomy and responsibility is not only evident in the discourse of elite actors but is enshrined in legislation, with, for instance, the introduction in 2012 of an £18,600 minimum income threshold for British citizens who wish to bring non-EEA spouses into the country.

And interestingly, I see the discourse around *homo economicus* recontextualised in the accounts of several participants in this study. When, for instance, I asked the Lord Mayor to reflect on her perceptions of what it means to become a British citizen, she responded by immediately recounting the story of an individual who appeared to gain access to citizenship through apparently nefarious means. As she

explained it, the daughter of a friend had had an arranged marriage to a non-citizen who subsequently left the relationship as soon as he was legally able to attain his own citizen-status in the country, independent of his spouse. The family then came to realise that the marriage had in fact been arranged solely to facilitate his citizenship claim. The Lord Mayor expressed her sadness and frustration for the family, her feeling that some people attain citizen-status ‘for the wrong reasons’, before turning to ask:

how you sift them out how you find out who the genuine ones who do want to come from another country and be good citizens here and really work hard and those who don't

This process of ‘sifting’, of identifying who is and who is not deserving of a place in the polity indicates the precarious status of the citizen-candidate and thus speaks to Anderson’s (2013) contentions on contingent acceptance (an issue I will explore further in Chapter 7). And crucially here, the Lord Mayor appeared to equate the ‘genuine’, ‘good’ citizen who should be accepted in the national community with the hard *worker* – the self-sufficient, responsible actor who takes on employment and thus contributes economically to the nation. As she went on to say:

how do you- 2 people tick all the boxes and appear the same but one is really passionate and wants to come here and the other is just seeing it y'know to try and get a ticket to a better life without contributing to the country that he or she is moving to

Here, she was not explicit in stating that her focus was economic, although her comment ‘contributing to the country’ could certainly be read as such. However, she was somewhat more direct later when she stated:

really what we're saying is well 'if you come to this country and you're going to work hard you can be a citizen but if you're going to come to this country and you're not

going to do that well then we don't really want you' [.]
but how do you know who is and who isn't?

Again she repeated this emphasis on hard work, this sense that those who adhere to the principles of *homo economicus* – the self-sufficient, responsible, economic actor – should be granted access to the polity, while those who do not demonstrate these priorities should be sifted out, deemed illegitimate and thus refused access to citizen-status. Her concern did not appear to lie with rejecting this dichotomous characterisation, but rather with ascertaining strategies for identifying those who fit the expected criteria and those who do not.

Later in our interaction, the Lord Mayor noted that the figure of the non-contributing migrant is a common trope in media depictions of non-citizens in the UK, and I was interested to see that several of the new citizens/citizen-candidates in this project also repeated this discursive construction in our conversations, referencing (directly or indirectly) broader government and media discourses around migration and the economy, specifically welfare. Maria Elena for instance told me that she knew the UK government was attempting to reduce migration because 'they already afraid for the fund like the public fund', while Evelyn similarly noted an economic justification for reducing immigration and a concern around the issue of social security:

if you're British they think benefits they're thinking
about benefits y'know but no I'm not going to take any I
just want my children

In recognising the public discourse around benefits, Evelyn was particularly keen here to emphasise that she herself was not interested in claiming any financial support, even though she knew she would technically be entitled to do so. Indeed, she made several references to her own employment status and her lack of interest in the benefit system throughout our interaction, saying 'y'know the benefits they

are talking about these things y'know but actually I'm not receiving anything', and later:

I'm not [...] because I'm not I'm not interested actually I just want my family to be with me because I can work y'know I can work

There is a sense in this repetition that Evelyn saw her own legitimacy, her own deservingness of citizen-status, as fundamentally intertwined with her ability to work and her refusal to apply for state support.

And in much the same way, Thandi also articulated a very similar position to Evelyn's, saying: 'I didn't want to go on benefits or anything like that', and noting her own economic contribution to the country:

I just feel that I've given a lot to this country I've worked as well so I've paid my taxes I've done what I have to do as a citizen

Again, Thandi appeared to equate her rightful place as a citizen with her ability to make an economic contribution to the country. And she articulated this powerfully when I asked if she thought that gaining citizen-status would make her feel different or would make other people see her differently in the UK, as I noted in the Introduction:

when you are a citizen the light is different [...] people look I feel people look at you in a different way they don't think maybe you are a scrounger you are a refugee you are someone who is scrounging at their resources you just feel also you have a right to be [...] yeah to belong [...] you have the right to have whatever you have to have because you have also contributed you have brought something into the kitty so you are entitled

As she expresses so poignantly here, it is through her own economic contributions to the country that she gains both the right *and* the legitimacy to access certain resources in the UK. She perceives in other people's reactions a sense that, as a refugee, she is viewed as a scrounger, someone who does not truly belong, but feels that this is different once citizen-status is granted, specifically that others will recognise her financial input to the national 'kitty' and thus deem her worthy of acceptance.

Maria Elena, Evelyn, and Thandi all appear to have raised the subject of benefits and finances spontaneously in our interactions – while of course our conversations were dialogic and co-constructed, hence my own input must inevitably have had an impact on the flow of the interaction, I cannot identify any points at which I myself explicitly raised the subject of contributions or social security. And it is interesting to note that in my interactions with the other participants in this study, the subject of economic contributions and welfare did not appear. The only exception to this was Alex, who did touch on the issue of contribution briefly, reflecting on what she termed a 'cynical approach' which might identify that:

there are good immigrants and bad immigrants and there are immigrants you want to keep happy because they are actually making a contribution and if we get pissed off we will leave

Significantly however, she was not in fact equating the 'good immigrant' with the economic agent here; rather, as she went on to explain, she was referencing the *intellectual* impact made by 'all the academics all the artists all the researchers all the writers'. Indeed, she specifically and explicitly prioritised the potential loss of 'all the intellectuals from Europe' over, as she puts it, 'the rich people'. For Alex then, the responsible, economic actor is of less importance to the nation and carries less intrinsic value than the individual who follows a creative, literary, or academic pursuit and thus contributes in these endeavours.

One explanation for the distinction that seems to have appeared between participants may be the issue of precarity: for Alex, as a university academic with a European passport, she feels secure enough in her position and legitimacy as a citizen-candidate that she is able to provide a counter-discursive articulation, to explicitly reject the prioritisation of economic self-sufficiency in favour of other legitimating qualities. In direct contrast, for Maria Elena, Evelyn, and Thandi – all of whom work in low-waged, somewhat precarious roles in the domestic or care sector – their position as legitimate ‘insiders’ in the national community is perhaps less secure, and, as such, all three women feel the need to justify their own validity and legitimacy as citizens.

Or perhaps this is not so much an issue of precarity, but speaks rather to the internationalisation and reproduction of the good-bad / deserving-undeserving migrant dichotomy (Jones et al, 2017). On this account, Maria Elena, Evelyn, and Thandi actively (if subconsciously) recognise that they themselves may be positioned as ‘bad’ or ‘undeserving’ migrants, and thence must work to validate their own right to be in the UK through a discourse of hyper-productivity (ibid: 125) and an explicit dis-identification with the non-productive other. The fact that none of the other participants in this study felt the need to articulate themselves in relation to this narrative of the model, contributing citizen may indicate certain gendered, racialised, or classed dimensions to this practice: it is perhaps *because* of their positioning as non-white, working-class women that Maria Elena, Evelyn, and Thandi feel compelled to actively disavow the deviant ‘anti-citizen’ with whom they may be associated, to articulate themselves in opposition to this unproductive other, framing their legitimacy in the UK not in terms of an ethical, moral, personal, or legal rightfulness, but in terms of their own ability to adhere to the principles of the proper, neoliberal subject.

Conclusion

“The way the system works [...] it's it's just about the money”

(Johannes, March 2015)

As Johannes articulated here, and as I have argued in this chapter, the contemporary citizenship regime appears to (re)produce certain neoliberal logics in its commodification, its articulation of responsibility, and its legitimization of the self-sufficient economic agent. Increasingly profit-driven, the citizenship process appears to actively privilege those with a certain degree of financial autonomy, with this citizen-candidate then accorded both access to the status itself, and to a certain degree of ownership over their citizenship ‘journey’. In direct contrast, those who lack this financial autonomy must bear a greater burden in attaining citizen-status, working harder to both prove and justify themselves as worthy citizens or risk being screened out of the citizenship system altogether. Both in the discursive articulations of elite actors, and in the processes and practices of the citizenship regime, the Good, legitimate citizen is realised not only through their reproduction of the linguistic and cultural norms described in Chapter 4, but also their positioning, and indeed *self*-positioning as the responsible *homo economicus* – the self-sufficient economic agent whose choices and decisions reflect this sense of personal autonomy and accountability.

Chapter 6: Performance and performativity: (en)acting the state/citizen

“It’s all a performance that doesn’t [...] yeah that doesn’t mean much really”

Bahadir, March 2015

The analysis thus far has indicated the multiple and complex ways through which the legitimacy of the state and of the citizen are articulated. In the following chapter, I seek to build on this analysis by examining the *performances* central to the national citizenship project, and the ways in which the (relations between) state and citizen are enacted through these events.

During the course of our 90-minute interview, as the conversation turned to his private citizenship ceremony, Bahadir mentioned the pledge of allegiance, articulating a sense of ambivalence about this enforced statement. While he expressed a certain amused incredulity that he should be forced to make a personal oath both to the Queen and to all her heirs, including ‘9 month old babies in nappies’, the wry humour in his tone disappeared as he turned to questioning whether, having made this verbal pledge, it would now be ‘ethically acceptable’ for him to be a republican in this country. This uncertainty, and his own intellectual curiosity, had led him to introduce the subject in one of his undergraduate Politics seminars, canvassing his students’ opinions on the meaning and impact of this act. Bahadir seemed persuaded by their collective response that the pledge should be seen simply as a formality which ‘nobody takes seriously of course’; indeed, he went on to describe the act as a simple matter of paying ‘lip service’ to something which no one actually cares about, before declaring emphatically that the

whole citizenship ceremony is really just ‘a performance that doesn’t [...] yeah that doesn’t mean much really’.

It was this comment which caused me to reflect further on the notion of performance, bringing to my attention the many points in my field notes at which I had myself made reference to the staged, scripted, and somewhat manufactured character of both the ceremony and the *Life in the UK* test. This chapter therefore seeks to explore the ways in which the concepts of both performance and of performativity can offer a useful theoretical lens on the citizenisation process as a bordering practice. In doing so, it draws on scholarship around ritual and ceremony (Rai, 2010, 2014a, b; Puwar, 2010) to examine the ways in which elements of performance – space, place, time, costume, and script – may work to realise certain relations between the state and citizen-candidate, naturalising the former’s authority over the latter. Following this, the chapter moves on to consider the test and the ceremony not simply as occasions in which the state can enact its pre-existing power over the compliant citizen, but rather as performative moments, as points at which both state and citizen are actively constituted as such. Here I draw specifically on Austin’s (1962) concept of the speech act to explore the pledge as the key point at which the citizen-candidate is brought into being as the citizen-subject, and examining the degree to which an oath-taker’s own ambivalence towards, or outright rejection of, the pledge may affect the performativity of the act.

6.1 Ritual, ceremony, political performance: the everyday and the hyper-visible

Much of the existing literature on ritual and ceremonial performance can be found in the anthropological field, particularly the work of Victor Turner (1967, 1969), whose investigations into the symbolic structures of Ndembu rituals in Northern Zambia produced thick description and in-depth hermeneutic analysis of the polysemic character of ritual practice. However, there is also a rich body of sociological scholarship, particularly from researchers building neo-Durkheimian arguments on the role played by ceremony and ritual practices in ‘reaffirming’ a social group’s

‘collective sentiments’ (Durkheim, 1915: 427). Shils and Young (1953) for instance saw the British coronation ceremony as ‘a series of ritual affirmations of the moral values necessary to a well-governed and good society’. For these scholars, intermittent ritualistic ceremonies such as the coronation provide an opportunity for a society to re-state its ‘fundamental moral standards’ and are important for the continuation of a social group. Drawing comparable conclusions, Lloyd Warner’s (1959) work on the US Memorial Day similarly positioned this ceremony as a key moment in the unification of the national community, a point at which the unity of the social group can be re-affirmed.

These historical interpretations certainly offer a useful lens on grand celebratory practices; however, they are subject to a key criticism: that is, they appear to presume that social groups somehow possesses certain ‘fundamental’ values; that these values reside within the group, waiting to be articulated during a particular ritual. And yet this position fails to acknowledge the fundamentally constructed character of social practice; indeed, for Hobsbawn (1983), the ‘traditions’ invoked in much neo-Durkheimian scholarship, such as coronations, may appear to reflect an immemorial past and stable national heritage but are themselves invented, produced through the interventions of the élite. It is through these grand ritual gestures, particularly in a context of linguistic, national, and religious heterogeneity, that certain hegemonic beliefs and value systems can be inculcated and certain relations of authority stabilised and legitimised. That is not to say that these neo-Durkheimian accounts must be rejected outright – the point still stands that ceremonial practices can work to (re)affirm a sense of collective unity; however, it is to recognise that these events are not neutral and a-political, rather they should be viewed as particular moments in which the manifestation of political power is made apparent.

With this in mind, I draw on Rai’s (2010, 2014a, 2014b) writing on political performance and the significance of aesthetics in both the ‘politics of art’ and the ‘art of politics’ (2014a), looking to the ways in which ceremony and ritual work to reproduce the ‘codes of power’ (2014b) involved in the stabilisation of particular

social and political relations. I follow Rai's (2010) contention that ceremonies tend to be 'hyper-visible', performed only on particular occasions and staged evocatively, as in the citizenship ceremony, while rituals can be rather more routinized, more 'unselfconscious', (ibid: 286) as may be expected in the test. The separation between the two, however, need not be so marked as both share key similarities in that they tend to be contrived rather than spontaneous, and somewhat stylised. Both too tend to involve repetition, and a precision and order uncommon in the everyday. As Rai (2010: 294) notes then, ceremony and ritual work both through their hyper-visibility, to 'enthral those who must be rendered susceptible', and also through their mundanity, 'obscuring dominance' through a ritualisation and routinisation with which they conceal the mechanisms through which power is enacted.

In analysing the performances in this chapter, I look to the specific spaces in which these acts take place, noting the ways in which the décor, furnishings, and props may 'act on their users' (Yanow, 2000). As Rai (2014b: 5) points out, 'the body on view does not perform in a vacuum; it does so in space/place/time'; in this sense, the space itself, the symbols, stage, layout, and architecture, contribute to the representations of sovereignty and legitimacy. Usefully, Yanow (2000) suggests a number of particular aspects that may be considered in the analysis of space, including size/scale/mass, materials, architectural design, landscaping, and the use of light, all of which are useful elements for my own examination of the citizenship ceremony and the testing centre. In much the same way, Puwar (2010: 299) draws on Lefebvre's (1991) analysis of space as both 'abstract', that is as subject to control, and as 'lived', i.e. as an 'interwoven series of local encounters', focusing her analysis on the ways in which the 'archi-textures' of the UK Parliament building, including elements such as the walls, floors, sculptures, and glass, work to enact and legitimate rituals, rites, and social relations. Again, her analysis takes into account the layout and positioning of certain rooms and the ways in which these features may contribute to the construction of a particular hierarchical asymmetry.

In the next section, I will draw on this scholarship to examine the ways in which both the *Life in the UK* test and the citizenship ceremony can be seen as key performances in which particular social relations, institutions, and modes of behaviour are produced and hypostatized. And whilst examining these impositions of state power, I will also look to identify any moments of disruption and counter-discourse manifested within these events.

6.2 Performing authority and submission

6.2.1 The *Life in the UK* test

To begin with the *Life in the UK* test, there is certainly much scholarship on the examination as a key mechanism of authoritative discipline. Foucault's (1977) seminal analysis of tests and testing processes in *Discipline and Punish* in particular sees the examination as a disciplinary mechanism through which to qualify, to classify, and to punish; the testing process here is a means through which to hierarchise the individual according to a particular norm and thereby to exclude those who do not conform to the expected standard. Building on Foucauldian scholarship, Shohamy (1998: 331) similarly looks to the examination as a means by which to 'determine membership' and 'classify people'. Certainly, in the case of the *LUK* test, the very fact that applicants must pass an exam deemed by the state to determine the appropriate 'knowledge' of UK life, epitomises such authoritative control. Crucially for this chapter, however, Foucault remarks not only on the examination itself, but also on the ritualised nature of the testing process, noting that the practice combines 'the ceremony of power and the form of the experiment, the deployment of force and the establishment of truth' (1977: 184). In this sense, it is both the test itself, and the *performances* associated with the testing event, through which certain relations of power are normalised.

These performances are starkly evident in the field notes I took during my visit to the testing centre. While the actual room in which the test takes place carries all the typical signifiers of a testing environment – separated seating, enforced silence, the

presence of an authoritative invigilator – these are the rather routinized, somewhat mundane practices of most examination events, and it is in fact the moments leading up to the actual test which are of particular interest to me here and which I would perceive as rather more hyper-visible. The reconstructed field notes below describe the point at which the test candidates, myself included, were sent into a waiting room prior to beginning the test:

We are directed to a waiting area – a narrow, rectangular, window-less space with a row of grey seats lining the walls, and, at the far end of the room, a small recess with glass windows and a door in which a woman dressed in formal clothing sits behind a computer. By the time I arrive, most of the (approximately 12) seats are already taken. As I enter, a man is being directed down the corridor, at which point a number of other people stand up to follow him but are told rather brusquely to wait because “you need to be validated before you go in”. We are then instructed to turn our mobile phones off and to have our proof of identity ready. I notice three CCTV cameras built into the ceiling, and a poster on the far wall stating that video-surveillance is in operation in this room. Aside from this notice, the walls are empty and the space feels austere and clinical. A large bank of grey lockers occupies much of the right-hand side of the room.

After a few moments, the woman in the small recess room leans round the door and states that she is “ready” for the next person. As no one responds, she smirks and says “don’t all rush at once”. The person closest to her stands somewhat nervously and enters the recess where the door closes behind them; however the conversation between the official and this test-taker is still audible in the waiting room – I hear her ask the attendee to confirm his name, his date of birth, and his address. After some minutes checking his documentation, she informs him that he is “not allowed to take anything into the test room” and tells him in a stern tone to leave all his belongings, including his watch, in the lockers, but to take his passport and

ID into the next room. Hearing these directions, Damian, a Polish-born man sitting opposite me, smiles in surprise and whispers to the man tapping his foot nervously beside him, “it’s just like the secret service”! The next person is then called to the recess, where, as he produces his paperwork, I hear the official say “I can’t accept that because it’s not been signed” but, moments later, that “luckily” he will be allowed to sit the exam as he has fortuitously brought an alternative piece of paperwork with him. When the third person enters the room and leaves the door slightly ajar, the official directs him to close the door fully behind him before he may sit.

Figure 23: Extract from fieldnotes at the testing centre (10.03.15)

Despite the fact that I personally had no reason to fear the test – my own status as a UK citizen would be unaffected by my results – I found myself somewhat gripped by the anxious atmosphere pervading the waiting area. As I noted in the field notes above, the room itself, or the ‘setting’ in performance terms, was clinical and austere, noticeably lacking the bright, welcoming colours of the main *learndirect* corridors and foyer. With the arrangement of the seats, the test-takers’ gaze was directed towards the line of candidates facing them, a layout which may have facilitated a degree of camaraderie; however the anxious foot-tapping of another can be rather contagious and this layout thus also contributed to a heightened sense of unease. Indeed, Alex recognised this anxiety when she reflected on her own experience of the examination:

for me being in an exam situation is not scary at all it’s my everyday life I was invigilating exams yesterday but for people who maybe never had an exam since they left school y'know 20 years down the line this may actually be quite scary they were very nervous you could hear nervous laughs and some people really retreating in themselves and flipping through the book for a last minute chance of memorising something [.]

Although Alex told me that she personally experienced little by way of anxiety during her test, she was aware that others in the room were much more concerned, as evidenced in their behaviour – their nervous laughter and their focused silence. And this sense of anxiety was clearly articulated in Maria Elena’s description of her testing experience in which she gave a powerful account of her own nerves in the waiting area and her attempts to combat this anxiety by praying:

everyone is nervous [...] because I saw I don’t know the people but the others is doing like that really (tapping feet nervously) and I said ‘why are they doing like that?’ but I said ‘oh my god relax myself I always do like that’ [...] and I pray as well y’know it’s normal nobody can y’know if you pray so I’m just praying as well that y’know give me strength and peace of mind

She went on to recall further the visible anxiety of other individuals in the room, and the ways in which this had affected her:

I’m totally shaking as well really but I try myself not the others stop being like that [...] and the other is standing and because you have free coffee how many times already the other coming for drink for coffee [...] and then if you as well if you feel them you feel like that as well so I think ‘oh my god no I don’t want that’ so I closed my eyes and like that I’m waiting I don’t want to see

In her attempts to combat her own nerves, Maria Elena actually closed her eyes so as to avoid noticing the anxious behaviour of her fellow test-takers, to avoid, in her terms, feeling the way they feel. While, in most other waiting room circumstances, Maria Elena could leave the room momentarily if disturbed by the behaviour of others, or perhaps distract herself with another activity, her movement and possessions were too tightly regulated and controlled to allow this autonomy here; she could close her eyes and pray, but she had to, simultaneously, remain within the designated space and continue to submit to the directions of the testing authority.

Interestingly, while there was some conversation between candidates in our waiting area, this took place in somewhat muted tones, our interactions and asides conducted in near-whispers. I attribute this both to the nerves affecting many if not all the attendees, but also to a sense that our behaviour in the room was tightly controlled, our movements and activities regulated both by the official – whose recess was made of glass and who could therefore see all corners of the waiting room – and also by unseen individuals operating behind the three CCTV cameras on display, and signposted at strategic points across the ceiling. As Salter (2008: 329) notes in his dramaturgical analysis of the airport, the setting ‘communicates the ground-rules for who may speak, what may be said, and what is heard’, and certainly this resonates with my experiences – the awareness of our visibility meaning that I, and perhaps others, felt a sense of constant scrutiny and surveillance, rendering us somewhat cautious, perhaps indeed, in Foucauldian terms, docile and compliant. In this case then, the architecture and features of the space worked here to act on the individual, to ‘provide a hold’ on our conduct (Foucault, 1977: 172).

Added to this panoptic orientation, the absolute imposition that all personal belongings, including watches, must be left in the lockers seemed a remarkable display of security for so mundane an event as an examination. Russ in fact mentioned this in our interview, noting with humour his difficulty exiting the room once he had entered:

Russ: oh one other thing I was going to tell you it was kind of humorous the levels of security that you go through and at one point I had to use the toilet and so you had to there's a special thing you y'know

Rachel: yes to get out of the testing room

Russ: to get out of the testing room and then you have to come back in and yeah they have to check you and make sure you're not bringing anything new in

Rachel: did they make you leave all your stuff in a locker or whatever before you go in?

Cindy: yeah you can't bring anything

Russ: you can't bring anything any cell phone

Cindy: we didn't even bring it into the building to be honest yeah we just didn't

Russ: but your mobile phone or anything any papers everything out y'know

Interestingly, both Russ and Cindy in this extract, and Damian in his comments about the secret service mentioned in the field notes earlier, saw the humour in this hyper-securitisation. And yet, despite the sense of amusement and incredulity, all three submitted to the demands, removing their personal belongings, or, in Cindy's case, leaving them outside the building in the first place. In doing so, they unquestioningly played the role of potential security risk, positioning themselves as latent threats – either to the safety of the building and its occupants, or to the 'integrity' of the test – and working to affirm their legitimacy by acquiescing to the official's demands, whether they perceived these as justified or not.

In terms of the actors involved in the test performance – in this case the official behind the recess – her bureaucratic tone and somewhat condescending manner added to the sense of unease in the room. Thandi, who I had met for the first time at the testing centre, remembered this three weeks after the event, describing the friendly women she had initially encountered in the *learndirect* foyer and contrasting them with the official in the waiting area:

it was a bit intimidating in that room when we were waiting to be called and the lady who was calling and checking you out she was a bit officious a bit threatening and you didn't know whether you were going to get it right

Thandi's comment 'you didn't know whether you were going to get it right' here is particularly interesting – at this point in the process, there is nothing other than the 'validation' of identity to 'get [...] right'; there can be no right and wrong unless an individual tries specifically to adopt another's identity. And yet, the whole performance was so threatening to Thandi that she expressed great unease with her own ability to prove that she was, in fact, herself.

Importantly, Thandi's concerns were not unjustified. On my visit to the testing centre, one candidate re-emerged from the 'verification' recess shaking his head and explained to me that he had been refused entry to the test because the ID he had brought with did not match exactly the spelling of his name as he had submitted it on his form. Surprisingly, he was rather sanguine about this, explaining that this was in fact the second time he had experienced this rejection. When I asked what he would do, he shrugged and replied 'oh I'll just go home and have a cup of tea'; here, he simply acquiesced, unquestioningly, to the official's decision.

Moments after this, it was my own turn to face this refusal as I discovered that my particular identity document, a letter from the electoral services which included my full name and address, did not appear on the Home Office's accepted documentation list. When I questioned this decision, I was told by the official in a neutral and formal tone that this was a Home Office guideline which she was obliged to follow and which was 'clearly laid out on the booking system'. I explained that I was sure the electoral register must also count as sufficient proof, given that it was a government-issued document, and I tried to give reasons for being unable to provide other documentation – I was co-habiting, for instance, and bills were not yet in my name. However, she continued to assert that, while this may be so, 'the Home Office issue guidelines on what we can and can't accept so it's not our choice'. In this claim, she positioned herself as entirely non-agentic, as enacting only the instructions she was given and thus taking no personal responsibility for the decisions she made. However, I did find a way to establish something of an uneasy rapport with her and, in a brief moment of separation from her official persona, she

acknowledged that people are turned away with great regularity for having 'incorrect' paperwork and that they are often deeply distressed by this. I gathered from our interaction that she too finds these moments rather difficult to manage, although whether she is ever able to exercise any discretion was unclear. However, given the sanctions with which officials throughout all levels of society are now subject, as discussed in section 1.2, it is not unreasonable to assume that testing officials may feel particularly anxious to ensure they 'police' candidates' identities carefully.

Having been refused entry to the test, I was presented with this official document:

Dear Candidate,

Unfortunately, we have been unable to validate your test booking today. This is because:

- There was a difference between the **name** on your ID document and the name given when you registered for your test.
- The test supervisors were unable to see a **true likeness** between the photograph in your ID document and you.
- The **date of birth** entered when registering to take the test does not match the date of birth on the ID presented.
- The **nationality** entered when registering to take the test does not match the nationality on the ID presented.
- The **country of birth** entered when registering to take the test does not match the country of birth on the ID presented.
- The **method of ID** which you presented today did not match the ID with which your test booking was made, or this was not one of the accepted forms of ID.
- The **proof of postcode** document was not one of the approved forms of proof or the name on the document did not match your ID.
- The **proof of postcode** document was not within the 3 month timeframe required.
- You did not arrive at the **scheduled time** and there was therefore insufficient time to validate you or the test had already started.
- You were unable to **verbally confirm** the information provided at the point of registering for the test.
- Other

Please Note: We are unable to offer you a refund for a test which was refused for any of the above reasons.

You will now need to log back into your account and book and pay for another test.

Figure 24: My LUK test rejection document (2015)

As shown here, there are at least ten different ways in which a candidate can fail to satisfy the conditions for validation, none of which would allow an individual to seek reimbursement of their £50 fee, or to appeal the decision. There is no signature here, nor any contact details with which an applicant could seek further advice or information; the particular authority/ies – ‘we’ – enacting this refusal are invisible, identifiable only as part of the UKVI body. This de-personalisation speaks back to

the legitimating mechanisms discussed in section 4.2.1, and indicates the ways in which these strategies articulate across citizenship documentation. And the very fact that I failed to provide appropriate documentation, despite my nationality, language proficiency, and level of education, indicates the challenges which citizen-candidates may face throughout the application process. Indeed, Saroj and Maria Elena had also been rejected from their first test on account of the fact that the names on their identification documents did not precisely match the names they had provided on booking the test.

I argue in this section then that it is not simply the fact that there is a gate-keeping test to citizenship which indicates state authority and works to realise certain relations of power. Rather, it is through multiple aspects of the testing event itself – the layout of the room, the features of the space, the practices of the official, and the grand performances of security in the waiting area – that the state performs its absolute authority. As Rai (2015: 1180) argues, to be effective, a performance must be ‘convincing’, it must ‘engage the audience that is its particular target’, and the anxious responses articulated by testing candidates and noted in my own fieldnotes suggest that these displays of sovereign power are indeed persuasive. At the testing centre, citizen-candidates have no choice but to adopt the role assigned to them, submitting to procedures, following instructions, and striving to satisfy the requirements of the official, here acting as Home Office conduit. Thus, as with testing practices in mainstream schooling, I see the assessment event here not as a ‘transparent technical activity’ (Gipps, 1999) but rather as part of an initiation process through which the legitimate citizen-candidate submits to the will of the state, recognises and pays tribute to the state by following its demands, and thus (re)produces the hegemonic relationship between state and citizen-subject.

6.2.2 The ceremony

6.2.2.1 Controlling movement and time

And this realisation of state authority is also evident in the citizenship ceremony. In this case, the event is grand, undoubtedly hyper-visible, with typically theatrical features including costume, script, and staged entrances. In the City, the ceremony takes place at the Town Hall. The entrance to the building is striking – an abundance of dark wood panelling on the walls and wide, wooden staircases opposite the entrance-way. The building is used predominantly for rather mundane activities – the payment of overdue parking fines, for instance – and many appear to move comfortably through its corridors. However, in the year I spent attending the ceremony, I noted with interest that individuals arriving for the citizenship ceremony would often pause in some confusion as they entered the building, seemingly unsure of their next steps. A security guard stands to the right of the entrance and a reception desk to the left, giving the impression that individuals should be accorded permission before they move further into the building, and I regularly saw ceremony attendees hesitate in the doorway until the security guard directed them to the reception desk. From there, the receptionist tells attendees to wait in a small room across the corridor, decorated in a rather bland style, where they are asked to stay until they are collected by a citizenship official and taken to the ceremony room. Interestingly, in a year's worth of observations, I never saw attendees re-emerge from this waiting room until the official gave permission to move on to the ceremony room.

Along with this control of individuals' movement, time is also regulated from the moment they enter the Town Hall. Every week I would hear the security guard tell overly-punctual ceremony attendees that they had arrived too early and direct them to leave the building and return only at 10.40. Interestingly, however, this temporal control was not enacted equally on all participants. On one observation, *I* sat, as normal, at around 10.15 by the entrance to the Town Hall and greeted the receptionist, who did not recognise me. She asked if I needed any help and I

explained I was there for the citizenship ceremony, to which she looked rather surprised and said ‘oh you’re quite early’. When I reminded her that I usually came here early to meet the registrars, she realised who I was and replied, ‘oh yes of course, well you’re allowed to be early’. I found this statement rather illuminating – it indicated my purposeful and explicit exclusion from the regulation of time to which others are expected to submit. And I read this control of both time and movement as a further example of the imposition of authority upon the citizen-candidate – again, as with the *LUK* test, their ability to make agentic decisions is suppressed as soon as they enter the ceremonial building, their role in the event is necessarily compliant and submissive.

At around 10.45, attendees are collected en masse from the waiting room by a registrar, led up the grand staircase and directed to form a queue outside the ceremony room with their Home Office letter and photo ID ready. Once their documentation has been checked by one of the officials, usually Amy, they are given an oath or affirmation card, depending on their choice, directed to the entrance of the ceremony room, and asked to wait again while their names are taken for a second time by another official, usually the Superintendent Registrar on duty that day. As they finally enter the ceremony room, music plays quietly from an old CD player at the front of the room, the faint strains of *Land of Hope and Glory*, *Rule Britannia*, *Jerusalem*, and *Auld Lang Syne* emanating from Amy’s ‘Now That’s What I Call Britain’ CD. I have included a copy of the CD track list for interest in Appendix H, and will consider this musical element further in the next chapter.

6.2.2.2 Constructing the space

The room in which the ceremony takes place (see Figures 26 and 27 below) is a large chamber which can accommodate approximately eighty people and is typically used for council meetings. Again, it is clad throughout in very dark wood and there are four sizeable portraits hanging on the walls on both sides of the room, three of which depict the Queen at various stages in her life. These visible manifestations of the Crown sit alongside plaques and formal portraits of previous Lord Mayors which

adorn each wooden wall panel. The ceiling is high with heavy wooden beams across both sides, a viewing gallery positioned at the back of the room, and stained glass windows across the front. The seating is arranged in a horseshoe shape with pews facing towards a large, raised ‘throne’ at the front. This ‘throne’ consists of three seats, the middle seat positioned higher than the two on either side, each set into an ornately carved, slightly raised, wooden structure. It is here that the Lord Mayor (or Deputy Lord Mayor) and any attending dignitaries will sit for the duration of the ceremony.

On a desk in front of the pews sit the ceremonial scrolls, rolled and tied with a ribbon ready to be given to each individual. An image of the scroll is reproduced below, with all references to the City, and the image of the City’s crest, redacted:

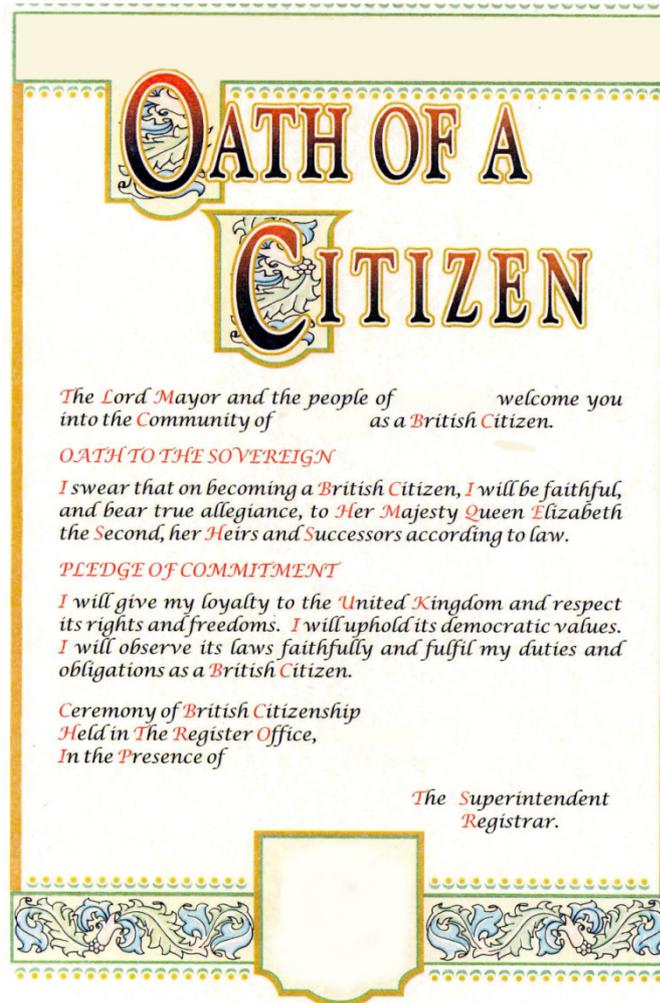


Figure 25: Ceremony scroll

These scrolls are commemorative and serve no practical purpose – indeed Antje laughed as she recalled the ‘little scrolly bit’ rolling around on her desk at home until she ‘stuffed it in a drawer or something with the old postcards and memorabilia’. However, Amy told me with some excitement about the time and energy invested in these objects by the officials:

we’ve got lots of ribbon we went mad because we ran out and then we ordered loads on e-bay we roll our own scrolls here

And I should note that these scrolls are specific to this particular location: some councils give no gifts, while others give pens or keyrings, for instance, at the end of the ceremony.

To the right of the ‘throne’, a large portrait of the Queen rests on a stand, and next to this a union flag. Interestingly, this portrait of the Queen is identical to the one which could be seen in the Department for Communities and Local Government reception area before they moved offices in 2014.¹⁶ This is exceptional – images of the monarchy are rarely if ever encountered in the everyday, and indicates again the hyper-visibility of this event. The white sign visible to the right of the portrait in Figure 26 displays an arrow and the antiquated word ‘Armoury’.

Due to the layout of the room and the positioning of the props, the gaze of attendees and their guests is directed, throughout the entire ceremony, at the three, key manifestations of the state – the image of the Queen, the Union flag, and the dignitaries, positioned on their throne ahead. Just as Puwar (2010) notes in her analysis of the parliament building, there is a particular ‘architectural split’ here, a horizontal divide between the audience – those attending the ceremony – and the officials, a manifestation of the hierarchical asymmetry evident in the room. The fact that the throne is raised to a slightly higher level than the other seats is a particularly marked display of state power, reinforcing, as Lefebvre (1991: 225) would note, the ‘sacred aspect of authority’, and thereby working to secure further the dominant social relations at work (Rai, 2010).

¹⁶ As I noted in footnote 8, section 3.2.4.1, I conducted an internship at the Department for Communities and Local Government during the course of this research and was surprised to see the same portrait of the Queen used in both these contexts.



Figure 26: View from the gallery above the ceremony room (25.02.15)



Figure 27: Close-up of the 'stage' (08.07.15)

Figures 26 and 27 show the ceremonial room from the perspective of the viewing gallery, with the throne, flag, portrait, and scrolls visible. Interestingly, I should note that the portrait of the Queen shown in Figure 27 was located in a more prominent position during this July ceremony than in previous events, and partially obscured the flag.

The ceremonial space is, of course, specific to each individual location, and from the perspective of the officials it does indeed play a key part in the performance of the event. The Deputy Lord Lieutenant, for instance, views the room as significant in providing a sense of occasion, in adding an important element to the ceremony.

I think it's important that there is a degree of sort of [...] not pomp's the wrong word but actually sort of occasion to it and I think it's nice that they do it in the council chamber [...] Stafford do it in the county building which again is a nice room [...] I mean my daughter-in-law actually is Taiwanese and she got citizenship in Westminster and that was very much sort of in and out of a concrete room almost like a sausage machine so there wasn't any degree of occasion particularly there [...] so I think that's important

Similarly, the Lord Mayor described the importance she attaches to its grandeur:

I think what's nice about (the City) is we do it in our main council chamber where we [...] it is quite nice it's a hundred year old building a lot of wood panelling so it does give it quite a nice feel of importance y'know it's not just in an office somewhere so to speak it is in a special special place and has a bit of grandeur about it which I think just adds a touch to the ceremony

The architecture of any given setting is not, in and of itself, transparent, its particular qualities do not reside within it; rather, its meanings are socially constructed. And in

this instance, the officials play a key part in the discursive articulation of the ceremonial chamber as ‘special’, as exceptional, as befitting the perceived importance of the occasion.

Interestingly, however, the room itself was rarely remarked on by the ten citizen-candidates I interviewed. While Antje did mention that the space was rather ‘grand’, and Russ and Cindy recalled a sense of formality and a certain ‘regal’ feel, none of the other participants made any specific mention of the building or the ceremony room. When pushed specifically on this point, John said simply ‘I just expecting like that to be honest’. This surprised me, particularly as I had noted during my own observations the visible surprise shown by many attendees as they entered the room. I had seen many individuals move with caution through the pews, seemingly concerned that they make take an inappropriate step in this imposing space, and I often watched attendees taking photographs of the room before and after the ceremony; indeed, in my informal conversations with attendees after each ceremony, people would always comment on how impressive they had found the space. The silence from interviewees on the subject during our interviews may be seen as demonstrating a degree of resistance to official expectation, something of a counter-hegemonic discourse on the subject. Or perhaps the reason for this lack of comment is somewhat more mundane – that the impact of the building fades in people’s memories and is not something recalled as readily as their responses to the oath, for instance; or perhaps rather that the feelings invoked by the building are somewhat intangible and difficult to articulate in an interview some time after the event.

6.2.2.3 Choreographing movement, costume, and script

At 11am, the ceremony begins with the Superintendent Registrar making a number of announcements, including the statement that all mobile phones should be turned off during the ceremony, and that children are welcome to stay in the room for the duration of the ceremony but should be taken outside if they become disruptive – in fact, on two separate occasions, Bernie, the Superintendent Registrar, did stop the

ceremony to politely but firmly request that a disruptive child be removed temporarily from the room. The announcements are akin to those that may be expected before a concert or theatrical production, and set the tone for the scripted, highly choreographed event that is to come. As soon as this rather mundane statement is complete, it comes as something of a surprise to hear someone knocking three times, slowly and loudly, on the wall next to a door on the left hand side of the room. This does not happen at every ceremony – there is one particular Mayoral Officer who chooses to knock – but it often took me by surprise, and appears to be an effective way in which to command people’s attention as the majority of the room each time turned to look at the doorway. After the third knock, the Officer then proclaims loudly: ‘please be upstanding for the right worshipful Lord Mayor’, at which point the whole congregation stands, calling to mind Foucault’s (1977: 166) notion of ‘signalisation’ in which the soldier is trained to react to a signal regardless of his own attitude to the injunction. At this point, the Lord Mayor or Deputy Lord Mayor (henceforth LM or DLM) enters the room dressed in full regalia including either a black and gold, gilt-fringed cloak and a heavy gold chain, or in the DLM’s case a green and gilt-edged gown, and walks across the front of the room and up the steps to take his/her position on the ‘throne’. On each occasion, the LM/DLM has taken this walk slowly, hands behind back, and I have noticed that most if not all attendees have watched his/her progress to the throne intently.

Since January 2015, a representative of the Crown – a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of the region (henceforth DLL) – has also attended the ceremony. Notably, and indicating a gendered dimension to these practices, on the single occasion this was a female official her clothing was formal but non-uniform; however, in contrast, male representatives are always clothed in military-style uniforms, black and red-trimmed costumes with gold epaulettes and silver spurs on the back of each boot which chime with each step; as they enter the room, the sound of the DLL’s spurs is usually the only audible noise. DLL M, once an engineer in the Territorial Army, also wears a black and gold-rimmed hat and carries a long, silver sword across his waistband. As he confirmed during our interview, members of the lieutenancy only dress in such uniform on specific, formal occasions, and their decision to don their uniforms thus

reflects the perceived ‘pomp and circumstance’ of the citizenship ceremony. Since the introduction of the DLL in every ceremony, the Crown is now explicitly emphasised, indeed personified, in the event; the DLL’s role being to represent and, in DLL M’s terms, ‘uphold dignity’ for the Queen. The ceremonial clothing is evidenced in Figure 28 below, which shows the Lord Mayor, a Deputy Lord Lieutenant, and one of the Mayoral Officers whose role is to pass the ceremonial scrolls to the officials:



**Figure 28: Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Mayoral Officer
(06.05.15)**

Jane, an administrator in the Lord Mayor’s office for over 20 years and one of the key choreographers of the citizenship ceremony in the City, described the decision to involve the Lieutenancy in the ceremony:

it’s a visual thing it’s so that they can be seen and for the recipient’s perspective seeing the gentlemen in their

uniform [.] or y'know all looking very smart representing the palace and we thought it'd be more special for the recipients

As she noted here, the presence of the lieutenancy in full military regalia was explicitly designed to provoke a particular reaction in the audience, the aesthetics here working to realise a certain affective response, as I will discuss further in Chapter 7.

Following the entrance of the two dignitaries, a tightly-scripted ceremony unfolds. The Superintendent Registrar makes a short speech welcoming attendees and inviting the LM/DLM to give an official welcome, at which point s/he makes a brief statement, occasionally partially extemporised but predominantly scripted, in which attendees are always told that this ‘ought to be one of the most important days of your life’, congratulated on becoming British citizens, and welcomed to the City and to their ceremony. The Superintendent Registrar then resumes her speech, spending several minutes speaking about the City, its developments over the past few years, its economic achievements and its successes on a global stage before commenting specifically on the subject of citizenship by stating that British citizenship means showing ‘*tolerance and respect for others*’, that attendees ‘*will be joining a community made up of many different backgrounds, cultures and faiths*’, and that they will now have the right to work anywhere in the EU. I will return to this speech for further comment in Chapter 7. Having finished this prepared statement, attendees are then directed to make their pledge of loyalty to the sovereign and their promise to ‘*observe the laws of this country*’ (more on which in section 6.3).

Once these statements have been made, each attendee is called to the front of the room to collect their ceremonial scroll from the LM/DLM and DLL, and their Home Office naturalisation pack from the registrars. This can be a lengthy process, akin to a graduation ceremony, particularly if the numbers of attendees is large. In general, few if any words are exchanged as attendees and dignitaries shake hands, although new citizens will often pause while family take photographs at this moment. Finally,

once all scrolls and Home Office packs have been collected, attendees are told to stand for the national anthem, which is played from Amy's 'Now That's What I Call Britain' CD and throughout which the DLL will salute in a further military gesture, and then remain standing as the LM/DLM and DLL leave the room.

The ceremony script is followed with absolute precision – I did not hear a registrar deviate even minutely from it – and is written in a rather formal style. Interestingly, while the wording of the pledge is imposed by the Home Office and is as such uniform across the country, the rest of the script is left to the discretion of the individual council, in this case, Jane. She was responsible for constructing the very first ceremony script in 2005 and explained to me that, as a Master of Ceremonies for many of the ceremonies delivered by the LM, she knew the 'typical protocol and flowery ceremonial wording' expected in such a script. In fact, due to her particular expertise, Jane actually sent her wording round to several of her counterparts in other councils to act as a model for their scripts. Despite the clear involvement of council officials in this speech however, the ceremonial, rather traditional wording, plus the fact that the registrar follows the script with absolute precision from a formal black folder, lends it an air of unquestionable authority. Rather than being produced by a particular individual working in the council offices and therefore perhaps subject to questions, doubts, disruptions, the script thus appears instead to have been bestowed upon the council from a higher authority, an authority with the power and legitimacy to define the meaning of citizenship, to delineate the expected practices of new citizens, to decide the particular qualities of the City in question.

In fact, whilst explaining to me that the citizenship ceremony tries to demonstrate to new citizens that they must 'respect' both fellow individuals and the nation as a whole, the DLM then goes on to tell me in our interview that:

well one tries to instil a value into them [...] and what are their duties y'know it's not a one way system it's a two way system and they've got to give

His use of the term ‘instil’ here is notable, again giving an impression of an incontestable authority demanding submission from the passive citizen-candidate.

Interestingly, however, despite the DLM’s expressed wish to inculcate certain beliefs or practices into the audience, the new citizens I interviewed generally had little to say about the officials’ speeches. For John, there was simply a feeling of relief and pleasure that the speeches were over quickly:

I was expecting more speeches from those people and they took one by one and when they finish blah blah but it wasn’t like that it was easy and very very short which is very good

In much the same way, Cindy and Russ also described their surprise and pleasure at the brevity of the script:

Cindy: I thought it would be longer (Russ: I thought it would be a lot) and with a lot more blathering going on (Russ: I thought it would be a little) and it wasn’t [.] it actually all that was said was very pleasant even though it was formal and it was regal

Despite the fact that the officials deemed these speeches crucial aspects of the ceremony and worked carefully to ensure they were appropriately worded, they do appear from my interactions with new citizens to be a somewhat unmemorable aspect of the event. Bahadir and Saroj recalled a little more specifically the fact that they were welcomed – for Bahadir it was ‘all very rosy text and welcoming me into that family into this family’; similarly Antje remembered that ‘there was a bit of a y’know a speech about how we were now part of the family which was kind of nice obviously’. However, there is no sense here of any imposition of authority, no comment on any of the content of the script; the main message taken is simply that of welcoming.

And yet while the individuals in this project may have perceived this welcome in a positive light, the very fact that the officials and dignitaries are given a platform to make such a welcome is indicative once again of the relations of power at work during this event and the articulation of a certain relationship between state and citizen. Many of the attendees will have been living in the City and/or the UK for decades and could reasonably thus resent the implication that they are newcomers to the nation in need of a formal welcome (Byrne, 2014: 141). Indeed, the very act of welcoming positions the attendee as a migrant subject, invited into the body politic by a gracious authority with the power to decide who is, and who is not, included. It is particularly important to note on this point that the legacy of Britain's colonial past means that certain attendees, Thandi from Zimbabwe and Saroj from India for instance, may at one time have been defined as British subjects, but are now subject to the exclusionary practices of the postcolonial period. In fact, Thandi does mention this, explaining with no visible sense of anger that her husband was a British citizen but that she was unable to automatically claim citizen-status for herself because he had failed to renew his British passport after Zimbabwean independence. This denial of citizen-status to the subjects of Britain's former colonies, and the racialised and gendered logics (Byrne, 2014; Bhabra, 2016) central to this practice, may indeed lead some attendees, if not those interviewed in this study, to resent being welcomed in this way, to ask the question 'who are you to welcome me'?

I argue here then that the ceremony is a particularly powerful manifestation of state authority, that through the décor, the furnishings, the costumes, and the script, this tightly staged and highly choreographed event gives the citizen-candidate little possibility to contest the state's ultimate authority. While I do not claim that these performances work wholly and totally to naturalise the citizen-subject as submissive, it is through such ceremonial practices that visible conflict, disruption and tension are disguised or indeed concealed (Rai, 2010: 293), and that the uneven power relations between state and citizen are legitimated.

6.3 Performativity: constituting the state and the citizen-subject

Having examined the performances which constitute the *Life in the UK* test and the citizenship ceremony, I now turn to the concept of performativity. Given the ontological commitments laid out in Chapter 3, I maintain that objects cannot constitute themselves as existing outside any ‘discursive conditions of emergence’ (Bialasiewicz et al, 2007: 406), that, as such, neither the state nor the citizen pre-exist their discursive articulation, rather they are made possible through a range of discursive practices – political speeches, military action, press releases, and, in this case, ritual and ceremonial practice. As such, and as Butler (1994) notes, while the concept of performance examined in the first part of this chapter presumes an existing subject, the notion of performativity speaks persuasively to the poststructuralist idea of discursive practice as producing that which it names. In this sense, the performances in the *LUK* test and the citizenship ceremony do not simply *sustain* the state as authority and the citizen as submissive, as discussed above, but actively *produce* these objects: it is through these performances that the state and the citizen are, in fact, brought into being, that the state is constituted as legitimate authority and the citizen constituted as legitimate subject, (at least in part, at that moment) acquiescent to the will of the state.

As Parker and Kosofky Sedwick (1995: 2) argue, there is a performative element in any ritual, scripted practice; however, the citizenship ceremony offers a particularly powerful and illustrative example of a performative moment in the oath/affirmation and pledge, and it is to this crucial point in the ceremonial event that I now turn.

6.3.1 ‘I’ve now sworn allegiance, I’m now bound’: the ‘happy’ performative?

At the point at which they make their pledge, all citizen-candidates are required to stand and collectively recite first the oath (religious) or affirmation (non-religious) of allegiance to the Crown – ‘her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, her Heirs and Successors’ – and, second, the pledge of loyalty to the UK – its rights, freedoms, values, laws, and duties. The statement cards are displayed below:



Figure 29: Affirmation/oath of allegiance and pledge cards

In every ceremony, the Superintendent Registrar introduces this moment as such: those ‘who are swearing the Oath of Allegiance, please stand (*and hold your holy book if you have brought one with you*) and all repeat the following words after me, saying your own name at the appropriate place (*original emphasis*):

I (NAME) // SWEAR BY ALMIGHTY GOD // THAT, ON BECOMING // A BRITISH CITIZEN, // I WILL BE FAITHFUL // AND BEAR TRUE ALLEGIANCE // TO HER MAJESTY // QUEEN ELIZABETH THE SECOND, // HER HEIRS AND SUCCESSORS // ACCORDING TO LAW.

En masse, those saying the oath stand and repeat this prepared statement, echoing the registrar who reads slowly, parsing the text into the short chunks delineated on the script above. As explained in the previous section, all attendees will be facing the front of the room and the visible manifestations of the state as they make this

pronouncement. The act of reading from a card also forces the attendees to bow their heads and direct their gaze downwards as they make their statement: this position, despite its clearly pragmatic explanation, is notable as an observer – suggestive of respect, or perhaps indeed deference, to those in authority ahead of them. Once the oath-takers have finished their statement, this same act is repeated by the affirmation-takers, and then all citizen-candidates are asked to stand together to make the pledge of allegiance to the UK.

The Home Office states in Guide AN (2017: 19) that ‘*Making the Oath (or Affirmation) and Pledge at a citizenship ceremony is a legal requirement, and **the point at which** (my emphasis) you will become a British citizen*’. The phrase in bold here indicates the significance attached to this act as a performative moment: until the point at which the individual has made these verbal proclamations, they are deemed to rest in something of a liminal state; they have successfully completed the various hurdles set by the Home Office and their citizenship application has been accepted; however, they are not technically ratified *as* citizens until they have made, and been heard to make, this statement.

This scripted moment thus brings to mind Austin’s (1962) concept of the speech act. Austin distinguishes between so-called constatives and performatives, with the former designated as statements which describe a state of affairs, and the latter as ‘utterances that accomplish, in their very enunciation, an action that generates effects’ (ibid: 3). For Austin, the marriage vow epitomises the performative statement – it is not that making the vow leads to something, or precipitates some other, separate event, but rather that the uttering of the words itself performs the action, produces the couple as married. In Ahmed’s (2004) terms then, ‘it’s not that saying something leads to something, but that it does something at the moment of saying’. This certainly resonates with the citizenship proclamation – as the registrar declares in introducing the statement: ‘this pledge will mark the next step in your journey – a journey that brings you into a national and local community as a new citizen’, and, while they have already been welcomed to their ceremony and to the

UK, it is only after making this statement that attendees are actually, formally welcomed into British citizenship. Within the registrar's speech as well then is a notion of performativity, a sense that the oath now *transforms* the individual from citizen-candidate to citizen-subject.

Antje reflected powerfully on this issue in our interview, and it is worth dwelling on several turns from our interaction. As she was describing the setting and laughing about the incongruous music, she suddenly paused and turned to reflect on the pledge:

Antje: [.] it did have a kind of very strangely if you actually swear allegiance to something [.] I mean that is [...] I mean the kind of thing where you don't think it's gonna happen but y'know if [.] if there was war between England and Germany I'd have to take up a rifle and shoot at my relatives [.] and you know it's not gonna happen you know it's totally y'know 99.99999% it's not gonna happen but just it has this kind of ok I've now sworn allegiance I'm now bound

Rachel: yeah how do you feel about that? Or how did you feel when you knew you had to do that?

Antje: well I didn't [.] didn't realise it would be but when you then say it it just makes it y'know makes it happen I suppose that's why they make people do it isn't it because if you've sworn it [.] everybody could hear you [.]

Rachel: mmhmm so it's the act of saying it that makes you realise

Antje: it's the act of saying it yes

Her own analysis of the pledge is revealing as it speaks so powerfully to the concept of the speech act *doing* something. As Antje recognised, saying the words ‘makes it happen’, it produces her as citizen-subject. In fact, the phrase ‘that’s why they make people do it’ is particularly salient here as it indicates Antje’s acknowledgement that she is being acted upon, that her agency has been removed: the act is forcing her to occupy a subject position with which she is not necessarily wholly comfortable, and, crucially, which carries powerful implications not only in the moment at which the pledge is uttered but also outside the confines of the ceremony room, in terms of her potential actions in an imagined future.

Alex also articulated concerns about the pledge; in her case her particular anxiety related to the fact that she must pledge loyalty to an institution which she fundamentally rejects. She not only saw a grave injustice in the fact that those born in Britain are never asked to make a declaration of loyalty to the monarch whereas she must, but she also feared the implication this would have if there is ever a referendum to consider abolishing the Crown:

imagine that there is a referendum and we can all vote whether we want to keep the monarchy or not they may well say y'know even if you have taken the oath you are dispensed and you are free to say whatever you want in this referendum however the dispensation would not cancel the moral obligation that I've taken the moment I've taken the oath

Again, for Alex, there was a recognition that this speech act is powerful. As she explained, even if the state gave particular dispensation to oath-takers in the case of a referendum, the fact that she had taken this oath bound her morally to the promise she had made: through this statement, she has been produced, or has produced herself, as loyal, submissive citizen, and is now *ethically* if not legally bound to occupy this subject position.

Importantly, for Austin it is not simply the uttering of the words that constitutes the act, although that may be the key incident; rather it is also generally necessary that ‘the *circumstances* in which the words are uttered should be in some way, or ways, *appropriate*’ (1962: 8, original italics). This certainly resonates with much of the analysis in the preceding section: the grandiose building, ritualistic practices, clothing, and movement described above all contribute to the production of a formal, authoritative setting, one in which a representative of the state carries the power to bestow upon attendees the official moniker of citizen; in which, as such, the pledge can indeed hold the power to transform the citizen-candidate into citizen-subject.

Along with the setting, however, the way in which attendees make their statement is also significant. Austin describes certain necessary conditions for a performative to be effective, or ‘happy’, one of which includes the assertion that the procedure must be executed by all parties correctly and fully (ibid: 15). Again, this resonates: for the Home Office (2013a: 24), candidates should not only say the words, but should take care to make sure they say these correctly: as they note, ‘*During the ceremony you will be asked to repeat the words of the oath (or affirmation) and pledge in English. You are advised to practice (sic) saying these words before you attend*’. The suggestion here is that applicants should practise the pledge so as to ensure that it is said correctly and fully, that it is not misspoken. Interestingly, one of the Superintendent Registrars, Bernie, is always noticeably keen to ensure that the pledge is repeated correctly. She will often introduce the pledge by asking attendees to speak ‘nice and clearly and loudly’, or commend them afterwards on their volume and clarity. Indeed, she explained to me in our interview the importance of allowing attendees to repeat the words rather than reading them aloud for themselves:

I think it’s important that people repeat the words after us because it could be they might be able to speak fine English but reading of English is a different y’know

For Bernie, this repetition ensures that even non-fluent readers of English are able to perform their pledge fully, indicating the significance she attaches to the ‘appropriate’ tone and formation of the declaration.

It is notable that, for Bernie, the speech act must not only be spoken, it also must be heard. On this point, interesting comparisons can be drawn with the literature on (de)securitising speech acts (Wæver, 1995; Buzan et al, 1998), as discussed in Chapter 1. Where the securitising actor can produce a particular object as a security threat by designating it as such, and being acknowledged by an audience as having done so, so the pledge can be seen to operate as a de-securitising speech act – it is by making this proclamation that the potential threat, the non-citizen, actively constitutes themselves as safe, as non-threatening citizen. In this sense, the new citizen here not only produces a shift in their own legal status by making the pledge, but also commits, and is heard to commit, their unwavering loyalty to the nation and thereby to constitute themselves as safe, loyal, as a legitimate member of the national group. For Roe (2005), (de)securitisation can be seen as a ‘call and response’ process – an actor makes a particular call and the audience responds with their acceptance. The (de)securitising actor cannot operate alone here – it is only with the audience’s acceptance that their act can be successful. In much the same way, while the wider British population is not present at the ceremony and the pledge cannot thus be described as public, the speech act must still be made aloud, in the presence of witnesses – an audience of officials. Here then, these spectators acts as arbiters, verifying that all the attendees at the ceremony have made the appropriate proclamation and thus constituted themselves as secure, legitimate citizens.

Given Austin’s comments on infelicitous or unhappy speech acts, however, it is important now to consider the effects on the performativity of the act when a pledge is performed ‘inappropriately’, when it is, for instance, misspoken, said with inappropriate tone, with incorrect grammatical formation, or perhaps, indeed, with the wrong intentions. This leads me to consider a final issue in this chapter: the concept of the ‘unhappy performative’.

6.3.2 'It didn't mean anything': the unhappy performative?

During my observations of the ceremony, I watched with interest the actual performance of the pledge and was surprised to note many occasions on which attendees could be described as having 'misspoken' the declaration in some way. While there were always individuals who read the statement with great enthusiasm, occasionally indeed some who would cross one arm over their chest or place their hand on a holy book, the statement is read as a group and, as such, it is not in fact difficult for others to remain relatively or intermittently silent during the pledge. In a number of observations, I witnessed one or two attendees who omitted several words from the pledge, perhaps purposefully, or perhaps for more mundane reasons such as language proficiency, or anxiety at speaking in public. On Austin's terms, this would qualify as an 'unhappy performative', a speech act which has been incorrectly formulated and which is thus, at least to some extent, a 'failure' (1962: 14).

Along with these lexical omissions, it is also common to observe people omitting their own names at the point during the pledge at which this is demanded. I frequently saw the confusion on attendees' faces when they were instructed to insert their own name at the appropriate point, and I believe that these omissions are often errors borne simply of misunderstanding. However, they raise a particularly interesting point: that is, whether the elision of the individual's name somehow negates the performative effect of the speech act. For Austin, even if there is no reference to the person making the utterance, the speech act may still be effective by virtue of the fact that the individual has made the utterance him/herself – in doing so, 'the 'I'' doing the action does come 'essentially into the picture' (1962: 60). However, this fails to account for situations such as the pledge in which a name *should* be included in a speech act but is, for whatever reason, omitted. This elision seems akin to the failure of an individual to sign their name when requested on a document – if the name is left unstated then, arguably, there can be no legal, or indeed perhaps ethical, obligation as no contract has in fact been undertaken.

And interestingly, several of the registrars independently mentioned a personal wish to change the collective nature of the pledge and instead make it a more individual affair, as they had heard is the case in other districts. For the Lord Mayor, requiring each individual to stand at the front of the room and make some, if not all, of the statement on their own would mean that people ‘couldn’t hide behind the fact that everybody else is saying it and they can just sort of mumble it’. Bernie was more specific, stating her wish to alter the pledge so that each attendee can say their name individually before continuing with the rest of the declaration in unison. For Bernie, this was about making the pledge ‘more personal you know for the person [...] I just think it’s nicer you know’. These are interesting observations as they reveal the importance accorded to the pledge by the citizenship officials, and the sense that the collective speech act as it currently stands is perhaps not quite as ‘effective’ as it could be.

Despite this sense of importance, however, I actually noted two occasions on which attendees appeared to avoid saying the pledge altogether. While Bernie was always meticulous in her attempts to ensure that all attendees participated fully, watching the group intently as they spoke, other officials were somewhat less thorough. In my fourth observation, for instance, there was some confusion when one woman appeared not to have stood for either the oath or the affirmation. Sharon, the Senior Registrar that day, stopped the ceremony to ask her directly if she had taken part in the oath but the attendee appeared not to understand. Sharon looked rather uncomfortable but, after a moment’s consideration, simply continued the ceremony. On another occasion, one man appeared to leave the ceremony with his scroll and Home Office certification before the pledge had even begun. When I questioned the registrars about this afterwards they were somewhat dismissive, telling me simply that he had been feeling unwell, and that they needed to be ‘flexible’ about things like that. I am unsure if it was indeed the case that this individual had been given his documentation without taking part in the pledge – indeed, I would be extremely surprised if this was possible; however, the scenario indicates both a potential moment of agency on the part of the officials, and a degree of contestability in this performative moment.

Moreover, Austin stipulates a further criterion for an unhappy performative: that is, incorrect or inappropriate intentions – a bet made by someone who has no intention of carrying the consequences through, for instance. And on this point, several of the participants in this study could be described as having somewhat ambivalent intentions with regards to the oath. For Johannes, for example, the pledge was essentially meaningless, simply another necessary hurdle which carried little by way of emotional or intellectual significance. He laughed as he recalled his participation in the ceremony, noting that he had had no idea why the room was separated into two parts (for those taking the oath and those taking the affirmation):

there is 2 ceremony I don't know but 2 ceremonies I guess
but anyway I sit in one I've no idea hehe

As can be read from his comment here, the speech act carried little meaning – he had not thought about whether he would like to take a religious or non-religious oath, and the whole declaration appeared entirely unimportant. In much the same way, John similarly expressed little interest in the pledge – he simply told me that he had expected everyone to be required to speak in turn and therefore the whole event to last longer; thus the speed with which the event was completed made him ‘very happy because there's no point to do one by one’. And when I asked Evelyn whether she had chosen the oath or affirmation, she replied with a smile ‘I just chose whatever hehe doesn't matter’. For Johannes, John, and Evelyn, there is no sense here that the pledge had any immediate or lasting impact; it was a statement they had made, but one which carried no explicit importance for them.

Bahadir was even more expansive on this point. When I asked him how he felt about making this declaration, he replied:

I wasn't uncomfortable I wasn't against it as such because
it didn't mean anything [...] I think it was because I
didn't take it seriously enough to like to take it as a
threat or to take it as [...] it's just again like looking

at it with political science lenses oh it's something that's done so I'll do it but y'know what does it change? it doesn't change anything emotionally or personally or y'know in my- the way I look at this country

Again there is a sense that this is simply a hurdle that must be completed but one which carries no immediate or lasting importance – for Bahadir, this act changes nothing. Arguably, however, for a promise to be effective the speaker must *mean* the words, they must *intend* to carry out the obligations they have agreed to. This is particularly salient in the case of Alex who, as described above, felt highly conflicted about the pledge due to its ethical implications. During our conversation, she talked about her own particular plan when the time came to say the pledge at her forthcoming ceremony: while she intended to say the words of the pledge as she recognised she could not legally avoid doing so, she planned to cross her fingers behind her back as she did so. For Alex, this action would not have a legal consequence but would at least negate the moral obligation she would otherwise feel having taken the oath. This is an act of direct contestation, a wilful moment of resistance to state-imposed directives.

Interestingly then, several of the participants could be described as having somewhat ‘insincere’ intentions, ranging from the apathy shown by Johannes, John, and Evelyn and their sense that the declaration is somehow irrelevant or inconsequential, to Alex’s intention to actively counteract the performative effects of the speech act by making her own, contradictory action. This speaks firstly to the moments of resistance available to citizen-candidates – this is a clear attempt on Alex’s part to assert her own agency in an otherwise broadly submissive process. Further, it also speaks persuasively to Fortier’s (2013) argument that the pledge can be described as an *act* in two senses of the term: firstly, performatively, in terms of the subject constituting themselves as legal, legitimate citizen; and secondly, in a theatrical sense – as a *performance* – with the individual simply ‘assuming a character, following a script’. As she goes on to argue, the pledge of allegiance can thus be

uttered in an ‘as if’ fashion, without the ‘identificatory and emotional energy’ that may be assumed in such a declaration.

In a sense then, the performance and the performativity of this moment are both fundamentally co-constitutive, and potentially contradictory. The very act of performing allegiance is a crucial part of the ceremony’s performativity – in this scripted moment the citizen-candidate is transformed into the citizen-subject; and yet it is through this very performance that some attendees disguise their own rejection of the pledge, *acting* out their allegiance but without *feeling* or *intending* the script. For Fortier (2013: 707), the oath should thus be described as a ‘partial performative’ – both performative, and simultaneously perhaps, ‘non-performative’ (Ahmed, 2012). And yet, while Fortier makes a persuasive point, I would argue that these ‘as if’ performances do not actually negate the performative effect of the pledge. I contend here that Austin’s work on the unhappy performative faces justifiable criticism on the grounds that it overemphasises the author’s own individual intentions. As scholars more aligned with poststructuralist theorising would argue, an overreliance on the concept of intentionality can fall into the trap of presuming an essential subject ‘free’ to make entirely independent choices at each moment. And yet as Walker (1995), building on Butler’s (1990) work in *Gender Trouble* points out, this account firstly appears to presume a fixed and stable subject, possessing a single, discernible intent – somewhat antithetical to much poststructuralist work on the fragmented, de-centred subject.

And further, this focus on intentionality fails to acknowledge the complex and multi-faceted ways in which individuals are ‘compelled and constrained’ (Walker, 1995: 72) by the regulatory norms and practices of the social world. Indeed, in the specific case of the pledge, the individual’s particular inner thoughts and beliefs are arguably somewhat immaterial since they are obliged to perform their allegiance through the pledge whether they wish to or not. Certainly, they can attempt to conceal themselves behind others and thereby omit one or two words, or cross their fingers behind their back to reassure themselves that the pledge is non-binding; however,

ultimately, they must still stand and at least mimic making this declaration, regardless of their personal beliefs and motivations. And for the audience, in this case the citizenship officials, the individuals' particular emotional response to the pledge is arguably somewhat inconsequential – while the officials may speak favourably of those who express emotion, as Byrne (2014) also found in her research, the key point is that attendees are *seen and heard* to make the pledge, not that they believe deeply in its content. Indeed, and returning here to my argument in the first section of this chapter, all attendees are forced to perform their deference to the state and their allegiance to the Crown throughout the whole ceremony, not simply at the point of the pledge, whether they *feel* this emotionally or not. As Fortier (2013: 702) herself points out then, the individual's own beliefs and preferences are essentially 'subsumed' in this tightly choreographed event; and thus, regardless of individual perceptions and beliefs, the state can still both produce and reassure itself of its unwavering authority through the ceremonial performance. Here then, the central foci of the chapter – performance and performativity – are inextricably interlinked, the one a central aspect of the other.

Conclusion

I argue in this chapter then that the concepts of performance and performativity offer a useful theoretical lens through which to examine citizenisation practices. As I contend in the first section, it is through the performances in the *Life in the UK* test and citizenship ceremony that the state confirms and sustains its authority and its legitimacy, and the citizen-candidate performs his/her loyalty and submission to this state power. Through this, the legitimacy of both state and citizen-subject, and a certain relation between the two, can be realised. However, these events are not simply manifestations of authority and submission, but rather powerful moments in which the state and citizen are constituted as such. As Fortier (2013: 707) notes, it is through these moments, and in particular the pledge as performative speech act, that 'citizenship, the national community, and the Sovereign' are brought into being. While these discursive practices are necessarily subject to contestation and disruption – indeed, I have noted certain moments of negotiated agency on the part

of both officials and new citizens – the carefully choreographed and tightly scripted character of the citizenship process offers little space for doubt or resistance; through these practices, the state is realised as authority, and the potentially threatening non-citizen is normalised as a legitimate member of the national polity.

Chapter 7: The politics of affect: imagining the nation-as-home, evoking desire

Of the many interactions I had throughout this research, one particular moment stood out as I was conducting my fieldwork. It took place during my first visit to the citizenship ceremony in late 2013 as I was introduced to the incumbent Lord Mayor. Having shown me round the Town Hall building and talked with great pride about the history of each room, our conversation turned to the ceremony itself. As he began to recount a particular interaction with a new citizen who had written to him after the ceremony to thank him for presiding over the ‘best day’ of his life, the then-Lord Mayor became noticeably moved, his eyes filling with tears as he told me what a privilege it was to be involved in such a significant event. In fact, I witnessed many such visible expressions of emotion throughout my research, moments at which both citizen-candidates and citizenship officials appeared to display powerful articulations of happiness, relief, and pleasure.

These observations lead me to argue that citizenship is not simply a marker of a bureaucratic relationship between citizen and state, or a signifier of an oppressive interaction between the citizen as subsumed by state authority, but also operates as an important site of affective power. As Anderson (1983: 141) noted in his seminal piece on the ‘imagined community’, an affective dimension is central in the construction of the polity, with this emotional commitment manifested most vividly in periods of conflict, in moments at which the subject is willing to make the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country. As he argues, this is evidence of a ‘profoundly self-sacrificing love’, an intense, emotional investment on the part of the national community to their nation state. In this final analytical chapter then, I look to the ways in which the citizenisation process can be seen as oriented towards, and as working to produce, the affective citizen-subject. In the opening section, I focus on the negative emotions of anxiety and fear, recalling my comments on the neurotic subject in section 1.3 and considering the ways in which unease and vulnerability are central to the citizenisation process. I then move on to consider the positive

emotions of warmth and affection, arguing that this positive affect, centred on the articulation of the nation state as a desirable *home*, is central to the state/subject relation but is, at all times, both contingent and subject to moments of contestation and resistance.

7.1 Realising the anxiety/desire nexus

While I will not dwell heavily on semantics in this chapter, I should note at this point a possible distinction between the terms ‘affect’ and ‘emotion’. For Wetherell (2012: 2), ‘affect’ may include both the ‘psychologised notion’ of emotions, or *feelings*, as they are understood in common parlance, and a rather broader, ‘more encompassing’ concept which takes into account the idea of influence, or ‘disturbance’. As she argues, ‘emotion’ is a rather basic descriptor relating to feelings such as sadness, or anger, and thus does not capture the diversity and range of ‘affective performances, affective scenes and affective events’. This is a useful theorisation of the distinction between ‘affect’ and ‘emotion’ and appears to cohere with Fortier’s (2016: 1039) contention that affect is both ‘deeply felt’ and ‘social’; affect thus encompasses the emotions/feelings – both ‘embodied and sensory’ – through which the individual experiences the world, *and* through which the world is produced and constituted. However, whilst recognising this semantic distinction, I follow Fortier (2016, 2017) and di Gregorio and Merolli (2016) in using the two terms broadly interchangeably, drawing simply on Fortier’s (2016) clarification that the term ‘emotion’ is somewhat more specific, referring to a particular feeling such as fear or anxiety, while ‘affect’ is a rather more generic category of emotions and feelings.

Although policy scholarship is emerging which seeks to consider the issues of affect and emotion, foregrounding the affective subject in explorations of political discourse (Johnson, 2010), this has tended to involve an examination at an individual level of the rhetorical strategies utilised by specific politicians to mobilise particular emotional responses and thence garner electoral support (Redlawsk, 2006; Westen, 2007). However, it is not the individual psyche which is the focus in this thesis, but

rather the broader governance strategies which look to the affective subject, for, as Fortier (2016: 1042) argues, affect is both ‘constitutive of and channelled into, practices of governance’.

I proposed in the theoretical framework in the opening chapter of this thesis that contemporary governance strategies can be seen as orientating to the ‘neurotic’ (Isin: 2004) citizen, the feeling, or emotional, subject whose anxieties are both heightened and controlled as part of a contemporary politics of fear through which the state is framed as an ontologically insecure body, and the migrant as an object of anxiety. And it is in the context of this theoretical position that Fortier (2010) posits the term ‘governing through affect’. This she sees as referring to the strategies, techniques, mechanisms through which the affective subject is addressed and their conduct designed, directed, or manipulated. By way of example, she looks to a number of policy strategies implemented during the 2000s by Blair and Brown’s Labour administration, arguing that the community cohesion strategy, the ‘Respect’ agenda, and the ‘fear of crime’ scheme in the criminal justice agenda each orientated not only to the rational, autonomous subject, but to the affective subject, the individual whose emotions – ‘desires, fears, anxieties, insecurities, affection, care, dis/trust, un/ease’ (2009: 19) – play a part in their conduct.

Despite the increasing scholarship on the role of affect (e.g. Jupp, Pykett, and Smith’s edited collection in 2017) however, there is surprisingly little attention to the issue in the field of citizenship studies; although Fortier (2016: 1038) notes a recent ‘affective turn’ in citizenship studies, this focus is, as yet, embryonic. In addressing this gap, she (2013: 697) looks to the ways in which affect is central to the citizenship regime, arguing that naturalisation is not simply a lego-political process through which citizen-status is bestowed upon the rational individual by a disinterested state, but rather constitutes a ‘site of emotional investment’ both on the part of the citizen, and indeed on the part of the nation state.

For many of the individuals in this study, this ‘emotional investment’ was partly centred on a sense of anxiety and unease, with the decision to embark on the citizenship process in the first place motivated by a sense of discomfort, a feeling of precarity in terms of legal status, of work/financial opportunity, of social acceptance in the UK. For the Europeans I spoke to, this unease centred specifically on the threat of a British withdrawal from the European Union, which Antje reflected on when she noted an increasing nationalism in popular discourse. She explained that she had never previously considered applying for citizenship, despite having lived in the UK since the mid-1990s and having had no intention of leaving the country since then. However, she told me that her feelings had changed radically over the past few years:

years before I would've said well who cares who's in what nation we're all in Europe together it doesn't matter but now it matters a lot already again

Our interaction took place several months before the referendum had been declared; however, her concerns related directly to the possibility of a British withdrawal from Europe, as she said:

if there finally will be a referendum and it looks I think there's a good possibility that the populist vote will be kind of 'all our ills come from Europe we'll be so much better off if we haven't got them' and now I can say 'well do your worst do it see what happens

Antje did not explicitly specify the exact risks she feared; however, and despite her apparent privilege as a well-educated, middle class, white woman with a PhD and secure employment, her statement ‘do your worst do it see what happens’ indicates a prediction of potential vulnerability, perhaps even to expulsion from the UK, from which she is now protected.

And a similar sense of anxiety was echoed in my conversation with Alex when she said: ‘I wouldn’t have bothered [applying for citizenship] if I wasn’t scared by the recent developments’. For Alex, she had never wanted to apply for citizenship, had never felt the need to express herself as anything other than ‘European’, but now felt that she was ‘being pushed towards having to apply for citizenship because of the political circumstances’. Again, like Antje, she was rather vague about the consequences she feared may emerge following a Brexit vote: although she talked about being ‘scared’, she did not then specify whether this fear related more specifically to her job, her status, or perhaps more broadly her sense of acceptance amongst established citizens. However, she did return often to the shift she perceived towards more right-wing political policy and, as with Antje, expressed a belief that securing citizen-status would provide her with some protections in an imagined, precarious future.

Both women here explicitly articulated a sense of fear, of anxiety and unease about Britain’s status in the EU, and hence about their own position within the country. It is interesting, however, that neither Antje nor Alex referred to a very specific threat – to their jobs for instance; rather, there is a more general sense of instability, a desire to find ways of ensuring their own security in a seemingly unpredictable climate. In much the same way, John expressed a feeling of vulnerability and a similar wish to confirm and safeguard his stability in the country, although his anxiety was not related to Brexit but rather centred on a feeling of constant precarity surrounding broader UK migration legislation. This is perhaps unsurprising – John arrived in the UK as an asylum seeker and his status in the country had thus undergone repeated scrutiny over the past eight years; indeed, the law has changed multiple times in this period. However, he articulated a powerful sense of vulnerability when he said:

if you are British are you know the law of the the British government it’s unwritten law isn’t it the constitution is unwritten and they keep changing it every year in April in April [...] in next April they do ‘oh those people don’t give them this one’ and next year they do so [...] if you

are British once and it doesn't affect you but if not still oh [...] if the law is changing somehow and it affects you so that's the problem

In the image John evokes here of constant anxiety, and particularly in his exultation 'oh' in the penultimate clause, I read the significance of this sense of unease, the degree to which his new citizen-status will protect him from an otherwise inherently precarious existence in which he is subject to the whims of a shifting and unpredictable state.

And I read a similar expression of anxiety in Johannes' account, particularly when I asked him why he had decided to spend the extra time and money applying for citizen-status rather than simply stopping the process once he was granted Indefinite Leave to Remain. However, in Johannes' case, it was not only shifts in legislation which particularly concerned him, but rather a belief that citizen-status would protect him from potential *discrimination* in several areas of his life, particularly in terms of jobs, housing, and mobility. He recounted in particular an instance in which he had approached his bank for a particular service and been rejected:

I came in one bank here I've been with indefinite leave before that time I tell them I need something they said to me 'if you don't have British passport we can't give you' [...] I was laughing I've got the money I have got everything I was laughing myself [...] now last 3 or 4 months even I don't have that money I ask them they say 'oh you've got British passport? Oh come we'll give you' [...]

On Johannes' account, it was simply his lack of citizen-status which determined his ability to access this particular financial service, regardless of his economic means. And he went on to tell me that in the job market, a candidate with citizen-status would be favoured over one without, even if that individual had more suitable knowledge and skills for the role. Although Johannes described his apparent mirth

during each of these encounters, and in fact he laughed often as he recounted these events to me, I do not read this laughter as suggesting a dismissal of these negative experiences as manageable or unimportant. Rather, I note the rhetorical questions he asked, such as ‘where you feel you can you build from there?’ and ‘how you gonna be feeling?’ and read in these questions frustration, perhaps even anger, at the injustices he perceives; indeed, he explicitly noted the inequity embedded in the system when he said: ‘it makes the people inequality straightaway’. Again for Johannes, it is citizen-status which provides the protection he seeks from systemic and social inequities, and citizen-status which thus safeguards him from an anxious existence in which he must constantly predict and navigate these complexities.

In these accounts, I find a resonance with Fortier’s (2017) contention that feelings of anxiety are inextricably linked with *desire* for membership of the nation state, with the emotional wish/need to be accepted into the UK as citizen. Indeed Fortier sees anxiety as ‘foundational to the state-citizen relation’ (2016: 1042), with this sense of unease in fact a ‘function’ (Fortier, 2017: 8) of the individual’s desire for the nation. On this account, anxiety and desire thus operate in a mutually co-constitutive way. For the participants in this study then, it is their own feelings of vulnerability and unease which direct them towards the nation state *as protector*; the discomforts at best, fears at worst, around acceptance, opportunity, and legal status that work to produce a sense of desire for the nation state as protective body. This need for recognition is, as Fortier (2013) notes, redolent of Butler’s (2002) work on gay marriage in which she writes of the pervasive desire to be legitimated by the state, and the ensuing anxiety when this recognition is not forthcoming. As Butler argues, this is not simply a pragmatic wish for state recognition, but rather a deeply emotional need: as she puts it ‘the absence of state legitimation can emerge within the psyche as a pervasive, if not fatal, sense of self-doubt’ (ibid: 25). And so the anxiety and unease experienced by those in marginalised or delegitimised positions – be that the individual in Butler’s work who does not conform to heteronormative expectations, or the individual in this thesis whose sense of security (in the broadest

sense) is predicated (at least to some degree) on their citizen-status – produces a desire for recognition and legitimation by the very object that plays a part in their marginalisation.

This anxiety/desire nexus is not, however, related to an atomised individual psyche as in much psychological scholarship, but, as I will go on to argue here, is central to, and built in to, the naturalisation process itself. As I have noted at various points throughout this thesis, every individual I spoke to articulated a sense of concern around some aspect of the naturalisation process, an anxiety which, I will now go on to explore, works to (re)produce the nation state as protective body, to heighten the desire for legitimation in the nation-as-home, and to realise the state/subject relation.

Corroborating my contentions around the neurotic subject in Chapter 1, this sense of anxiety can be read in the accounts of both citizenship applicants *and* citizenship officials. Indeed, I was surprised to note that the ‘agents of the state’ (du Gay, 2005) with whom I interacted appeared to be negotiating a sense of real unease at times. Amy in particular exemplified this point. She is the main ceremony gatekeeper, playing the role of border guard both at the ceremony booking stage and at the event itself. It is Amy who decides whether an individual presents a sufficiently convincing account of their identity when they ring to book a ceremony slot, and Amy who checks this documentation when attendees arrive at the ceremony site. And the anxiety this causes her is evident in the multiple accounts she gave of individuals whose legitimacy she had found questionable. She recounted one instance in which she called the Home Office to ask for advice on a woman she believed to be impersonating another – here she took it upon herself to affix a post-it note to this person’s documentation so she would remember to check her ID more thoroughly when she arrived at the ceremony. In another instance, she enlisted the support of a colleague on encountering an attendee in a private ceremony whose appearance did not seem to match that of his ID: ‘because we did have a guy attend a private one and I was like ‘it doesn’t look like him what do I do’? And I myself witnessed this concern in the fourth ceremony I observed, at the end of which Amy and Sharon held a whispered discussion about a particular

attendee whose daughter had approached Sharon before the ceremony to ask if he would need to read anything as he could not speak English. Amy looked noticeably worried about this lack of English proficiency, and asked Sharon: ‘should we report him’? The officials were then distracted by another ceremony attendee, however, and, as far as I am aware, took no further action.

For Fortier (2017), the unease expressed by officials such as Amy stems from their position as both agents of the state, and as actors operating at a distance from the state. As Amy told me several times in our interaction, the Home Office gives her little if any information about broader legislative changes, and, as I describe above, she is often required to make decisions on an individual’s legitimacy either alone or with the support of a colleague, but *without* the help of the Home Office. She did not tell me if she would be subject to any penalties were she to fail to carry out her security tasks appropriately, and this is not something I asked directly; however, given the legal sanctions to which landlords, for instance, are now subject, as discussed in section 1.2, it may reasonably be assumed that public servants such as Amy could also be implicated in these changes. Either way, Amy is left to carry out a role for which she has received no training, but which she clearly sees as central to her job.

Amy’s account provides further corroboration for the argument that anxiety is central to the state/subject relationship, and manifests both on the part of the subject *and* on the part of the state. As Fortier (2017: 16) would argue, Amy here ‘exercise[s]’, or perhaps personifies, the state’s anxieties around the potentially threatening non-citizen – the fear that they may be illegitimate in their citizenship claims and thus of potential danger to the security or cohesion of the nation – and the state’s desire for the legitimate subject. However, rather than simply reflecting her relationship with the state, I would argue that Amy is anxious to ensure she fulfils this role properly because it also appears to matter to *her* personally that the individuals she allows to enter the ceremony are there legitimately. When I asked her to reflect on the importance of the ceremony she replied:

it is important everybody's there for the ceremony and stays and respects the other citizens at the ceremony [...] and I think it kind of formalises it and if you're serious about it then it's something that I think they should [...] sort of follow through

In this, Amy appeared to equate attendance at the ceremony with a demonstration of commitment; it is through their presence at the ceremony that the outsider actively proves that they are 'serious' about their decision to naturalise. And I read this wish to ensure attendees' commitment as an articulation of Amy's own concerns around potential illegitimacy, particularly as she went on to say:

I think it's really important y'know if somebody wants to come into a country to prove y'know that they are er willing to agree to our laws

Amy seems to suggest here that the ceremony is the attendees' opportunity to demonstrate – to 'prove' – that they will be law-abiding members of the national community. There is no clarification as to why the non-citizen may pose a particular threat to UK law; simply a sense that the migrant Other must be made to *prove* that their intentions are legitimate. And in this, I see the reproduction of the anxieties around the non-citizen – the potentially deviant 'anti-citizen' (Barbero, 2012) – as described through Chapter 1. Here, Amy orientates to the 'sensitivity of vulnerability' (Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking, 2013: 347) realised through contemporary governmental strategies, re-contextualising the domopolitical neurosis around the encroachment of the threatening Other into the nation. In her anxious desire to ensure she verifies attendees' identities appropriately, she thus displays both a professional and a personal responsibility to make safe the nation state, to protect the homeland from the danger of the threatening Other.

And in her anxious navigation of this gatekeeping role, Amy then directs this unease onto the applicants she encounters, individuals who are themselves navigating their

own fears and concerns in their naturalisation applications. I see this mutual, dialogic, or co-constitutive, unease particularly vividly in the moments just prior to the citizenship ceremony: the point at which, as I described in Chapter 6, attendees approach Amy's desk with their documentation and ask, with varying degrees of anxiety, to be admitted to the ceremony chamber. In this liminal moment – a point at which even Antje with her privileged status as a highly educated, white, European feared she may forget her own postcode – the sense of anxiety on the part of both state and subject (established citizen and non-citizen) is made manifest.

One obvious site at which this desire/anxiety is further produced and heightened is in the *Life in the UK* test. As I have argued at points throughout this thesis, the test itself can be seen in terms of governmentality as a 'technology of reassurance' (Fortier, 2013; 2017), a way in which to reassure the neurotic polity that the prospective candidate desires their citizen-status, and thus the nation state, to such a degree that they will study, train, work upon themselves in order to surmount this obstacle. Here, the negotiation of anxiety is central, both on the part of the established citizen who looks upon the non-citizen with fear and unease, and on the part of the citizen-candidate, whose anxious navigation of the testing process provides proof of their commitment to, and desire for, the nation state. At the testing site in particular, Fortier (2013) sees the realisation of three subject positions – the 'good, established citizen', the 'new desiring citizen', and, significantly, the oppositional 'failed citizen' – or perhaps 'anti-citizen' (Barbero, 2012) – the actor who does not 'desire 'us'' with sufficient commitment to navigate this hurdle, and who is, as such, undesirable.

This navigation of anxiety is then intensified in the performances at the testing centre – the close proximity to fellow candidates in the waiting area, the constant observation, the wait as the identity of each individual is quietly but publicly verified or rejected in the official's glass cubicle, and the layout of the testing room itself – the discursive practices which constitute the testing regime. So in what is already a high-stakes situation – for precisely the reasons outlined by Antje, Alex, John, and

Johannes, passing this test is crucial in allowing them to secure the status they feel will insulate them from an otherwise vulnerable existence – the sense of anxiety is then heightened further by these practices. And alongside the anxieties experienced in this specific moment, are the longer-term concerns which all the participants in this study found when attempting to gather the appropriate documentation for their citizenship applications, followed by the at-times lengthy wait for confirmation of the success or failure of their application, with no possibility of direct contact with the deciding body. As I discussed in Chapter 5, these delays and tribulations are experienced differently by different applicants, but every individual I spoke to described at least some sense of anxiety at some point in their application process. Bahadir put it neatly when he talked about the ‘precariousness of the moment’ at which he discovered that his application had been successful; his sense, despite presenting a well-documented application for status, that you ‘can’t ever be completely sure’ that the state will find in your favour.

Building further on Fortier’s anxiety/desire nexus, however, I in fact read in the accounts of some participants a sense that these heightened anxieties actually work to *increase* their desire for the nation, to intensify their wish to be accepted and legitimated by this ‘elusive, unlocatable’ (Aretxaga, 2003: 399), omnipotent body. Saroj for instance was generally very positive about her experiences, she seemed reticent to articulate any criticism of the state or the system in our interaction; however, when I asked her how she felt now she had been granted citizen-status she told me she now really felt ‘definitely’ like a British citizen. When I asked why, she replied:

because you learn so much in this process where you apply
and you read and there’s so much to build up

Unfortunately the background noise in the recording then obscured some of Saroj’s words but I recall sensing that, despite her positive account, she had not found the process wholly straightforward – indeed she told me how much time and energy she had expended on the *Life in the UK* test and the English language component – and it

was the navigation of these complexities that had partly contributed to her desire for official legitimation in the nation and her sense of relief and happiness once this was complete. And this suggestion that the challenges faced in the process may work to heighten the desire for the nation state was articulated rather more explicitly by Evelyn. When I asked her to reflect on the naturalisation process, she told me:

it's like a trial as well [...] you go for your hardship
before you will reach actually the peak

This description of the process as a 'trial' and a 'hardship' and the final achievement of citizen-status as 'the peak' is powerful, and she reiterated this several times in our interaction, saying for instance:

because you strive very hard you work very hard for this
at the end you receive this fulfilment

In Evelyn's account here I read a sense that the challenges and difficulties she had faced had intensified her emotional attachment to the nation state, as materialised in her citizen-status. And this resonates with my observations of Johannes and his wife at the testing centre in their obvious exuberance at her finally passing the test on the third attempt, in Thandi's thrilled exclamations 'god is good god is good' when she emerged, triumphantly, from her first test, and also in John's articulations of the happiness he felt on discovering that he had passed the exam at the second attempt: 'I can't tell you! I was so happy I was so happy'. In these articulations, I see Fortier's (2013: 699) description of naturalisation as a 'site of affective power': to these individuals, citizen-status is not simply a bureaucratic marker, but is rather a powerfully emotional symbol of their relationship to the state. This speaks back to my contention at the start of this section that anxieties (around the application process, or more broadly around a sense of precarity and vulnerability in the nation state) are central in the dialectical realisation of the state and the subject.

7.2 Literalising the imagined community: text, music, and the aesthetic

This affective dimension should not, however, be seen as realised simply through the negative emotions of anxiety and unease; indeed, it would be an over-simplification to portray the citizenisation process solely as an oppressive regime centred wholly on anxiety and fear. In fact, I found in my interactions with both officials and citizen-candidates a good deal of positivity and warmth, and the expression of a real sense of affection for the nation state, as I will now go on to explore.

It may seem surprising given my previous analysis to suggest that these positive emotions are partly produced through the testing regime, however I argue here that the *Life in the UK* test is in fact a site at which this more positive affect can be realised. This is particularly so given the elision of the state as described above (and as explored further in Chapter 5). For where the nation state may appear elusive and intangible, a distant and immaterial entity with which subjects cannot interact, the test in fact works to articulate and thus *literalise* this abstract body. I do not wish here to contradict my argument in Chapter 4 in which I described the test and its materials as a troubling ideological site at which the nation's (his)story can be codified and reified; indeed, this discursive closure was undoubtedly a cause of real consternation and frustration for many of the citizen-candidates I spoke to. However, the literalisation of the nation in this written text also plays a key part in the articulation of an affective imaginary – it is through this written document that Anderson's (1983) 'imagined community' or Hall's (1992) 'symbolic community' can be produced as a 'tangible [...] object of desire' (Merolli, 2016).

So while applicants such as Alex voiced only intense frustration with the content of the test, others gave a somewhat more nuanced account. Cindy and Russ, for instance, articulated a good deal of positivity about the image of the UK they saw depicted in the test. For Russ, learning about the Reformation and the history of the Protestant and Catholic churches in the UK 'helps you appreciate the British people'. He saw the development of democracy, as he understood it from the *LUK*

test, as resulting in the ‘stiff upper lip’ which he seems to respect. And as we spoke, Russ and Cindy turned to comparing the UK and the US, telling me that the different histories of the two nations, again as they had come to learn in their test preparation, had resulted in a rather different national ‘psyche’, leading Cindy to declare: ‘personally I prefer the British people’.

Certainly, Cindy’s affection for Britain stems from her everyday experiences and interactions not simply from the test; but I contend here that the version of the UK presented in the test works to heighten this sense of warmth and appreciation, to literalise a narrative of the UK which Cindy and Russ find particularly appealing. And this sense of positivity and warmth can also be read in Maria Elena’s rather interesting account of the *Life in the UK* test. She had, perhaps significantly, taken the 2007 version constructed under the Labour government, and/but, like Russ and Cindy, her understanding of the testing materials appeared to play a part in her affection for the UK. Despite all the anxieties she had suffered, particularly at the testing centre – as explored in Chapter 6 – she told me that ultimately: ‘it’s very nice exam it’s about life here y’know’ (her emphasis on ‘life’). As I pressed her to explore this comment further, she began to articulate a rather interesting position on the content of the test:

it’s totally like for example respect each other y’know
it’s something doing that one in the books as well that
you need to do that one and for me it’s so nice y’know and
because of what they have the government say and then I
think everyone is do something that one and I have
feelings oh ok oh very nice y’know in UK in your
neighbourhood if there is something a problem and you can
help and they will help you as well

Here Maria Elena appears to see the information she has read in the guidebook about respect for the wider community as a key facet of Britishness and, crucially, as reproduced in the everyday. Whether she actually experiences this mutual respect in her daily life is not entirely clear in this account, but what is apparent is that the

version of the UK articulated in the 2012 test is extremely appealing to Maria Elena. She, like Russ and Cindy, went on to contrast the UK with the Philippines, telling me that in ‘my country [...] we don’t do that’, that relationships with neighbours are less supportive in the Philippines – ‘if you ask for help sometimes they will ignore you’ – and to declare that this is different in the UK, as she said:

in the books what I’m reading about y’know how to in the community y’know to help people and you need to know to your community y’know if you have some problems just run there yes you can read that as well

Again, she speaks here of community support, of a sense of mutual care and concern which she sees as evidenced in the testing materials, and which she apparently thus views as a central part of everyday life in the UK. While our interaction was of course co-constructed and Cindy, Russ, and Maria Elena may thus have expressed such positivity partly because they were interacting with a British interlocutor, I still read a sense of warmth and appreciation for the nation *as it is articulated* in the testing materials. So, despite the hardships Maria Elena has faced in terms of her own legal status, and the inevitable complexities she must have encountered in her everyday life, these are elided in favour of a narrative of community spirit and support, a social world she sees as verified in the *Life in the UK* test materials.

As I have argued throughout the thesis, the state does not ‘exist’ in some pre-discursive form – it is through these discursive articulations that it comes to be in the social world. And, as Rose (1996: 85) argues, the very viability of this discursively produced nation state rests not with its own ‘self-imagining’, but on whether ‘people can choose or want to recognise it and make it theirs’. With this in mind, the *LUK* test can be said to work as a means through which to produce this necessary sense of desire for the state. It is through the articulation of the nation state as literary fiction, or indeed as ‘fantasy’ (Butler, 2002: 22), that the inevitable complexities of everyday life are obscured, and a coherent, and appealing, national narrative – a narrative of the nation as, as Thandi repeatedly puts it, a desirable ‘home’ – produced. In this

sense, the test works, to varying degrees of success, to constitute and realise the distant, elusive nation state as a knowable, tangible, object of desire.

And this realisation of the nation state as an object of desire can be read in an analysis of the ceremony as well as the test. Indeed, while there may not have been unanimous enthusiasm expressed in our conversations about the test, all the citizenship actors I spoke to articulated at least some degree of positivity about the ceremony, some sense that the event had or would play a part in producing/affirming an affective relationship between themselves and the nation state, as I will now go on to explore.

Again, as with the test, I read the ceremony as working to ‘literalise’, or perhaps ‘aestheticise’ – more broadly through discursive practice rather than simply written discourse – an affective imaginary, to articulate a particular version of the UK with which subjects are called to affiliate. Firstly, the ceremonial script echoes much of the content of the *LUK* test as described above. The opening sentences of the Lord Mayor’s speech describe the UK as ‘a state built on a union of nations, beliefs and common civic values’, and, echoing Maria Elena’s reading of the *LUK* test, ‘tolerance and respect for others’ are articulated as central facets of Britishness. The UK’s apparent diversity is also referenced, with the ceremony audience told that they are now ‘joining a community made up of many different backgrounds, cultures and faiths’. And this version of the UK is also articulated in the Lord Mayor’s opening speech, a text written entirely by individuals in the council and without any direct Home Office interference, as attendees are told: ‘you’ll become part of a nation which respects individuality and diversity’. Just as the *LUK* test articulates an image of the UK without inequality, racism, discrimination – Britain is described on the opening page of the guidebook as a ‘fantastic place to live’ (TSO, 2013: 7) – so the ceremonial scripts also present a singularly positive depiction of an open, supportive nation in which mutual respect is central.

And this affective imaginary is further realised through the aesthetics of the ceremony, as described in Chapter 6. The grand building, the mayoral attire, the stained glass indicate a certain opulence and splendour, while the flag and multiple images of the Queen position the Crown as a central feature of UK life. In fact, on the appearance of the Crown, the City has only recently taken the decision to foreground the royal family further in the ceremony through the involvement of the Lieutenancy, as discussed in Chapter 6. This decision was taken midway through my observations, in early 2015, at a meeting between the Lieutenancy and the incumbent Lord Mayor, and was seemingly viewed by the citizenship officials as a crucial addition to the ceremony. The Deputy Lord Mayor was particularly strident in his support for their inclusion, telling me:

I think it's first class that the lieutenancy is involved now in citizenship ceremonies it's absolutely vital I think because [...] it's allegiance to the Queen and such like and they're the representatives of the Queen and it is so important and I can't understand why they weren't involved

For the DLM, the visibility of the Crown is central to the citizenship ceremony, and, despite the fact that multiple portraits of the Queen already hang in the ceremonial chamber, the appearance of her representatives is thus 'vital'.

With the addition of the Deputy Lord Lieutenants in all their ritual garb into an already imposing and rather grandiose ceremonial room, the scene depicts a particular version of the UK. This is a vision of pomp, majesty, and grandeur, Britain's complex class and race relations elided, the violences of its colonial history obscured. This is not a UK that many of its inhabitants would necessarily recognise: there may have been a certain re-articulation of the Royal family over the past few years, with the (re)centring of this institution particularly evident in the wedding and Jubilee events of 2011/12; however, the monarchy is not a visible feature in most social contexts, and it is only in recent years that the union flag has begun to

(re)appear with some frequency in public spaces, mostly at international sporting events. Indeed, Evelyn appeared to recognise the incongruity in this imagery when she laughed as she recalled the ceremony: ‘a portrait of the queen and the flag yeah hehe the queen always is present hehe’.

However, as I noted in the previous chapter, individuals at the event often referred to the aesthetics of the room once the ceremony was complete, with several commenting informally to me that it had made their ceremonial experience particularly ‘special’. And the foregrounding of the Crown, also evident in the *LUK* guidebook which states that the Queen ‘provides a focus for national identity and pride’ (TSO, 2013: 120), appears to be part of a version of the UK with which some, or perhaps indeed many, new citizens seem to wish to associate: after every ceremony, I would always observe attendees choosing to have their photographs taken next to the portrait of the Queen – indeed a lengthy queue would always form around this portrait – and it would be an imposition to presume that these were all taken in a spirit of irony.

Alongside this visual dimension is the musical element of the ceremony. As I mentioned in Chapter 6, the registrars play certain tracks at the start and end of the ceremony from their ‘Now That's What I Call Britain’ CD, an album released to commemorate the Queen's 2012 diamond jubilee. This is a decision specific to this particular council. As Byrne (2014) found in her comparative research, a range of musical choices are made across different councils, with a live pianist present in a Hillsborough ceremony, and a CD of classical music at a ceremony in Wandsworth, and I see these local decisions as significant given the potential influence music may wield on its listeners (Brown, 2006b). Indeed, the relationship between music and patriotic sentiment is widely researched, with scholars such as Hebert and Kertz-Welzel (2012: 1) noting that songs celebrating ‘glorious history, cultural characteristics, and cherished values’ contribute to the discursive realisation of a particular national story, and work to produce an affective response in their listeners. In the particular tracks chosen in the City then – ‘Land of Hope and Glory’ and ‘Rule

Britannia' – a particularly jingoistic vision of a powerful, imperialist UK, an unapologetic ode to the UK's apparent historical triumphs, is constructed. That is not to say that this music is necessarily received in the same way by all attendees – Antje recounted with laughter, perhaps even a touch of mockery, the fact that she had watched the Last Night of the Proms the night before her ceremony, and remembered her surprise – 'oh is this groundhog day?' – on hearing the same music as she entered the ceremony room. However, it is clearly seen as important to the ceremony officials – in my seventh observation, as attendees entered the ceremony room, Bernie directed me to turn the volume up on the CD player to ensure this, as her fellow official Aileen put it 'stirring patriotic music', could be heard by everyone in the room. And, despite Antje's counter-discursive response, the particular choice of music can be said to play a role in the articulation of a certain version of Britain and Britishness – again, as with the aesthetic elements of the ceremonial space, this is a racialized, classed, and gendered realisation of a nation predicated on the successes of its predominantly white, male military and royalty.¹⁷

Finally, the articulation of a particular version of Britain with which attendees are called to affiliate can be seen in another musical moment – the national anthem, a piece in which the Crown is foregrounded and the interconnection between church, royalty, and the state made manifest. Although I tended to observe the majority of attendees standing in silence, perhaps with their heads bowed slightly during the anthem, my conversations with new citizens suggested that this musical ode to the Queen and royal family in fact marked a particularly emotional point in the ceremony. Cindy told me that she 'got a little teary-eyed' at this moment in the event, while Saroj also remembered the national anthem as momentous; it was at that point that she felt a shift in her status, as she told me: 'when it's time for that so you feel like that's our country'. John too, despite finding the

¹⁷ I note here as an amusing aside the near mishap during my final observation, in which Amy almost set up the wrong CD to play in the ceremony. We laughed as we realised that, had she not noticed her mistake, the attendees would have been greeted by Petula Clark's 'Downtown' in place of the national anthem at the end of the ceremony.

words to the song somewhat hard to grasp, explained that: ‘it says something yes which is you feel so proud and a British from now on’. These responses resonate with Anderson’s (1983: 145) analysis three decades ago, his argument that the sense of ‘simultaneity’, of ‘contemporaneous community’ produced by the national anthem can be seen as a further discursive practice through which the nation is articulated and the national community produced: as he puts it, it is in the national anthem that the ‘physical realisation of the imagined community’ can be seen.

7.3 ‘Membership of the British family’: articulating the nation-as-home

A particular element in the articulation of this imagined community is of specific note here. In the second sentence of the Lord Mayor’s ceremonial speech, attendees are told that the ceremony is:

*A rite of passage that formally welcomes those who wish to join us into full membership of the **British family**, and into citizenship of the United Kingdom*

In these words, the nation as ‘*family*’ is foregrounded ahead of the citizen-status which is to be bestowed. This speaks back to the articulation of the nation state in domopolitical (Walters, 2004) terms as a home, and its subjects as a family. Here, it is not simply a lego-political membership, but rather an affective relationship with a rather more intimate household which is invoked. And, I found in my conversations with citizenship officials a sense that they did indeed take a very personal responsibility to ensure that attendees at the ceremony were welcomed, and *felt* welcomed, into this national home. Jane talked about ‘welcoming embracing these people’ while the Lord Mayor told me ‘it’s a great honour for me to be the person to welcome them’. For the Deputy Lord Mayor:

with the citizenship ceremony you welcome the people [...] the individuals who are coming in [...] and make them feel homely I think that's the important thing

And he repeated this sentiment a little later as he reaffirmed: 'well it's to welcome them and to make them feel at home'. Although he was not explicit in these particular extracts, I understand from our overall interaction that the sense of 'homeliness' prioritised by the DLM is not simply a question of comfort at the ceremony site, but rather refers to a broader sense of comfort and well-being in the nation state. The DLM's comments bring to mind Ecclestone and Hayes (2009: ix) work on contemporary mainstream education practices as orientated towards certain 'populist therapeutic assumptions' which foreground 'emotional well-being' and 'emotional competence'. Here then, a therapeutic lexis can be seen, with the citizenship officials articulating their role as hospitable insiders, as established members of a national community whose duty it is to ensure the legitimate subject both *is* and *feels* welcomed into this nation-as-home.

And I found this notion of a welcoming home or family re-contextualised by several of the individuals I spoke to during the course of this research. Antje, for example, told me that she had found the ceremony rather more emotional than expected. When I asked her to explore why this might be the case, she replied:

it's just kind of after having been here for what feels like I don't know absolutely ages and [...] yes and then somebody tells you you're now part of the family it's kind of [...] especially as somebody from Germany where there's been so much angry history [...] it's quite [...]

Although Antje is highly articulate and an expert speaker of English, she was unable to find the words to express her response fully, as evidenced in the pauses and elided adjectives – 'it's kind of [...]' and 'it's quite [...]'. However, it is clear here that the ceremonial script, and/or perhaps the direct conversations she has had

with citizenship officials during her ceremony, have affected Antje; that she feels, despite her almost two decades in the country, that she has now been drawn in to a rather different emotional relationship with the UK.

And Evelyn gave a similar account. When I asked her memories of the ceremony, her first response was not to comment on the events, but rather to say:

you feel like you belong to the British y'know family [...] and you should also [...] what they call this one [...] like you're not separated anymore y'know something like that

And when I asked her to explore whether this feeling of acceptance in a *familial* community was related to the ceremony, or to her new passport, or to her legal status, she told me:

y'know during the ceremony they're reading this 'you're now become part of the yknow' it it makes something y'know yeah

So, despite all the complexities with Evelyn's husband and children's status, the fact that she still now is required to present evidence in legal cases in order to secure their rights to live together in the UK, she found in the ceremony script a performative moment at which her feelings towards the country shifted and her position as a member of the *nation-as-home* was secured.

Thandi had not yet completed her application and so her experience of the ceremony, and of her citizen-status, existed as yet in an imagined future. However, she also articulated this 'therapeutic' (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009) lexis in her account. For Thandi, citizenship is a crucial final step in helping her to feel safe and secure in terms of legal status, and in her emotional sense of wellbeing in the country, as she said: 'really I want to feel to feel that I belong'. And she also invoked the idea of a national family, although interestingly hers was a rather more specific

comment on the royal family. She told me that she was a royalist, and recounted the visit to Zimbabwe of the Queen Mother in 1958, an event which she remembered vividly despite her young age. For Thandi, the current royal family do not simply exist as somewhat abstract state figures, but can rather be seen as family members:

the Queen and the Royal family people- I mean we always-
they are nice people nice figurehead mother granny anyone
would feel that the Queen is their mother

Here then, Thandi articulates an image of the Queen as a parental figure, her subjects thus her children, and so she looks forward to the moment in her ceremony at which she can swear allegiance to this protective and supportive family member.

And even for Bahadir, with all his cynicism about the ceremony (as I will explore in the final section), this familial language clearly stood out in his memory of the ceremony. When I asked him to describe the event, he recalled the registrar reading a script 'welcoming me into that family into this family of y'know [...]'. As Bahadir went on to explain, there was something powerful about this moment, some sense of an affective shift now that he had been constituted as a member of the national household:

after all these years going through all these hurdles
paying y'know through the nose at every step having that
document and somebody saying 'welcome home' there is
something positive with it so I'm not I'm not resentful

Again, there is a sense here that the 'journey' to citizenship, the lengths Bahadir has had to go to to achieve this status, works to heighten his feelings of positivity, and the moment at which he is officially *welcomed* stands out to him as a particularly powerful point at which his relationship with the UK has shifted.

In these accounts then, I read a further articulation of citizenship as an affective site, a site at which the nation is constituted as a home, the national community as a family, and the legitimate, desirable, and emotional citizen as a welcomed member of this intimate, domestic space.

7.4 Contingent welcomes and fantasy citizenship: ‘we can always go’

Despite the sense of welcome expressed here, however, this is not a hospitality extended to all, but is rather a somewhat contingent welcome predicated on the perceived desirability of the citizen-candidate and, importantly, on the willingness of the ceremony attendee to display their sense of affective attachment to the nation state. This is evidenced particularly in the officials’ comments on the national anthem. Up until my 5th ceremony observation, attendees would stand in silence as an instrumental version of the anthem played from a CD at the end of the event. In early 2015 however, the registrars independently decided that they now wanted to encourage attendees to *sing*. In fact, Amy was very excited about this, taking it upon herself to print and laminate the lyrics which she placed along the pews before the ceremony began. From then on, Amy, Bernie, and Sharon, along with the Deputy Lord Mayor, would sing along as the anthem played.

When I asked the Deputy Lord Mayor to explain why he thought that *singing* was important, he told me that it was a way of ‘appreciating’ the importance of the anthem, while Bernie in particular would always encourage attendees to join in; indeed, in one ceremony, she publicly commended a rather embarrassed attendee with the words: ‘the woman on the back row with the glasses I saw you singing loudly so well done to you’. And all the registrars I spoke to told me how much they appreciated the attendees who demonstrate their enthusiasm and emotion – not simply during the national anthem but throughout the ceremony. Sharon described with great enthusiasm the attendees who have cried and hugged her at the end of their ceremony, while Amy remembered one particular occasion on which ceremony guests had whooped and ululated at the end of a ceremony in support of a family member – indeed, she and Bernie had attempted to imitate this

sound afterwards. And for Bernie, referring to the pledge: ‘the louder the words are spoken to me the nicer’.

In contrast, however, all the citizenship officials I spoke to referred in a rather negative tone to those citizens who do not *show* such emotion in the ceremony. Amy spoke with some sadness about the people who:

can't wait to get out the door and I'm kind of like 'it hasn't finished yet y'know come back in' and obviously they just want the bit of paper and that's it

And the Lord Mayor similarly told me about her own sense of disappointment with those who do not publicly demonstrate their happiness and enthusiasm at the event, those who may be seen to articulate a somewhat ‘unhappy performative’, as described in Chapter 6. The whole turn here is rather interesting as she marks the relationship between the visibly emotional attendee and the ‘*Good*’ citizen. The turn began when I asked her to tell me her thoughts on the purpose of the event and she replied:

it's a ceremony to show to people who are coming and they are receiving it that as the city of X y'know we're welcoming you but we do recognise it is a very big step you are taking and that as a X citizen that we do expect that you will be as good a citizen as you can

She said a little more about respecting neighbours and playing a part in the community, and then, without any recorded interruption or back-channelling from me, added:

I think that's what to me [...] it's a way of getting that message to them [...] I mean I have sat there sometimes and there are some people odd times I've seen the odd person or two and I think right you're not taking much interest

in it they don't read the words just sit there with their arms folded they come and get their certificate and then they're gone [...] and you just think well that's a bit of a shame really [...] that they're not valuing it

In the shift within one turn from speaking about the 'good [...] citizen' to those who 'just sit there with their arms folded', the Lord Mayor appears to be suggesting that those attendees who do not visibly emote at the ceremony therefore do not *value* it; and, crucially, she then seems to equate these new citizens with those who do not respect their neighbours and do not make the effort to be, as she puts it, 'as good a citizen' as they can. These comments resonate with Johnsons' (2010: 501) contention that the 'good citizen' *both* 'feels' *and* 'performs' particular emotions. As Byrne (2014) also found in her research, those citizens who, as Jane puts it, just 'get their piece of paper that's really all they want', are a source of anxiety, perhaps even to be feared and rejected, while the citizens who actively demonstrate that they feel 'loyal, patriotic and integrated,' (Johnson, 2010: 501) are to be welcomed.

And this idea of displaying emotion is particularly interesting given the way in which several of the attendees I spoke to articulated their own responses to the ceremony, responses which were somewhat more complex and less equivocally positive than the officials here may wish to see. For Bahadir, for instance, although he recognised the moment of welcoming in the ceremony as powerful and said he did not 'resent' this, this is still an emotionally complicated event for him. In fact, his overriding feeling from the ceremony was one of embarrassment:

for us for me it was like an embarrassment ok let's be done with it and go home right y'know we're all very awkward

And, as I mentioned in Chapter 5, this sense of embarrassment was one of the main reasons he opted for a private rather than public ceremony:

I thought the public ceremony would be an embarrassment I would be embarrassed because (Rachel: what about?) because of how [...] enthusiastic all these other people were and I wasn't [...] and I y'know I can't relate to that feeling of any sort of nationalism or y'know because they have the queen's portrait there in the corner and somebody gives a talk of some sort and y'know the national anthem and everyone smiling and happy and it's a celebration it's not I'm not like that it's it's any sort of nationalist celebration or any celebration that has that sort of elements in it I would find embarrassing

For Bahadir then, he does not share the patriotic feelings he sees others express; indeed, in a somewhat counter-discursive articulation, he specifically rejects the particular symbols he sees as referencing this nationalism – the anthem and the portrait of the Queen.

None of the other individuals I spoke to described such obvious resistance to the ceremony. However, as I noted in section 5.3.2, John, Johannes and Evelyn all articulated a certain ambivalence towards the event, a degree of apathy for instance towards the oath, or a sense that the ceremony had been significant more in terms of the evidence it helped them to produce than for any particularly emotional reasons. When I asked Evelyn whether she thought it important to have a ceremony at all or if she would rather simply have received her citizen-status in the post, she told me that she was happy about having a ceremony, but simply because it supplied her with further evidence of her citizen-status: 'yeah I think it's more important because you then have evidence that you hehe y'know'. For Evelyn then, it is not the emotional experience which she particularly values, but the rather more instrumental proof it provides for her.

And finally, while the registrars may position the welcome as central to the citizenship ceremony, that is not to say that this welcome has been, or will continue to be, felt as such by the individuals becoming citizens. Indeed, it is not simply at

the moment of the ceremony that this sense of hospitality is somewhat conditional, but rather more broadly in terms of the subject's experiences in the everyday. This speaks back to the social inequalities and sense of vulnerability expressed in the opening section of this chapter, and to the broader climate of distrust and outright hostility to the Other, as described in the opening chapters of this thesis. As Anderson (2016) notes, even gaining citizen-status gives no guarantees of equality; rather the promise of 'just rewards' and social security (in the broadest sense of the term) is no more than a 'fantasy' – there exists rather a 'differentiated citizenship' which carries clear implications for those on low wages, the unemployed, women, and those from minoritised communities. Indeed, as I have argued through this thesis, the 'community of value' through which the national imaginary is articulated (Anderson, 2013) positions the 'respectable' or 'hard-working' family as central to, perhaps indeed constitutive of, the body politic, and thence works to exclude the oppositional 'shirker' or 'scrounger' as a so-called 'failed' or 'anti' citizen.

And Evelyn appeared to recognise the contingent nature of her welcome to the UK as she described all the complexities her husband and children have faced in securing their rights to remain in the country as a family:

so I said to my children and my husband 'well if we are not belong to this country we can always go' hehe that's what I told them

Here then, Evelyn articulates her own resistance to a totalising affective relationship between herself and the nation state – this is a contingent acceptance on the part of the state, and a contingent desire on the part of the subject who can, if necessary, find a way to leave. While a fuller analysis of this 'fantasy citizenship' is beyond the scope of this research – the focus here being specifically on the citizenisation process rather than experiences post-conferral of citizen-status – it is thus crucial to emphasise that the affective relation between subject and state produced through the citizenisation process is not a complete project: rather, the sense of desire between

the one and the other is contingent, and subject to rupture and contestation at all times.

Conclusion

I have argued in this chapter then that the citizenisation process works to realise a certain affective relationship between subject and state, to constitute the nation state as *desirable* and to welcome the legitimate, desirable subject into the national community. Central to this production of desire is the re-contextualisation of certain characteristics through the *LUK* testing materials, and through the ceremony aesthetics, music, and script. Through these discursive practices, a particular fantasy of the UK is produced, an imaginary in which the Crown looms large but systemic inequality is obscured and all individuals, regardless of their background, can benefit equally from this welcoming society. These practices work to produce the nation-state as a desirable home, a site of protection from insecurity and unease; however, while citizen-candidates are called to demonstrate both their identification with, and their *emotional* attachment to, this version of the UK, this affective dimension is never complete, theirs is a contingent welcome which does not necessarily extend to the new citizen's experiences in the everyday.

In Conclusion: constructing and contesting the Good, British citizen

I turn now to the final chapter in this PhD in which I draw together the sections in the thesis, articulating the ways in which the study responds to the research questions I constructed, and looking to the contributions I believe this PhD makes to the field, particularly in terms of its methodological and conceptual implications.

8.1 Reviewing the thesis

I have sought in this PhD to examine the contemporary citizenship regime in the UK, examining the multiple discursive practices – material, symbolic, textual – which constitute the citizenisation process in a particular local context in order to investigate the ways in which these practices work to produce the state, the citizen, and the relation between the two. In Chapters One and Two, I articulated a theoretical framework in which to position the thesis, arguing that the newly-instituted processes for naturalisation should be contextualised in terms of a wider politics of mobility within the contemporary securitised state, and thus positioning the citizenship regime as part of an assemblage of bordering practices. I then moved to locate the thesis within the relevant scholarship in the field, arguing for a nuanced reading of the naturalisation regime as it is practised by a number of actors, operating within a specific location. In Chapter Three, I expanded upon my onto-epistemological commitments, and explored both the ‘why’s’ and the ‘how’s’ informing this research project.

These chapters laid a theoretical and methodological foundation for the analytical work which followed in Chapters Four to Seven. I began my analysis by focusing on the legitimating strategies central to the citizenisation process, drawing on Bourdieusian scholarship to examine the ways in which the citizenisation process works to define the linguistic and cultural norms of the population and thereby to manage and exclude the (il)legitimate, and to enforce a process of self-legitimation on the citizen-candidate. In Chapter Five, I built on this analysis, turning here to

consider the ways in which certain neoliberal logics are realised and reproduced through these legitimating practices. Here, I explored three key themes in particular – commodification, responsabilisation, and the realisation of *homo economicus* – investigating the ways in which written and spatial elements in particular reproduce neoliberal logics through the citizenship regime. I turned in Chapter Six to explore more symbolic and material elements of the naturalisation regime through the lens of performance and performativity. Here, I focused on the testing centre and the citizenship ceremony to look more closely at the ways in which the citizenship regime may work to realise the state’s authority over the citizen. Finally, I turned in Chapter Seven to a consideration of the object of study through the lens of affect. Here I claimed that it is through both the negative emotions of anxiety and vulnerability, and also the positive feelings of warmth and affection, that the nation state as *home* can be articulated and a mutual sense of desire between state and citizen can be produced.

In this final chapter, I now examine the ways in which these analytical chapters respond to the research questions articulated in Chapter Three, before turning to the contributions made by this thesis, particularly to the fields of citizenship studies and discourse studies.

8.2 Addressing the research questions

It is instructive here to re-state the research questions constructed through the course of this research project. I began with the central research focus:

- How is citizenship for naturalisation purposes brought into practice in a particular urban setting in the UK?

As I articulated the theoretical framework, I narrowed this central aim to encompass four specific questions:

1. (How) do naturalisation practices work to realise the nation state/the citizen?
2. (How) do naturalisation practices work to realise the nation state/citizen relation?
3. (How) do individual actors produce and navigate the citizenisation process?
4. What counter-hegemonic spaces exist for contestation/resistance to dominant discursive formations?

I will now explore the ways in which the thesis addresses these research questions, turning in the following section to examine RQs 1 and 2, and thence to RQs 3 and 4 in section 8.2.2.

8.2.1 Realising the nation state, the citizen, and the state/subject relation

As I have argued throughout this thesis, the nation state and the citizen cannot be said to ‘exist’ in a pre-discursive state, but are rather brought into existence through discursive practice. In their critical discourse analysis of the nation-building project, Wodak et al (2009) draw on Hall’s (1992) scholarship on the discursive realisation of this ‘symbolic community’ alongside Kolakowski’s (1995) typological work to posit a schema through which to read the articulation of the nation state. Here they see such ‘strategies’ as an *emphasis on origins, continuity, traditions and timelessness*, and an *invention of tradition* as central to the realisation of the modern nation state. While I am reluctant to draw too heavily on any such essentialising schematic work, I note Wodak et al’s (2009: 26) broader contention that the articulation of the nation state can be seen as centring on three temporal axes – the past, the present, and the future. And I see this position as consonant with the findings I have produced in this thesis, with the multiple discursive practices which constitute the citizenisation process invoking such temporal moments.

The sense of a national past is explicitly articulated through the lengthy *LUK* chapter outlining the UK’s ‘long and illustrious history’ (TSO, 2013: 14), but can also be seen in the ‘hyper-visible’ (Rai, 2010) performances of the citizenship ceremony. Here, as I described in Chapter 6, the antiquated clothing of the ceremonial officials,

the inclusion of somewhat bizarre and archaic practices such as the symbolic door knocking to announce the grand entrance of the Lord Mayor, and the choice of music particular to this specific local setting, reference a (version of a) Britain of the past, an imperial Britain founded on past (male) military victories and grand displays of status and hierarchy. In both written and performed practices, the Crown is also foregrounded as a seemingly central feature of the UK narrative. Alongside this version of the UK, however, is a somewhat discordant and contradictory articulation of the present, a contemporary UK – or ‘modern, thriving society’ (TSO, 2013: 70) in which, as I discussed in Chapter 7, mutual respect, religious freedom, and gender equality are paramount, and the same structural inequity evidenced in the figures of the mayoralty, the Lord Lieutenantcy, and the Crown, is elided. In the *LUK* materials, this present also includes the ‘values’ supposedly unique to the UK, or, as Antje puts it in a rather bemused tone, the ‘5 values and the 9 freedoms what are they again’? I should note here however, that while the concept of ‘British Values’ is foregrounded across much political discourse, and was raised by several of the citizenship officials, I observed no mention of the issue in the ceremony itself beyond a vague reference to ‘democratic values’ in the ceremonial script, suggesting a degree of inconsistency within and across these practices.

Alongside these invocations of the past and present is the articulation of a sense of anticipation directed towards some shared, imagined future: the ceremonial script ends with clauses in the future form – ‘you will be faithful subjects to the Sovereign and true and loyal citizens of the United Kingdom’ and ‘may you all find happiness and contentment with your new status’, while Guide AN (2017: 3) states that gaining citizenship status ‘gives you the opportunity to participate more fully in the life of your local community’, again referencing future possibilities in some shared national endeavour. Despite the fact that all individuals undertaking the naturalisation process will have lived in the UK for at least three/five years and will inevitably have been participating in many aspects of UK life already, these are opportunities apparently available specifically to those carrying citizen-status, and thus offer ‘new’ citizens an (imprecise) image of a new, imagined future.

Through these practices then, a particular, and somewhat contradictory, version of the UK is realised, its past, present, and future articulated, and its supposed characteristics reified. And in turn, these practices also work to realise the proper citizen, the Good, ‘integrated’ individual who, through both the testing and the ceremonial process, expresses their loyalty to, and desire for, this (version of the) national community. In Gianni’s (2013: 219) terms, the ‘cultural’ values embedded in the citizenisation process:

constitute the symbolic standard determining who is part of a political community and who is not, who should be and who should not, how one has to behave as a citizen and how one should behave in order to become a citizen

In demanding that the citizen-candidate pay a form of tribute to the nation state in the test, in the ceremony, and in their documentation, the citizenisation process thus works to legitimate a particular version of the proper British citizen. And in this way, the stranger is made safe; or, in John’s rather ironic mispronunciation of the term ‘naturalised’ throughout our interview – the migrant Other is here ‘neutralised’.

And, somewhat paradoxically, while the nation state is emphasised and its apparent truths literalised through these practices, the state itself is increasingly occluded in the naturalisation process – as I have mentioned through this thesis, state-sponsored opportunities for citizenship training have been withdrawn, representatives from public services such as the fire brigade no longer take an involvement in the ceremony, and access to agents with whom to discuss applications and seek support is almost non-existent. As Bahadir tells me:

you can't reach them on the phone [...] it's impossible [...] the first year we were here you could if you waited like 2 hours but then they brought in this new system where you

speak into the machine which picks up like keywords [.]
 and gives you a standard answer which is never y'know [.]

This elision of the state leads me to claim that through the citizenisation process, the neoliberal citizen is produced: this is the individual who accepts responsibility for their own training and personal improvement in order both to navigate the application process and also to pass the *LUK* test on their own initiative. And this is also the individual who takes control of their own fiscal independence. As I discussed in Chapter 5, this relates both to the increasingly prohibitive costs surrounding the naturalisation application, and also to the increasing commodification of the citizenship process, both of which work to produce the figure of *homo economicus* – the financially independent actor who can afford to buy their citizenship status, and who will thus take personal responsibility for their own economic success. This ‘deserving’ citizen places no financial burden on the state, a position articulated by élite and media actors, by citizenship officials, and indeed by several of the citizen-candidates themselves, with Evelyn, Maria Elena, and Thandi particularly keen to emphasise that they are financially self-sufficient and will not seek to claim benefits, even once they are entitled.

Through the discursive practices which constitute the citizenship regime, the legitimate citizen is thus realised in terms of his/her oppositional relationship with the deviant ‘anti-citizen’ (Barbero, 2012). This is the potentially threatening Other who provokes consternation, or perhaps even fear, in several possible ways: through a reliance on social security and a failure to ‘work hard’, as expressed, for instance, in the Lord Mayor’s comments on the ‘genuine ones’ who ‘really work hard’ in section 5.2.3; through a failure to provide convincing documentary evidence of their own ‘identity’, as evidenced, for example, in the officious practices of the test administrator in section 6.2.1 and in Amy’s multiple moments of anxious identity-checking mentioned throughout this thesis; through an inability to demonstrate an appropriate level of language proficiency, as apparent in the whispered conversation between Amy and Sharon in section 7.1 in which they echo David Cameron and Theresa May’s concerns around the non-English speaker; and/or through a failure to

exhibit the expected emotional response during the ceremony, an inability to fully evidence their desire for the nation rather than simply for ‘the bit of paper’, in Amy’s terms. As the Lord Mayor captures most powerfully in her comments, this is a discourse articulated, at least partly, in *ethical* terms: it is through the articulation of a ‘normative frame’ (Byrne, 2014: 6) that the oppositional figure can be separated from the ‘*Good*’ citizen, identified as a potential source of threat and thence ‘sifted out’ of their citizenship claim, or perhaps indeed of the nation.

Central to the citizenisation process, however, is not simply the realisation of the nation state and the citizen as separate entities, but rather the production of the one in relation to the other – the state and the citizen-as-subject. This centres firstly on the construction of an authoritative/submissive relationship between the two. Here, the state works to naturalise its authority through the more mundane and expected examination practices in the testing centre, as well as the hyper-visible manifestations of power in the ceremony. As I explored in Chapter 6, multiple aspects of the performances at both sites, including the proxemics, symbolism, and clothing, work to realise the state’s authority over the citizen-candidate, while documentary practices such as the use of case numbers and depersonalised salutations work to legitimate the state as incontestable authority. In turn, the citizen-subject is required to display their submission to the state, self-legitimising through their (often copious) corpus of documentation, and performing their allegiance to the Crown in the ceremony’s most notably performative moment.

However, as I argued in Chapter 7, this is not simply a relationship of power and submission; rather, I maintain that the citizenship process works to produce a mutual sense of desire and affection both on the part of the state and of the citizen-subject. This speaks directly to the theoretical framework articulated in the opening chapters of this thesis in which I positioned the citizenship regime as part of an assemblage of *domopolitical* bordering practices. This is not (simply) a violent sovereign state to which the individual is forced to submit, but rather a desirable *home*, a domain of safety and protection which the Good citizen-candidate is anxious to protect, and to

which s/he actively *chooses* to give his/her loyalty and affiliation. Indeed, while most of the individuals I spoke to articulated a feeling of pressure as a motivating factor in their decision to naturalise, a sense that they had been coerced into undertaking the process by political shifts rather than personal choice, there remains with every participant at least some negotiated sense of agency in this decision. Whilst recognising the barriers to movement experienced by several of the participants, the decision to naturalise did represent an explicit resolution on the part of everyone with whom I interacted to *remain* in the UK.

And, as Byrne (2014) found in her research, the participants in this study did tend to express some degree of positivity about their citizenship ‘journey’. All generally viewed their ceremonies as pleasant, broadly enjoyable experiences, and several seemingly perceived the nation state *as articulated* in the test and ceremonial sites as an entity with which they actively wished to affiliate. And perhaps surprisingly, the majority of participants in this study spoke positively about the officials they had managed to meet through the application process. Despite his frustrations, Bahadir told me: ‘I was actually treated very nicely along the along the [...] process’. And Thandi recounted a memorable moment just prior to her *Life in the UK* test in which a receptionist at the *learnirect* building gave her a pen. This moment was significant, as she told me: ‘it was kind very kind [...] it gives you confidence doesn’t it in the system as well hehe’. For Thandi then, these individual instances of compassion worked more broadly to reinforce her sense of confidence in the state, suggesting again the paradox that at the same time as the state is increasingly concealed and its presence withdrawn from the application process, so simultaneously it is in the individual moments and interactions with citizenship officials that the state is produced as a key site of affection for the aspiring citizen.

These comments on such individual moments of kindness lead to the next section in this chapter – the individual actors and specifically local textures which constitute

the citizenship regime, and the opportunities this negotiated agency allows for moments of contestation and resistance (RQs 3 and 4).

8.2.2 The individual, the local: disruptions and resistance

As I noted in Chapter 3, I chose to observe multiple citizenship ceremonies not with the expectation that the overall content of the event would change, but on the understanding that this would allow me to build a more nuanced picture of the ceremony in its complexity as a social practice. And I did indeed find a notable difference in the atmosphere of the event, depending particularly on which official was presiding. For instance, in my sixth observation, a young college student came to observe the ceremony as part of her work experience with the council. She was clearly impressed by the building and the room itself, whispering ‘oh isn’t this grand’ as she entered, and I saw her visible excitement reflected in the responses of several of the participants, particularly two children seated on the front row who giggled as she smiled at them throughout the ceremony. I wrote in my field notes that I had in fact sensed a particularly ‘*light and relaxed*’ feeling before the ceremony, with Amy joking as she told us that the Deputy Lord Lieutenant would make his first appearance on that day. I noted her words: ‘today we have Colonel (X), in the hall with the candlestick – it’s very Cluedo isn’t it?’ and the laughter of her colleagues as she said this. And, as this was the Deputy Lord Mayor’s third ceremony, I commented in my field notes that he seemed to be ‘*growing into the role*’ – appearing rather more confident than at previous ceremonies, although he still made several errors, for instance declaring the event was over before the anthem had been sung. On this occasion, he chose to extemporise his welcome speech, and as such, this ceremony saw a particular emphasis on the relationship between the event and the Queen as the DLM informed the attendees in a serious tone that the ceremony was particularly important for them because ‘you’ll all have the protection of the Crown’. Despite this rather formal introductory speech, however, his demeanour towards the event of the event was relaxed as he told attendees that he was looking forward to speaking to each one of them personally after the ceremony.

In contrast to the broadly jovial atmosphere of this sixth observation, however, I noted a particularly '*flat*' feeling in the tenth observation, presided over by a Senior Registrar who took part less frequently in ceremonies. Her delivery was extremely formal, and Amy in fact noted at the end that the attendees had shown little enthusiasm that day. I attributed this lack of enthusiasm at least partly to the Senior Registrar's manner, but also to the layout of the room. While, as I noted in Chapter 3, Bernie in particular would take great care to ensure that guests and attendees were seated close to one another in order to give an impression of a fuller congregation, this particular official had not attempted to arrange the room as people entered, spending her time instead verifying their documentation (despite the fact they had already passed through Amy's verification process outside the ceremonial room). The result of this lack of attention was that many of the guests had taken seats at the back of the room where their view of the event was entirely obscured, while large gaps remained in the pews at the front of the room. Several spaces on which the officials had placed the laminated anthem cards remained empty, while at other points, individuals had sat where there were no anthem cards. And this distinction in tone and atmosphere is particularly notable because, in this observation, a new Senior Registrar was being inducted: with several personnel changes at the council offices, this new individual would now be taking over the event, adding her own personal input to the ceremony from then on.

Certainly, I would be cautious in making any strong claims as to the particular impact these differences in atmosphere and tone may have had on the attendees in the longer term. However, as I argued in Chapter 7, the ceremonial event works to produce a particular affective response in new citizens, and, as such, the particular nuances in these localised practices are important; the practices of the officials presiding over the events and the atmosphere they help to produce should not be dismissed as inconsequential. Indeed, given the significance attached to the ceremony by several of the participants in this study – Thandi, Cindy, and Russ, for instance – the particularities and distinctions between events as they are practised by individual actors are central to an understanding of the naturalisation process as it is practised in the everyday.

Further, it is in these moments of negotiated agency that I see the space for acts of resistance and contestation, both on the part of ceremony officials and of citizen-candidates themselves. This resistance may be read, for instance, in the deliberate or accidental omission of the name as the individual makes the pledge, or in the more explicit articulations of opposition, such as Alex's wilful rejection of the oath and her purposeful counter-conduct – crossing her fingers behind her back – as described in Chapter 6. Indeed, for Alex, the impositions throughout the citizenisation process were too troubling to ignore. As I explored in Chapter 4, she was also deeply frustrated by the *Life in the UK* test, rejecting both its content and its construct. Although she told me that she had no choice but to take the examination, her resistance came when she began to revise as she took a 'calculated risk' in choosing carefully which content she would memorise and which she would ignore:

I'm willing to compromise because I have to take this stupid test so I have to say what you tell me but I am not going to memorise the name of sportsmen and sportswomen I'm not doing it

And in an explicit statement of resistance, she told me:

I will forget everything in that book as a matter of principle and I will forget about having to take this test as soon as I've done it

Here, Alex clearly articulates the most unequivocal contestation. However, the more subtle moments of resistance, such as the decision by one test-taker not to prepare for the examination, as described in Chapter 5, also indicate a space for acts of disruption to hegemonic impositions.

And these moments of resistance can also be seen in the challenges some of the participants felt able to make during the course of their applications. Bahadir, Cindy,

Russ, and Alex in particular recounted points at which they had contested certain decisions; indeed, for Bahadir, his ability to resist was significant, as he said:

that's probably why my experience was on the more positive side because I always knew if there were a problem I would probably y'know make a fuss about it

And Cindy and Russ had in fact made very vocal complaints during the course of their application, at one point complaining directly to one of the officials about the loss of their paperwork. Cindy told me she 'gave them what for', persisting in her protest until the official apologised and acceded.

I note that that the ability to resist may be experienced and articulated differently by different citizen-candidates – I can read no such explicit moments of contestation in the accounts given by the individuals who had passed through the asylum process, for instance; indeed, this may be an expression of the differing degrees of precarity experienced by the individuals in this study. However, contestation can still be read, perhaps in more subtle forms. Johannes, John, and Maria Elena's lack of interest in the oath, as I described in Chapter 6, is itself indicative of a degree of resistance to official expectations – these are 'as if' (Fortier, 2013) performances in which the citizen-candidate rejects the 'emotional energy' (ibid: 707) that may be expected in the oath. Further, humour and mockery can also be read as indicating a degree of subversion: for instance, I regularly witnessed smirks and disguised laughter amongst some attendees at the ceremony as they watched the grand entrance of the mayoralty and lieutenantancy into the ceremonial room, a rejection perhaps of this ostentatious display of status. And participants such as Bahadir were unapologetic in their mockery of the system, as I described in Chapter 4; indeed, the party which Bahadir held on attaining his citizen-status, in which he bought union flags and masks of the Royal family and his friends prepared an ironic musical tribute to the process based on Gilbert and Sullivan's 'For he is an Englishman', indicates a powerful moment of contestation. As he told me, this act of ridicule was important to him: it both demonstrated the 'significance of the situation' but also

allowed him the space to ‘laugh at it’; to both navigate and disrupt state impositions through a combination of acquiescence and outright mockery.

8.3 Contributions to the field, further avenues for research

I turn finally to the contributions I believe this thesis makes, particularly to the fields of citizenship studies and discourse studies, and the avenues for future research I see emerging. As I noted when I articulated the research gap in Chapter 2, two key lacunae can be seen in existing scholarship on citizenship: an engagement with the citizenship regime as a social *practice*, and an examination *across* these multiple practices as a totality. As such, research which, for instance, focuses solely on citizenship ‘texts’ (e.g. Turner, 2014; Brooks, 2014; Chisari, 2012), or on the liberal credentials of citizenship regimes (e.g. van Oers, 2010; Carens, 2010; Bauböck and Joppke, 2010; and Paquet, 2012), abstracts policy from its enactment. Here citizenship legislation is conceived of simply as ‘a fixed document’ (Fortier, forthcoming: 1) imposed by élite actors upon a receiving subject. And yet, as I have sought to explore in this thesis, written legislation forms only one part of the newly-instituted processes for becoming British, and this singular focus on the written text neglects to consider the manifold ways in which naturalisation policy is *practised* by multiple actors, enacted, as Darling (2014: 485) notes, ‘through relationships between people, places, and institutions’. Further, as I have argued in this thesis, neither the intentionality nor the absolute ‘success’ of governmental practices can be assumed (Fortier, 2010: 19); rather space exists for negotiated acts of agency in all policy implementation.

For the more recent research projects which do take a more interpretive approach to the naturalisation regime, examining for instance the *LUK* test or the ceremony as they are practised (e.g. Byrne, 2014, 2017; MacGregor and Bailey, 2012), this scholarship gives a valuable and revealing insight into these particular events, either in their singularity, or as compared across geographical sites. And it may indeed be the case that research taking such a singular perspective – on the test, on the ceremony, or on the application process and documentation – could draw out similar

analytical themes to this thesis, also enabling an examination of issues around legitimacy, access, performance, and affect. However, in looking to the multiple discursive practices which constitute the citizenisation process as a totality, I have been able to construct a more nuanced and complex picture which has allowed me to examine the ways in which written, spoken, material, and symbolic practices both reinforce and disrupt one another, and to note further the spaces that appear for contestation and resistance to governmental impositions.

I argue then that both the individual analytical chapters, and the coalescence across these four chapters, offer a valuable conceptual and methodological contribution to existing scholarship. The work on legitimacy and legitimation in Chapter Four, for instance, reinforces existing research around language and language testing, particularly Bourdieu's scholarship on linguistic impositions (1977; 1986; 1991) and more recent research in the areas of critical pedagogy and critical language testing (e.g. Shohamy, 1998; Cooke and Simpson, 2009). However, taking into account the multiple practices surrounding the citizenship regime makes certain textures visible. For instance, scholarship focusing solely on the *LUK test as text*, (as referenced in Chapter Two), might similarly assert that this written document works to articulate a particular version of the UK and to realise the state's legitimacy to construct this narrative, just as in this PhD. However, it would fail to recognise the more subtle and complex ways in which this legitimacy is constructed and *maintained*, not only through testing documents but also, for example, through the legitimating mechanisms visible in citizenship documentation such as case numbers and logos, or through the temporal inaccuracies evident in particular Home Office correspondence. The (in)consistencies between these more complex elements are central to the realisation of state legitimacy, particularly for scholarship which rejects a monolithic view of the state as unitary, and to the ways in which this legitimacy is 'received' by the citizen-candidate; indeed, as Darling (2014b: 484) notes, it is only by 'taking seriously the connections' between texts, materials, discourses, and 'affective states' that academic research can 'critically interrogate' the ways in which the state itself comes to be practised.

Further, it is only by foregrounding the *LUK* test as it is practised by individual actors that I have been able to examine moments of negotiated agency and indeed resistance. I have read such moments, for instance, in the points at which citizen-candidates purposefully rejected certain test content, or explicitly declared an intention to deliberately forget the content of the test. I would argue that this represents a valuable contribution to the existing scholarship, both on Knowledge of Life tests (e.g. Turner, 2014; Gray and Griffin, 2014; Löwenheim and Gazit, 2009) and more broadly on language testing for migration purposes (e.g. Cooke, 2009; Blackledge, 2009a), as it avoids a totalising view of the state as wholly repressive authority and enables a more contextualised and nuanced process of ‘studying through’ (Wright and Reinhold, 2011) policy as it is enacted. In doing so, it responds directly to Fortier’s (forthcoming: 1) call to research which seeks to examine the ‘social life’ of policy in its complexity.

And it is through an orientation towards these individual accounts that I have been able to construct an analysis in Chapter Five which examines in detail the (re)production of certain neoliberal logics through the citizenisation process. Again, as I noted, existing research (Chisari, 2012; Turner, 2014) has pointed to the realisation of the neoliberal subject through the testing regime, postulating, for example, that the *LUK* test works to enact a process of ‘responsibilisation’ (Miller and Rose, 2008) on the citizen-candidate. However, by focusing on testing *practices* I have been able to examine in more specific detail the ways in which this responsibilisation may take place in the everyday: I saw this, for instance, in the citizen-candidates’ accounts of their testing preparation as a solitary endeavour in light of the withdrawal of the pedagogic other. And further, by taking a wide-angle view across citizenisation practices, I have been able to examine the multiple ways in which these neoliberal logics are realised, not only through these testing practices but also in less apparent ways, such as the occlusion of the state during the application process, the withdrawal of public figures such as the fire service in the ceremony, and the spatial distribution and characteristics of the *LUK* testing site within the City. Indeed, I would argue that this multi-modal analysis offers a useful

contribution beyond the field of citizenship studies to the existing literature on the discursive articulation of the neoliberal subject in other academic fields.

Turning to Chapter Six, there is, as yet, minimal research (e.g. Byrne, 2014; Fortier, 2013) on the citizenship regime which looks to the ceremony and the *LUK* test as they are *performed*, and no existing scholarship to my knowledge, at least in English-language publications, which looks to construct a concurrent analysis of *both* events through the lens of performance and performativity. And yet, as I argue in Chapter Six, certain consistencies can be read across the test and the ceremony which may work to reinforce the state's authority over the citizen, for instance the impositions – of time, of movement, of knowledge – expected in both the examination text and in the examination itself, which are then reinforced in the grand gestures of state power – clothing, movement, visual imagery – evidenced in the 'hyper-visible' (Rai, 2010) ceremonial event. Further, it is through a focus on these events as they are performed that I have been able to explore the particularly *local* realisation of these events and thus to reinforce my contention in Chapter Two that policy is enacted rather than simply received; or, as Jones (2015: 13) puts it, that policy involves *people* and happens in *places*.

Finally, I argue that the examination of 'affect' in Chapter Seven offers an important addition to the emerging, or 'nascent' (Di Gregorio and Merolli, 2016: 934), body of research which seeks to foreground the affective subject in citizenship policy analysis. This is a particularly relevant intervention given the contemporary orientation to, or indeed 'enthusiasm for', the *emotional* subject across political discourse, in the UK and beyond (Jupp, Pykett and Smith, 2017: 1). In particular, through this analysis, I have been able to add an important nuance to existing literature on citizenship which foregrounds the *negative* ways in which the state enacts its authority on the subject (e.g. Wodak et al, 2009; Löwenheim and Gazit, 2009). For the sense of unease and anxiety articulated by the participants in this study is in fact part of a more complex emotional response, one in which a mutual

sense of desire between state and citizen-subject can be realised and the nation state produced in domopolitical terms as a protective home.

This contention leads to my final contribution – that is, the conceptual intervention provided by the coalescence of the four analytical chapters. It is in the links between the four themes – legitimacy, access, performance, and affect – that I see an empirical justification for, and development of, my conceptualisation of the contemporary citizenship regime as a powerful *domopolitical* bordering practice. By seeking to reimagine the citizenisation process in its complexities and (in)consistencies, I have been able to examine the realisation of the state, of the citizen, and of the state-subject relationship in a different way to existing citizenship scholarship. In particular, and as detailed in section 8.2 of this chapter, I have been able to engage with the multiple and complex ways in which the citizen and the state are constituted, maintained, and resisted: in cultural, linguistic, technological, economic, and ethical terms, across written, symbolic, spoken, and visual practices. It is through these complex discursive practices that *bordering* can be realised (and contested) in the contemporary, securitised state: geopolitically, in terms of the reproduction – by both officials and citizen-candidates – of citizen-status and the concomitant passport as a legitimating marker; biopolitically, in terms of the articulation and constitution of (il)legitimacy across discursive practices; and neropolitically, in the (re)production of anxiety and desire and the orientation to the *feeling* subject across every level of the national citizenship project.

This conceptual contribution could be developed in future research projects in several different ways. Firstly, the continued re-centring of the nation through the citizenship regime has taken on a particularly interesting dimension given the referendum decision for the UK to leave the EU, for while research into this particular phenomenon is in its infancy, there has already been a notable increase in applications for permanent residence amongst EU citizens (Migration Observatory, 2016), and an 80% increase in citizenship applications over the past year (BBC, 2017b). As the legislative and political landscape following Brexit begins to develop

therefore, it will be particularly relevant to conduct further research with Europeans deciding either to naturalise in the UK, perhaps after many decades living in the country without citizen-status, or choosing instead to remain in the UK without attempting to secure citizen-status; research may particularly look to the ways in which these individuals navigate, mediate, or contest insecurities within this climate. Further, within the post-Brexit context, the naturalisation regime is likely to undergo yet more modification, with further interventions into migration policy seemingly inevitable regardless of the particular administration in power. Policy research will thus be needed to account for these interventions as they emerge.

Within this landscape, further scholarship could also usefully involve comparative studies across geographical contexts in the UK, looking to the ways in which citizenisation practices in their entirety are enacted at multiple different sites. While documentary practices may be imposed at a national level, the non-textual will be distinct to each individual council, and will thus produce a rather different realisation of the national citizenship project. As such, research on this account may involve analysis across comparable urban sites, or perhaps across rural settings in which the demographics are rather different from the City in this study.

Further, on this point, a particular area of interest that may warrant specific investigation will be the ways in which citizenisation practices are differently articulated across the nations which constitute the UK. This is particularly relevant given the tendency in Home Office discourse, as followed in this PhD, to articulate the UK and Britain as interchangeable. As yet, there exist surprisingly few pieces of research which seek to examine the juxtaposition between state discourses and regional articulations of UK citizenship in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland (excepting Kiwan, 2011; and Andrews and Mycock, 2007). And yet the ways in which citizenisation is practised may well be distinct across these sites, and may be particularly divergent as claims for Scottish, Welsh, and Northern Irish independence develop.

Finally, to draw this thesis to a close by returning to the quotations I included at the very start of the opening chapter, this PhD points to the conclusion that national citizenship *matters*, and thus *requires* continued academic intervention. It matters to the fractured nation state in its ‘permanent crises’ (Chernilo, 2006: 15) to which the ‘citizen of nowhere’ (May, 2016a) apparently poses an existential threat. And it matters to the citizen him/herself, for while the imagined world of cosmopolitan post-nationalism may seem tangible for the privileged few whose mobility is largely unconstrained (Rao, 2016), for those less able to traverse national borders, those more implicated in the bordering practices of the contemporary securitised state, it is still national citizenship which provides, in Thandi’s words, the ‘right to be’.

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Appendices

Appendix A: CEFR levels

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Table from University of Cambridge (2011)

Appendix B1: Sample field notes, extract from ceremony observation 1

Citizenship ceremony 1: 18.12.13

I arrive at the town hall at 10.35 and I immediately feel nervous in the building – it's very large and imposing and there are no clear signs to tell people where to go. I introduce myself to the receptionist on the main desk and she's polite but serious as she directs me upstairs to the ceremony room. I'm really not sure what to expect as I climb the grand, spiral staircase and follow the directions I've been given through the corridor to the ceremonial room. I find a small crowd of people gathered outside the main door, and I'm relieved that Amy realises who I am and beckons me over to introduce herself.

10.45 Amy's seated at the door requesting from each attendee their Home Office letter and photo ID. Families, couples, children are then shown to their seats in the ceremonial room by a 2nd registrar – Sharon (I'm later told she's a Superintendent Registrar). Amy chats to me as she checks IDs; she's polite and friendly but there's a formality in the way she speaks to each attendee. She tells me there are 41 attending today – says they've 'sneaked' an extra person in. She explains they've been inundated with applicants from the HO – but she doesn't know why this sudden surge.

In the room itself the 41 attendees are joined by their guests, so I think there must be around 70 people altogether. This is much bigger than I'd expected. It's very grand; an abundance of dark wood, stained glass windows at the front. Seating is divided into those taking the oath, and those taking the affirmation. I'm really surprised to see a big portrait of the Queen ahead – I don't think I've ever been in a room with a portrait like this, except maybe an art gallery. The union flag hangs at the front of the room and I find myself smiling at the incongruity of this symbolism.

The pews are arranged in a horseshoe shape facing towards a large, ornate throne, again made out of very dark wood. The registrars take their seats to the right of the throne – Amy sits at this desk throughout the ceremony organising paperwork.

10.50 Sharon begins announcements:

- Fire alarm protocol, mobile phones silent/off; video ok but no obstructing or moving during ceremony; same for photos; no food or drink; 'lovely' to see kids but if 'disruptive' take them out of the ceremony.

- Those taking the oath given instruction – repeat words after her; same for those taking affirmation; ‘must be silent’ while others speak.
- Collect scroll then presented with HO pack with info on applying for passport, how to vote, info from fire brigade so can have free fire service check. If you don’t want to shake LM’s hand put it across chest.
- HO says certificates shouldn’t be laminated.
- Everyone to stand for national anthem.
- Finally, ‘enjoy the ceremony’

Fairly quiet while waiting – noise of kids and quiet whispering; feels like there’s a sense of anxiety, or maybe anticipation, in the room?

11.00 Loud knock on door – unexpected, everyone turns to look; announcement to be upstanding for LM – walks in slowly across room, takes seat, slight smile

Sharon: on behalf of the Queen and X city council, pleasure to welcome people

LM: this ‘ought to be one of the most important days of your life.’ Like to ‘congratulate you on becoming British citizens’.

X has a ‘long history of welcoming people’ into the city. ‘You’ll become part of a nation’ which respects ‘individuality and diversity’.

X a city of ‘social justice’ and ‘mutual appreciation’. The purpose of the ceremony is to emphasise that ‘rights flow from responsibilities’ and to emphasise ‘respect for democracy’.

‘I look forward to learning how you’ve become involved in our community’

Appendix B2: Sample field notes, extract from ceremony observation 2

Citizenship ceremony 2: 24.09.2014

I arrive at 10.15 and enter the town hall building. I feel nervous again; it's a really grand building and, even though I know where to go this time, I think I'm apprehensive about missing Amy. I'm surprised that I feel this way since I've been here before and I do know which way to go to the ceremonial room; but then there's something about this space that makes me feel my presence needs to be ratified.

10.20 Amy arrives and we walk to the ceremony room together. She shows me the documentation she has carried over with her – it's a really large folder of paperwork with information about each attendee, and in fact I notice that it's so unwieldy she's actually carried it here from her offices in a wheelie suitcase. She talks through some of the tasks she's completed including inputting all the information about participants into a database. She tells me that the numbers of attendees are really small at the moment – this is a noticeable difference from last time when they 'sneaked' an extra person in. Amy speculates that this could be due to the backlog in passport applications so personnel are responding to this rather than processing ceremony applications – Bernie nods in agreement. Amy wonders if it may also be that the test had been made more difficult or the costs have increased again (later I hear her tell the LM she thinks an application is around £1500 per person); I'm surprised that she seems to have this wider awareness of legislative changes?

She tells me there have been other changes to the ceremony in the last year: in the past someone from the electoral register would be present to talk people through the process of registering; there would also be representatives from the fire service who would talk to attendees about fire safety and offer free fire alarms, but these have both disappeared – the electoral register now online with info in the naturalisation pack.

10.35 Bernie arrives and immediately asks me to 'be her helper' as she ushers people in – Amy and another official meet people at the door and take their HO letter and form of ID, Bernie and I stand just inside the room – Bernie ticking names off and me directing them to their seats depending on whether they've chosen to take the oath or affirmation – B asks me to fill up the first two rows evenly so it 'looks nicer'. People seem to see me as an official and I feel slightly embarrassed about this.

Appendix C: Sample field notes, testing centre

Testing experience: 10.3.15

My test is booked in for 12pm on Tuesday 10th March 2015. For a few days before, I keep checking the email to make sure I know where to go – when I type learndirect into google it doesn't actually offer a clear location, and when I googlemap the postcode on the confirmation email, it shows a residential street so I'm concerned that I'll go to the wrong place. I feel anxious that I won't be able to find the place, or that I'll end up arriving too late to take detailed notes.

I set off at around 11 from the city centre. The walk takes 25-30 minutes, at which point I arrive at the residential street I've seen on googlemaps. To the right is a large carpark and an office building set back behind the street; I presume this must be the venue but I can't see any signs to that effect. I walk through the carpark and enter the building to find a large, spacious, modern foyer, with a wide desk and 2 receptionists at the front, a learndirect logo on the wall, and a coffee bar to the left. In the setup and décor it feels like a corporate venue, maybe even a hotel.

I take a seat in the café where I immediately see another woman (Thandi) with her LUK practice test book out on the table. She's studying quietly. In fact I realise the whole building is very quiet. I can't tell if the other 2 people in the café are also test-takers, or if perhaps others have already made their way to the 2nd floor where the email stated the test will take place.

At 11.30, another couple arrive, again, the woman clutching the LUK book. They walk up to the front desk and I hear the receptionist asking in a polite but rather officious tone – 'who is taking the test'? 'What time is her appointment'? And then 'I'm afraid you are early; you need to sign in. I'm afraid she'll have to go upstairs on her own so if you want to wait in the café then you can and we'll call you over in 10 minutes or so'. This reminds me of the control of time exercised on ceremony participants.

A minute or so later, another woman walks into the coffee shop, looking rather unsure. She then changes her mind and moves towards the main desk, at which point one of the waitresses approaches me to say I can't wait in the café unless I buy something. Our conversation means I can't hear the interaction between the test-taker who has just walked in and the receptionist but I find out later that her test isn't until 1pm, so she's actually arrived an hour and a half early. Having been asked so assertively to leave the café, I move to the small seating area in the foyer – 4 or 5 chairs facing towards the reception desk – where I watch more people arrive.

Appendix D: Poster and flyer circulated in refugee centre

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WARWICK

Are you going / have you recently been through the naturalisation process to become a British citizen?

Do you have some time to chat?

If yes, then your participation would really benefit this research

About me: I'm an English language teacher and PhD student at the University of Warwick, researching current citizenship policy and the ways that new/recent applicants perceive the naturalisation process

About the research: I'm looking for **people who are becoming/have recently become British citizens** to share with me their **experiences and thoughts** about the naturalisation process

About you: I'd like to speak to people of any age, at **any** stage of the citizenship process, and from any national background

If you are happy to have a chat with me, or would like to find out more first, please contact me, Rachel Lewis:

by email: r.lewis.3@warwick.ac.uk
or by phone: 07765 076 348

Invitation to participate in research

I'm an English language teacher and PhD student at the University of Warwick, researching current citizenship policy and the ways that new/recent applicants perceive the naturalisation process. I'm looking for **people who are becoming/have recently become British citizens** to **share with me their experiences and thoughts** about the naturalisation process.

If you're happy to have a chat with me - Rachel Lewis, or would like to find out more, please **get in touch**
by email: r.lewis.3@warwick.ac.uk
or by phone: 07765 076 348

**Appendix E1: Information sheet and consent form:
'new'/prospective citizens**



Information sheet

My name's Rachel Lewis and I'm an ESRC-funded PhD researcher in the Centre for Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick. My research focuses on the subject of citizenship, and includes analysis of political policy alongside research with individuals who are applying for British citizenship status.

What will you be asked to do?

In my research, I am interested in exploring the ways in which citizenship is understood and practised in a range of social contexts. I would therefore like to conduct an informal interview with you in which we discuss this subject. The interview will include questions about your decision to become a British citizen, your experiences of the naturalisation process, and your perceptions of citizenship 'events' such as the *Life in the UK* test and the ceremony.

What will happen to the data?

After the interview, I will transcribe our conversation in full, and may use comments and quotes from this in future academic work.

If you do take part, the information you share with me will be confidential. I will try to anonymise your data as far as possible, ensuring that your name (if you choose) and the specific city in which you live will not be mentioned. I will give you access to the written transcripts after the interview and you will have the chance to clarify anything you feel is not clear, or to remove anything you would prefer me not to include in my research.

What if you change your mind?

If you decide to stop taking part, you can withdraw from the research at any time up until three months after the interview. You do not have to answer any questions that you don't want to, and you can stop the interview at any point without giving me any explanation.

Thank you for reading this information sheet. If you have any doubts or questions, please contact me:

Rachel Lewis

r.lewis.3@warwick.ac.uk

Centre for Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick, S0.31 Social Sciences Building,
Tel: +44 (0)2476-5-51425

Participant identification number: _____

CONSENT FORM

Name of Researcher: Rachel Lewis

- I agree to take part in the above study, which will involve an interview of approximately one hour
- I understand that the interview will be transcribed and direct quotes may be used; however, every attempt will be made to ensure anonymity
- I understand that my interview data may be used, in an anonymised form, for future academic articles, conference presentations, and the final thesis
- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet provided, and have had the opportunity to ask any questions I may have
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time up until 3 months after the interview; if I choose to withdraw, related data will be destroyed

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Appendix E2: Information sheet and consent form: citizenship officials

Information sheet

My name's Rachel Lewis and I'm an ESRC-funded PhD researcher in the Centre for Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick. My research focuses specifically on the subject of citizenship, and includes analysis of political policy alongside research with individuals who are applying for British citizenship status.

What will you be asked to do?

As part of my research, I am interested in exploring the ways in which citizenship is understood and practised in a range of social contexts, including the citizenship ceremony itself. I would therefore like to conduct an informal interview with you in which we discuss this subject. The interview will include questions about your involvement in the citizenship ceremony, and your experiences and perceptions of this event.

The interview approach will be semi-structured, so you will have some opportunity to choose the direction of our conversation.

What will happen to the data?

After the interview, I will transcribe our conversation in full, and may use comments and quotes from this in future academic work.

If you do take part, the information you share with me will be confidential with respect to your personal identity. I will endeavour to anonymise your data as far as possible, ensuring that your name (if you choose) and the specific city in which you work will not be mentioned. I will give you access to the written transcripts after the interview and you will have the chance to clarify anything you feel is not clear, or to remove anything you would prefer me not to include in my research.

What if you change your mind?

If you decide to stop taking part, you can withdraw from the research at any time up until three months after the interview. You do not have to answer any questions that you don't want to, and you can stop the interview at any point without giving me any explanation.

Thank you for reading this information sheet. If you have any doubts or questions, please contact me:

Rachel Lewis

r.lewis.3@warwick.ac.uk

Centre for Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick, S0.31 Social Sciences Building

Tel: +44 (0)2476-5-51425

Participant identification number: _____

CONSENT FORM

Name of Researcher: Rachel Lewis

- I agree to take part in the above study, which will involve an interview of approximately 30mins
- I understand that the interview will be transcribed and direct quotes may be used; however, every attempt will be made to ensure anonymity
- I understand that my interview data may be used, in an anonymised form, for future academic articles, conference presentations, and the final thesis
- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet provided, and have had the opportunity to ask any questions I may have
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time up until 3 months after the interview; if I choose to withdraw, related data will be destroyed

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Appendix F: Ethical Approval form

Centre for Applied Linguistics

Application for Ethical Approval MPhil/PhD Students

A Information

Name of student:	Rachel Lewis
Date of registration:	1/10/2012
Project title:	Constructing the British citizen: an examination of the interface between political and migrant discourses
Supervisor:	Dr. Malcolm MacDonald
CRB Clearance:	N/A

B Texts

The documents that will be examined in this research consist solely of teaching materials and test packs that are freely available to the general public. The teaching materials can be read or downloaded from the following government website: <http://www.niace.org.uk/projects/esolcitizenship/>; while the *Life in the UK* test resources can be downloaded from a number of both official and unofficial websites, including the Home Office website: <http://lifeintheuktest.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/>, alongside other general websites: <http://www.officiallifeintheuk.co.uk/test/>; <http://www.uk-citizenship-test.com/>. Given the ready availability of these resources, no permissions must be sought to use these texts.

C Participants

Details

The participants in this research will be a group of non-British-born adults who are beginning the process of applying for British citizenship. All participants will be over 18, and, given that their aim is to achieve citizen status, they will all have lived in the UK for approximately 5 years. Some may have British spouses and families residing here; others may not. It is anticipated that most will be between 20 and 40 years old, and an even proportion of males and females is expected. All participants must be able to confirm their participation autonomously, without the need for permission from a gatekeeper or family

member, for instance.

While some of the participants may be native English speakers (those taking the *Life in the UK* test may come from English-speaking countries), those attending the ESOL courses will inevitably have English as a second language. Although they will all be approximately B2 (CEF) level, this will be a key consideration at all stages of the research, particularly during the initial presentation of the project.

Respect for participants' rights and dignity

Before agreeing to take part in the research, all participants will be given an information sheet and a consent form, both of which will clearly state the possibility of withdrawing from the research at any point without the need for justification, and the ways in which confidentiality will be sought. On this point, all names will be anonymised and personal details may be changed if the participants choose. Information provided by the participants will only be used for research purposes, unless the researcher gains the participants' explicit consent to use the data in a different forum.

The participants' fundamental rights, along with their cultural and religious values, will be respected throughout the research process. In line with ESRC stipulations (2010), the research is designed in a way in which the dignity and autonomy of the participants is a clear consideration throughout the research process; hence the research design aims to address the power asymmetries inevitable in all research projects; further, no evaluative judgments will be made by the researcher, and the participants' opinions and beliefs will be respected, whether or not they conflict with those of the researcher.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be a consideration at all stages of the research project, in terms of the collection, the storage, and the use of data. Thus, pseudonyms will be used for participants, all data will be stored on my personal PC which is password protected, and no data will be shared with third parties unless further consent is explicitly sought. On that point however, it is worth noting that the consent form will specify that the data may be used in academic contexts other than the thesis; thus the participants will be aware that their data may be used in journal articles and conference presentations.

D Consent

Will prior informed consent be obtained?

- from participants **YES/NO**
- from others **YES/NO**

Informed consent will be obtained from all focal participants, from any teaching staff involved in observations, and from other learners who will be present in classrooms during observations. All participants will therefore be asked to sign a consent form before the data collection process begins. In the event that any of the participants feel uncomfortable providing a signature, perhaps due to their ethnic background, every effort will be made to explain that the consent form is

a contractual necessity demonstrating my own commitments to the participants rather than vice versa; however, it may be that a special case for verbal permission is deemed necessary.

The participants will also be given an information sheet which outlines the key aims of the research, states the researcher's affiliation with Warwick university, outlines the expected demands made on participants, and explains the participants' rights to withdraw at any point, for any (unstated) reason. Every opportunity will be given to participants to raise questions or concerns at any point, both before the data collection process begins, and once it is underway.

E Security and protection

Data storage

Data will be stored on my personal PC, which is password protected. Hard copies will be kept in a secure room, and generally will not be taken into public places. Data will be kept for 10 years after completion of the research process.

F Protection

This research carries no physical risk to participants; however, possible psychological risks do need to be considered. In particular, this research may raise sensitive topics such as ethnicity, class, and social status, and may involve the participants engaging with personal feelings and beliefs that may be rather complex. As the ESRC's (2010) own stipulations note, it is impossible to remove all risk from social research; however, it is important to ensure an awareness of these concerns, and to structure the research project in order to allow the participants the time and opportunity to explore these issues in their own way(s).

Further, it will be crucial to ensure that participants understand the procedures and issues associated with participant photography, particularly in terms of their own safety and security when taking photographs in a public place. As such, when the visual project is introduced, participants will be given clear guidelines and instruction, and will be given the opportunity to discuss any concerns or doubts with the researcher. Once the photographs are uploaded, any faces that can be identified will be pixelated to protect anonymity.

No risk to the researcher is anticipated in this project.

In terms of honesty and fairness in reporting data, a continual process of member-checking will take place throughout the research, in order to give the participants an opportunity to verify the researcher's interpretations, and to expand on and develop their own ideas. In this way, I will be explicit about my interpretations throughout the project, and any points or information on which I am unclear will be discussed with the participants themselves. Further, participants will be offered access to the final research project if they wish to read it, or simply to see the sections of the analysis that relate directly to themselves. Given the use of multiple research methods, all data will be checked and verified against other data sources in order to create a nuanced picture of the participants' responses.

G Ethical dilemmas

Any ethical dilemmas arising during the research process will be discussed initially with the supervisor – either in person or in a phone call. If necessary, other colleagues in the Centre for Applied Linguistics may be consulted.

H Authorship

I hope to produce sole-authored publications, although joint authorship with the supervisor is also a possibility.

I Other issues

N/A

J Signatures

Research student

Date



15/09/2013

Supervisor

Date

K Action

Action taken

- Approved**
- Approved with modification or conditions – see Notes below**
- Action deferred – see Notes below**
- [Where applicable] CRB clearance reported to HSSREC**

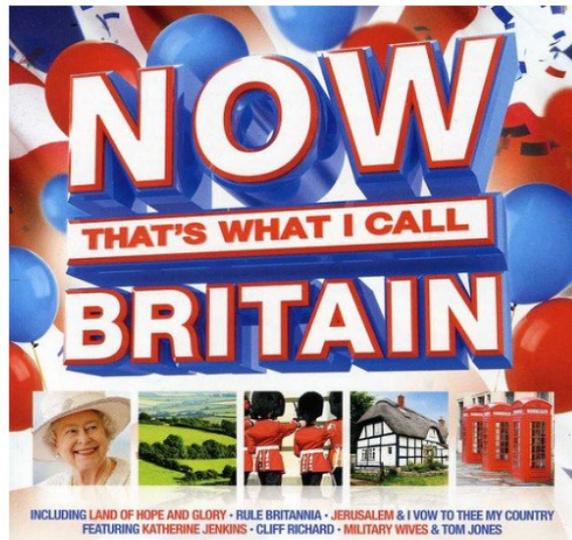
Appendix G: Sample interview transcript

[.] denotes a micropause; [...] denotes a pause of approx. 0.5 seconds;
 [...] would denote a pause of approx. 1 second; [2.0] a pause of 2 seconds, etc.

Extract from interview with Lord Mayor, 28.01.2015

[1]	001 002 003 004 005 006	Rachel:	so would you mind telling me a little bit about your role in relation to the citizenship ceremony [.] so a bit about what you do?
[2]	007 008 009 010 011 012 013 014 015 016 017 018 019 020 021 022 023 024 025 026	CN:	OK well my name is Councillor N I'm currently the Lord Mayor of the City and it's [...] I take part in the citizenship ceremonies as [.] representing the city so as the Lord Mayor I'm here to represent the city represent the people [.] I'm non-political so whatever political party however they voted that is all irrelevant I'm here as a representative of the city and it's in that role that I'm here to hand them their certificates and to welcome them to the city [.] y'know I'm well aware that some of them have perhaps lived here for a few years in conversation with them but it's about welcoming them to be recognised as a citizen of the city
[3]	027 028 029	Rachel:	ok and so you've been doing this for 6 or 8 months now?
[4]	030 031	CN:	yes that's right since last June
[5]	032 033 034	Rachel:	and had you done it before when you were Deputy?
[6]	035 036 037 038 039 040 041 042 043	CN:	yes there were a couple of times when the then Lord Mayor couldn't do it so that is the role as the Deputy you would step in [.] and I had done it a couple of times last year as well when the then current Lord Mayor was away or couldn't do it [.] because they are on quite a regular basis on a Wednesday

Appendix H: 'Now That's What I Call Britain' Ceremony CD



Track Listings

Disc: 1

1. Land of Hope and Glory - Arr. from "Pomp and Circumstance" March No. 1 - The Royal Choral Society, BBC Concert Orchestra, Barry Wordsworth
2. Rule Britannia - Della Jones, The Royal Choral Society, BBC Concert Orchestra, Barry Wordsworth
3. Abide With Me - Bruce Blyth, The Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Richard Farnes, Stephen Cleobury
4. Auld Lang Syne - Royal Scots Dragoon Guards
5. The Dam Busters March - Central Band Of The Royal Air Force
6. Amazing Grace 2007 - Royal Scots Dragoon Guards
7. 9. Nimrod (Adagio) - BBC Concert Orchestra, Barry Wordsworth
8. Benedictus (Morse Theme) - Choir of New College, Oxford, Edward Higginbottom
9. Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer - Fron Male Voice Choir
10. Fantasia on Greensleeves - Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Neville Marriner
11. "Pomp and Circumstance." Op.39 March, No.4 in G - BBC Concert Orchestra, Barry Wordsworth
12. The Procession Of The Bride (The Infitrol) - I Was Glad - The Choir Of Westminster Abbey, James O'Donnell, The Choir of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, St James's Palace, Andrew Grant, The London Chamber Orchestra, Christopher Warren-Green, Fanfare Team from the Central Band of the Royal Air Force
13. Colonel Bogey - The Coldstream Guards Band
14. A Life On The Ocean Wave - The Band of H.M. Royal Marines
15. The British Grenadiers - The Coldstream Guards Band
16. Scottish Medley - Royal Scots Dragoon Guards
17. British Radio Classics - The Coldstream Guards Band
18. Zadok the Priest (Coronation Anthem No.1, HWV 258) - The Royal Choral Society, BBC Concert Orchestra, Barry Wordsworth
19. God Save The Queen - The Royal Choral Society, BBC Concert Orchestra, Barry Wordsworth

Disc: 2

1. (There'll Be Bluebirds Over) The White Cliffs of Dover - Vera Lynn
2. I Vow To Thee, My Country - Katherine Jenkins
3. Jerusalem - The Coldstream Guards Band, Alfie Boe
4. Race To The End (Chariots Of Fire) - Laura Wright, The City Of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra
5. Wherever You Are - Military Wives, Gareth Malone, London Metropolitan Orchestra
6. Land of my Fathers (Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau) - Bryn Terfel, Orchestra of the Welsh National Opera, Gareth Jones, The Black Mountain Choir, The Risca Choir
7. Did I Make The Most Of Loving You - Mary-Jess
8. Now Is The Hour - Gracie Fields
9. We'll Meet Again - Vera Lynn
10. Release Me - Engelbert Humperdinck
11. Summer Holiday - Cliff Richard, The Shadows
12. It's Not Unusual - Tom Jones
13. Rocket Man (I Think It's Going To Be A Long Long Time) - Elton John
14. You'll Never Walk Alone (2002 Remaster) - Gerry & The Pacemakers
15. The Air That I Breathe - The Hollies
16. Something In The Air - Thunderclap Newman
17. Streets Of London - Ralph McTell
18. You Don't Have To Say You Love Me - Dusty Springfield
19. Downtown - Petula Clark
20. Shout - Lulu And The Luvvers
21. Waterloo Sunset - The Kinks