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# MOBILIZING LINGUISTIC AND SEMIOTIC RESOURCES, CONSTRUCTING IDENTITIES IN LOCAL LIFE WORLDS: MIGRANT WORKERS FROM TIMOR- LESTE AND THEIR FOOTBALL CLUBS

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# MOBILIZING LINGUISTIC AND SEMIOTIC RESOURCES, CONSTRUCTING IDENTITIES IN LOCAL LIFE WORLDS: MIGRANT WORKERS FROM TIMOR-LESTE AND THEIR FOOTBALL CLUBS

## MOBILIZANDO RECURSOS LINGUÍSTICOS E SEMIÓTICOS, CONSTRUINDO IDENTIDADES NOS MUNDOS DA VIDA LOCAIS: TRABALHADORES MIGRANTES DE TIMOR-LESTE E SEUS CLUBES DE FUTEBOL

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### ABSTRACT

This paper is based on research of a sociolinguistic and ethnographic nature, which was carried out with young migrants from Timor-Leste, who were based in a small town in Northern Ireland (CABRAL; MARTIN-JONES, 2017). Through this research we traced their migration trajectories (via Portugal or England), and we documented the agentive ways in which they were dealing with local conditions of settlement and employment, and, at the same time, creating new spaces of solidarity and conviviality within local life worlds. We focus here on one particular life world – that of sport – and on the nine football clubs formed for Timorese men and boys in this local Irish setting. We describe and analyse three different aspects of the communicative practices that were developing around the football: (1.) The linguistic, cultural and semiotic practices involved in the naming and branding of the clubs e.g., practices that indexed different Timorese identities (from different regions of Timor-Leste) and practices that indexed different globalised cultural worlds of football; (2.) the language resources of the Timorese club managers (including Tetum, Portuguese and English), and their organisational practices, their ethos and their funds of knowledge; (3.) the significance of the scheduling of football tournaments around key dates in the establishment of the nation of Timor-Leste – a regular practice that indexed an orientation to a shared national origin.

**Keywords:** Timor-Leste; migration trajectories; mooring; life worlds; conviviality; identities; football; language resources; linguistic, cultural and semiotic practices

### RESUMO

Este artigo é baseado numa pesquisa de caráter sociolinguístico e etnográfico, que foi feita com migrantes de Timor-Leste numa pequena cidade na Irlanda do Norte (CABRAL; MARTIN-JONES, 2017). Através desta pesquisa, traçamos as suas trajetórias de migração (via Portugal ou Inglaterra) e documentamos os modos agentivos que eles encontraram para lidar com as condições de estabelecimento e de emprego e, ao mesmo tempo, de criar novos espaços de solidariedade e convivialidade nos mundos da vida locais. Aqui, focamo-nos em um mundo em particular – o do desporto – e nos nove clubes de futebol formados para homens e jovens timorenses naquele contexto irlandês. Descrevemos e analisamos três aspetos diferentes de práticas de comunicação que se desenvolveram à volta do futebol: (1.) as práticas linguísticas, culturais e semióticas envolvidas na escolha de nomes e “marcas” (branding) para os clubes, em especial, práticas que indexavam diversas identidades timorenses (de diferentes regiões de Timor-Leste) e que indexavam diferentes mundos culturais e globalizados de futebol; (2.) os recursos linguísticos dos “treinadores” dos clubes (inclusive Tétum, Português e Inglês), as suas práticas de organização, os seus sistemas de valores e os seus fundos de conhecimento; (3.) o sentido da programação dos torneios de futebol em torno de datas importantes na construção da nação de Timor-Leste – uma prática regular evocava uma orientação para uma identidade nacional partilhada.

**Palavras-chave:** Timor-Leste; trajetórias de migração; amarração (mooring); mundos da vida; convivialidade; práticas linguísticas, culturais e semióticas

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### INTRODUCTION

This paper draws on research, of a sociolinguistic ethnographic nature, conducted with young migrant workers from Timor-Leste based in a small town in Northern Ireland (CABRAL; MARTIN-JONES, 2017). The overall aims

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of this research were: (1.) to build an account of the life histories of a small sample of these young Timorese, taking account of their education and prior work experience in Timor-Leste and their migration trajectories from Timor-Leste to Northern Ireland (via Portugal or England); (2.) to document the ways in which they were dealing with the local conditions of settlement and employment; (3.) to gain insight into the agentive ways in which they were creating new spaces of solidarity and conviviality within local life worlds, and (4.) to focus on the ways in which they were drawing on different linguistic, cultural and semiotic resources (including Portuguese) as they built new transnational and transcultural identities within local life worlds.

In this paper, we focus on one particular life world: that of sport and, in particular, the nine football clubs that had been formed for men and boys, in this small-town context. We describe and analyse three different aspects of the social, cultural and semiotic practices that were developing around the football: (1.) The linguistic, cultural and semiotic practices involved in the naming and branding of the clubs – practices that indexed different Timorese identities (from different regions of Timor-Leste) and practices that indexed different globalised cultural worlds of football; (2.) the language resources of the Timorese club managers (including Tetum, Portuguese and English), and their organisational practices, their ethos and their funds of knowledge; (3.) the significance of the scheduling of the football tournaments around key dates in the establishment of the nation of Timor-Leste – a regular practice that indexed an orientation to a shared national origin.

Our research revealed the situated and multifaceted ways in which these Timorese migrants were constructing identities within this particular life world, along with the agentive ways in which they drew on different linguistic, cultural and semiotic resources, in doing so. It demonstrated the need to rethink the design and scope of contemporary research into language, migration and deterritorialization. While we need to document the specific ways in which linguistic repertoires and language practices are shaped by language policies and educational experiences in countries of origin, attention also need to be given to the social processes associated with reterritorialization, and what Hannam et al. (2006) referred to as mooring and to the communicative practices that unfold during specific, situated processes of mooring. It is only by adopting a dual focus on migration and mooring that we can build a full picture of the ways in which multilingual resources are reconfigured in the context of transnational migration and the ways in which identities are constructed in different domains of social life.

The orienting theories for our research come from the field of multilingualism, from the sociolinguistics of globalization, from anthropological research on migration and diaspora and from recent writing by sociologists about mobilities and mooring. In the next section of this paper, we touch on overlapping lines of theory-building in these different fields and we foreground the concepts that are most relevant to our research. In the third section, we trace the broad temporal and spatial dimensions of transnational population movements from Timor-Leste, focusing in on recent Timorese migration to Northern Ireland. In the fourth section, we describe the research approach adopted in our study and we detail the range of ethnographic, textual and photographic data that we have gathered. In the fifth section, we draw attention to the diverse origins and migration trajectories of the participants in our study and to the ways in which their communicative repertoires have been shaped over time. In the sixth and most detailed section, we describe the local conditions of settlement and employment. The seventh section then focuses in on the nine football clubs and on the ways in which linguistic and semiotic resources are drawn upon in the naming and organisation of the clubs, and in their distinctive branding. We also show how cultural resources and different funds of knowledge are drawn upon by club organisers and managers in the organisation of the clubs. In addition, we point to the complex processes of identification at work in this sports context, and to the multifaceted local ways of representing what counts as being Timorese. Then, in the two final sections, we offer reflections on the significance of the insights we have gleaned from the research that we have done thus far.

## 1. ORIENTING THEORIES

The last decade of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first century saw a surge of interest, across the social sciences, in globalisation. In the sociological and anthropological literature of this period, there was a wealth of theory-building and commentary on the changing social and cultural conditions of the late modern age (e.g. HARVEY, 1989, APPADURAI, 1996, CASTELLS, 2000, HANNERZ, 1996). Attention was drawn to the different types of changes ushered in by globalisation: the intensification of transnational population flows, the rapid

development of new communication technologies and the transformation of the political and economic landscapes of different regions of the world.

By the first decade of the twenty first century, sociolinguists began to make their own significant contributions to this emerging body of research, through empirical work and theory building. They contributed to the characterisation of the political, economic and cultural conditions of late modernity and to the identification of the ways in which language practices and ideologies organise and legitimise these conditions (COUPLAND, 2003, HELLER, 2007, 2011, BLOMMAERT, 2010, DUCHÊNE; HELLER, 2012, HELLER et al. 2016). Here, we focus in on the specific epistemological shifts that have taken place in the sociolinguistics of multilingualism and we show how the specific debates in this field guided our own thinking as we undertook this research with Timorese in the UK.

For most of the twentieth century, the dominant concern in the sociolinguistics of multilingualism was with the mapping of patterns of language use in local ‘communities’ – communities that were constructed as stable, homogeneous and bounded entities. Pratt (1987, p. 60) was the first to call for a de-centering of the notion of “community” and for a move towards a “linguistics of contact”. She argued that such research would focus on “modes and zones of contact between dominant and dominated groups, between persons of different and multiple identities, speakers of different languages”.

Along with this critique of essentialised notions of community, we also saw the development of a new orientation, across the social sciences, to the study of contemporary mobilities. A broad epistemological shift took place away from “sedentarist approaches” (HANNAM et al., 2006, p. 5) and towards a new concern with mobility, deterritorialization, and the intensification and diversification of transnational population movements. Sociolinguists engaged in research in multilingual contexts picked up on the notion of mobility in a number of ways and adopted new conceptual compasses: For example, Heller (2011, p. 5-6) argued that we need to turn our gaze away “from stability to mobility” and engage in a fundamental rethink of both theory and method in this area of research. As she put it: “Tools of enquiry refined when the focus was on boundaries, stability and homogeneity require refashioning for addressing movement, diversity and multiplicity” (HELLER, 2007, p 6). Instead of focusing on “stable communities”, she stressed that we need to focus on the development of the trajectories of different social actors over time and space and build an understanding of how the communicative repertoires of these social actors are shaped within these trajectories. The notion of trajectory provides a way of taking account of the intersecting dimensions of time and space, and of moving away from synchronic accounts. In addition, it enables us to capture some of the complexity of contemporary transnational movements, including those that involve extended sojourns in different countries and, hence, access to diverse language resources and funds of knowledge

In his volume on the sociolinguistics of globalisation, Blommaert (2010) called for a “sociolinguistics of mobile resources”, one that takes account of the diverse material and symbolic ties that get established across global networks. He argued that we need a sociolinguistic analysis that represents linguistic and semiotic phenomena as being located and distributed across scales, from global to local, and specifically, one that interrogates the links between scales.

As the mobility paradigm has been developed in sociolinguistics, and across the social sciences, there has however been growing divergence of views. In one strand of work (e.g. CRESSWELL, 2002, BRENNER, 2004, HANNAM et al., 2006, URRY, 2007), there has been a critique of research where there is an exclusive focus on mobility and of “deterritorialized approaches that posit a new ‘grand narrative’ of mobility, fluidity or liquidity as a pervasive condition of postmodernity or globalization” (HANNAM et al., 2006, p. 5). These scholars have argued that an account of mobilities is incomplete without reference to moorings and reterritorializations. They argue that “forms of detachment or ‘deterritorialization’...are always accompanied by rhizomic attachments and reterritorializations of various kinds” (HANNAM et al., 2006, p. 3).

Aligning ourselves with this strand of work, we take the view that, in our endeavours to provide as full an account as possible of the lived experience of migration among different groups of social actors, we need to keep both mobility and mooring (or even re-mooring) within our sights, since, as Hannam et al. (2006, p. 2) put it: “mobilities and mooring occur dialectically”. We need to trace the historical specificity of particular migration trajectories and, at the same time, we need to capture the situated ways in which mooring (or re-mooring) occurs, along with the ways in which new forms of social organization, new communities of practice (WENGER, 1998) and new social activities come to be imbued with meaning. Studies of migration, within the disciplines of anthropology and cultural studies (e.g. BRAH, 1996, FORTIER, 2000, AHMED et al., 2003) have sustained this dual focus. They have provided

accounts of dislocation and displacement, while also throwing light on the social and cultural processes involved in mooring, reterritorialization or what Ahmed et al. (2003) call regrounding.

Mooring and remooring imply considerable agency on the part of the social actors involved. In the case of labour migration, it involves finding accommodation and work, but also identifying spaces where recreational activities associated with the place of origin can be organised, and also working out how these activities might be organised, and by whom. In the case of remooring, these social processes are necessarily iterative.

Locating our research with Timorese migrants in Northern Ireland within the new sociolinguistics of multilingualism, we combine this duality of focus on the social processes of mobility and mooring with an account of the ways in which language, and other semiotic resources (KRESS, 2010), are drawn upon in the process of mooring. We are focusing, in particular, on the creation of spaces of solidarity and conviviality in local life worlds, on the construction of new identities and new forms of belonging in those spaces and on diverse representations, on and offline, of what it means to be Timorese, well beyond the borders of Timor-Leste. We use the term "lifeworld" proposed by Habermas (1987) to refer to spaces beyond institutional worlds. We use the terms "spaces of conviviality" in a broad sense, including the everyday meaning of "spaces where we do things together in enjoyable ways", and also including the meaning proposed by Gilroy (2004), in his reflections on the potential for conviviality in some contemporary urban settings where people of different origins live side by side, where differences are rendered banal, and where cultural resources come to be shared and/or blended across generations.

At the same time, we are keenly aware of the fact that south-north migration is bound up with global asymmetries of power and with the major economic shifts taking place in late capitalism. As Adey (2006, p. 85-86) has pointed out: "Mobility, like power, is a relational thing" and it is unevenly distributed. The mobility of some social actors needs to be viewed in relation to the immobility of others, and moving north and west, from the global south, rarely involves retaining the same positioning with the social hierarchy. As Duchêne and Heller (2012, p. 15-16) remind us: "The landscape is uneven, unbounded and fluid and (...) social actors occupy different (and differently advantageous) positions with respect to access to the resources that circulate across it".

For this reason, our broader research project spans the different social spaces traversed by the young Timorese migrants participating in our study. While our main focus in this paper is on the spaces of conviviality that they are creating within their local life worlds, on the ways in which they are building different identities within these life worlds and on the use of digital resources to portray these practices and identities to family and friends in Timor-Leste, in the broader project we are also taking stock of their lived experience of day-to-day social life in the small-town settings in which they find themselves and their experience of endeavouring to gain access to different workplaces. We also include the ways in which they are positioned within these workplaces, depending on the language resources and funds of knowledge available to them.

## 2. THE TRANSNATIONAL MOVEMENT OF TIMORESE

The first major outward movement of Timorese came in the wake of the Indonesian invasion and occupation of the eastern region of the island of Timor, in 1975<sup>1</sup>. Individuals and whole families moved abroad, as refugees, with the assistance of the International Red Cross, to build a new and more tranquil life in another country. Most moved to Australia or Portugal. During this period, other Timorese took refuge in countries such as Mozambique which had also been colonised by Portugal. Later on, in the 1990s, during the final phase of the struggle against the Indonesian occupation, a significant number of Timorese students sought refuge in foreign embassies in Jakarta, Indonesia, as a consequence of student-led demonstrations in Timor and in Indonesia (FERNANDES, 2011). Most of these students eventually made their way to Portugal, where they received financial support for several years to continue their studies. Some of these students then found their way to the UK as migrant workers.

Since Independence in 2002, there has been a new transnational movement. A significant number of young Timorese men and women have been leaving Timor-Leste in search of work in Indonesia, South Korea, Australia and in Western Europe. On Independence, Portugal made it possible for all Timorese born before May 20, 2002 (the

1. For details of the political history of Timor-Leste, including the Indonesian invasion and occupation (1975-1999), the East Timorese Resistance, the UN administration (1999-2002), and Independence in 2002, see Budiardjo, Liong, 1984, Taylor, 1999, Fernandes, 2011 and Leach, 2017.

date of Independence) to apply for Portuguese citizenship and, thus, for the right of residence and employment in Portugal, and elsewhere within the European Union (EU). This was because, under international law, the eastern region of the island of Timor remained a colony of Portugal until Independence in 2002. Neither Portugal nor the United Nations recognised the Indonesian occupation and administration of the territory from 1975 to 2002. This political and legal arrangement helped to alleviate the high level of unemployment among young people in the urban areas of Timor-Leste in the years immediately following Independence.

Many of those who have taken up this entitlement to apply for Portuguese citizenship have sought work in countries other than Portugal, notably the United Kingdom. This trend has been particularly marked since the recent economic downturn in Portugal. There are no official statistics on the numbers of Timorese currently living and working in the UK, but according to informal estimates, the overall number is circa 15,000. Their remittances (to family members in Timor-Leste) are highly significant: in 2008, it was estimated that remittances to Timor-Leste from the UK amounted to \$5 million (US dollars) a year (SHUAIB, 2008). It is likely to be much higher now, because of the significant rise in numbers of people migrating to the UK (see, for example, McWILLIAM, 2022).

There have been two overlapping routes into employment in the UK for these young migrants from Timor-Leste: First, some have followed the long-established labour migration routes from mainland Portugal, and from Madeira, into the rural sector. This has led to the clustering of Timorese migrant workers in small towns and in rural areas of England (e.g. in Devon and Lincolnshire) and Northern Ireland (in County Tyrone). In Northern Ireland, factories linked to food production have been established (e.g. factories designed for the processing and packaging of poultry and other meat) (DOYLE; MCAREAVEY, 2016). Other Timorese migrants have moved into urban areas (e.g., Bridgewater, Bristol, Oxford, Peterborough, Leeds, London and Northwich, near Manchester) and have found work within the service sector (e.g. supermarkets, department stores, online shopping/packing services). Whether they are based in rural or urban areas, they occupy precarious positions with the local economy and are part of what Standing (2010) refers to as the growing "global precariat". They are generally recruited by employment agencies and are expected to work to flexible schedules.

### 3. OUR STUDY IN NORTHERN IRELAND: DETAILS OF OUR ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK

We made our first field visits to Northern Ireland: in October 2014 and in June 2015. We conducted participant observation in different public settings e.g. in the Catholic Church in Dungannon and in local sports events (particularly football matches) and we have kept detailed field notes. We also used still photography and we gathered different kinds of texts and artefacts, including digital texts (e.g. postings on Facebook and on YouTube). In addition, we carried out extended face-to-face interviews, of a semi-structured nature, with twelve Timorese men living and working in Dungannon and in Cookstown<sup>2</sup>. The interviews were carried out primarily in Tetum<sup>3</sup>, with the interaction sometimes involving the blending of Tetum with Portuguese and/or English. The interviews lasted approximately one hour and they were all audio-recorded. Six were individual interviews and the others were joint interviews with football team members. They focused on the interviewees' migration trajectories and on their lived experiences of mooring or re-mooring in this Northern Irish context. The six individual interviewees constituted a core group of research participants (see Table 1 below).

### 4. DIVERSE ORIGINS, TRAJECTORIES, LANGUAGE RESOURCES AND FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE

From our participant observation and our interviews, and from earlier research in Dungannon by Da Costa Cabral (2010), it is becoming clear that there is considerable diversity among the young Timorese currently living and working in Dungannon and Cookstown. They come from different districts of Timor-Leste and they speak different regional languages<sup>4</sup> (e.g. Fataluku, Makasai and Mambai), as well as Tetum, the primary lingua franca. Table

2. Initials have been used here, instead of names, to preserve confidentiality.

3. Tetum has long been a language of wider communication in Timor. Its use widened in the context of the East Timorese Resistance to the Indonesian occupation (see Cabral & Martin-Jones, 2008). It is now a national, official language of the nation of Timor-Leste, along with Portuguese.

4. In the Constitution of Timor-Leste, the regional languages are referred to as national languages. Tetum and Portuguese are co-official languages.

1 below shows the language resources and the migration trajectories of those within the core group of research participants. Since all the core group interviewees were between the ages of 20 and 45, they had all received their education, either solely or partly, through the medium of Bahasa Indonesia<sup>5</sup>.

All members of the core group had had some modest material resources when taking the decision to move north. They had had enough to cover the cost of the long-haul flight from Timor-Leste to Europe and their living expenses while seeking employment.

TABLE 1. The core group of interviewees

Interviewees	Occupation Timor-Leste	Occupation Northern Ireland	Migration trajectories			Language resources
			Via Portugal	Other sojourns in the UK	Direct to UK from Timor	
MFB	Bank NGO	Factory (meat processing)		✓		Makasai Tetum Bahasa Indonesia English
CX	Male Nurse				✓	Makasai Tetum Bahasa Indonesia
HA	Student		✓			Tetum Bahasa Indonesia Portuguese English
RS	Student		✓			Tetum Bahasa Indonesia Portuguese English
DA	Driver for a government department				✓	Makasai Tetum Bahasa Indonesia
AX	Porter Construction Worker				✓	Makasai Tetum Bahasa Indonesia English (taking an ESOL course)

All members of the core group had had some modest material resources when taking the decision to move north. They had had enough to cover the cost of the long-haul flight from Timor-Leste to Europe and their living expenses while seeking employment. Take, for example, MFB who had worked in an Indonesian bank during the Indonesian occupation (1975-1999) and, then, after Independence in 2002, he had worked with a non-governmental organisation (Interview with MFB, June 2015). CX had been a male nurse who had worked for Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) during the three-year UN administration<sup>6</sup> (1999-2002) and had then gone on to work for the national health service in Timor-Leste after Independence (Interview with CX, June 2015). DA had been a driver for a government department after Independence (Interview with DA, June 2015). And AX had been employed as a porter in a warehouse in Dili (carrying sacks of rice) and also as a construction worker.

Some of our interviewees had spent some time in Portugal before moving to Northern Ireland and re-mooring there. They thus had a working knowledge of Portuguese. For example, one interviewee had been one of the students

5. During the Indonesian occupation, Bahasa Indonesia was imposed as the sole official language and medium of education (see Cabral, 2013 for details).

6. A UN administration (UNTAET) was established after the referendum in 1999 when the Timorese voted in favour of Independence and the Indonesian military forces were obliged to withdraw from the territory.

who had sought refuge in an embassy in Jakarta in the 1990s. He had subsequently been given safe passage to Portugal (Interview with HA, June 2015).

Two of those we interviewed in June 2015 (RS and HA) had been among the very first groups to arrive in Dungannon, in 2001 and 2002, directly from Portugal. They had found work through an employment agency in Portugal (Interviews, June 2015). Another interviewee (MFB) had worked in England before moving over to Northern Ireland and had therefore had prior exposure to English in the workplace (Interview with MFB, June 2015).

Three of these young Timorese (RS, HA and MFB), who had had sojourns in Portugal or England before moving to Northern Ireland, spoke Portuguese and English with some ease and fluency. However, all of those who had arrived in the second decade of the twenty first century had come directly from Timor-Leste to join friends and family who were already working in Northern Ireland. Most of this group spoke rather little English and virtually no Portuguese. They spoke a regional Timorese language and they all spoke Tetum and some Bahasa Indonesia. As in Timor-Leste, Tetum had become the main language of wider communication in this Irish context.

The communicative challenges faced by new arrivals, in dealing with the Irish authorities and with accessing social services, is evident in recent statistics for health and social care in Northern Ireland. According to Doyle and McAreavey (2016), Tetum was among the top six languages for interpreter requests made, in the context of health and social care, between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2014. In those three months, 24,158 interpreter requests were made for 41 different languages across Northern Ireland.

## 5. LOCAL CONDITIONS OF SETTLEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

While there has been a significant pattern of labour migration to England since the mid twentieth century, large-scale migration to Northern Ireland is a much more recent phenomenon. Northern Ireland only began to see an increase in inward migration at the beginning of the twenty first century. This increase was quite significant. Doyle and McAreavey (2016, p. 52) point out that: "Between the 2001 Census and the 2011 Census, the number of non-UK/Ireland migrants to Northern Ireland tripled (from 1.6% to 4.5% [of the local population])". Two main political developments lay behind this increase in migration: First, the culmination of the Peace Process in Northern Ireland on December 2, 1999, and the subsequent change in the political economy of this region of the UK, including inward investment in infrastructure. Second, the accession of different nation-states in Eastern Europe and the Baltic to the European Union, from 2004. This expansion of the European Union facilitated labour migration, to the Republic of Ireland (in the south) and to Northern Ireland, from Poland and from the Baltic States, especially from Lithuania (CORRIGAN et al., 2015, DOYLE; McAREAVEY, 2016). However, following the UK exit from the European Union on 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2020, the migration route to Northern Ireland, from the European Union, has no longer been open.

The small number of migrants arriving in Northern Ireland in the second half of the twentieth century had, for the most part, settled in large urban areas such as Belfast, rather than in small towns like those where our study was based. The local population in towns such as Dungannon and Cookstown had had relatively little experience of incomers. However, labour migration to these towns increased significantly in the first two decades of the twenty first century. Drawing on the 2011 Census data, Doyle and McAreavey (2016, p. 59) have demonstrated that, by 2011, there was a significant concentration of migrants of different origins in particular wards in Dungannon. As they put it: "Dungannon, a town in rural Country Tyrone, has four wards with over 20% combined migrant levels and two with over 30%, a significant change to occur in 10 years". Because of these significant demographic changes, the Timorese in our study who came to Dungannon in the early part of the twenty first century reported that they encountered considerable small-town hostility to incomers and frequent use of racist language. They also had considerable difficulty in understanding the local variety of Irish English (Interview with RS and HA, June 2015).

However, those who indicated that they had experienced this early hostility also noted that there had been change over time as other groups of migrants had also arrived, from Poland, Portugal and the Baltic States (Interview with RS and HA, June 2015). A local nongovernmental organisation had also made a difference: The South Tyrone Empowerment Project (STEP) had been established to provide assistance to local groups of migrant origin, in finding appropriate housing, in dealing with local authorities and with legal issues and with interpreting and translation in bureaucratic encounters and in health care settings. During our field visits, there were some visible signs of a change

of ethos in the public domain, at least. There were also books for children in different languages in the public library and a multicultural festival had been organised by Dungannon Town Council.

Most of the rental accommodation available in Dungannon and Cookstown is in houses. There are few apartments. The cost of renting a whole house is high, so, multiple occupancy is the norm for single people of migrant origin. Some of the Timorese who are married also share with family members or friends from Timor-Leste.

The Timorese arriving in Dungannon, or other local towns, eventually find work in one of the factories in the region. The largest one – Moy Park – is based in Dungannon. It specialises in chicken processing and packaging (e.g. for sale in supermarkets). This was formerly an Irish company, but when we were doing fieldwork in 2015, we learned that it had been owned by a Brazilian corporation since 2010. This development highlights the increasingly globalized nature of this aspect of food production. Two smaller factories in Cookstown specialise in the packaging of pork and of cheese for the retail sector (Interview with DA, in Tetum, June 2015). There is also a rendering plant in the area that prepares animal feed (Joint interview with RS and HA, June 2015).

Two local employment agencies act as the gatekeepers for those seeking work. Whilst the Timorese who arrived in the first groups found work right away, and even had their passage from Portugal paid for (Interview with RS and HA, June 2015), those who have arrived in recent years have found that it takes about 5-8 months to get a full time position. There has also been increasing casualization of employment so, initially, newcomers are offered part-time work on an ad hoc basis. Describing the insecurity and the anxiety experienced by him and his colleagues, over an eight-month period, due to the precarity of their situation, one of our interviewees gave the following account: “Ne’ebé telefone ami tau deit iha ulun leten ...kualkér tempu deit [sira] liga ona” (We slept with our phones above our heads ...they could call us at any time) (Interview with CX, June 2015). For those Timorese who do receive a full-time position, the working hours are long. They work twelve-hour shifts, but overtime is no longer paid, since the pattern now alternates each week. They work for 5 days one week and just 2 days the following week.

The ability to speak English is increasingly used by employment agencies to select employees. Thus, for example, there is an initial screening process in which applicants are interviewed in English before being given an application form. Those who have some capability in English move into positions of greater responsibility in the workplace (e.g. taking on supervisory duties or assisting veterinary staff with poultry inspection). A linguistic hierarchy of the kind described by Duchêne et al. (2013) is clearly being created through these recruitment and workplace practices. In this context, the Timorese migrants are experiencing a re-stratification of their language resources. Those who benefitted from their knowledge of Portuguese in Timor-Leste, have now found that these resources are no longer valued in their new work environments.

## 6. CREATING NEW SPACES OF SOLIDARITY AND CONVIVIALITY IN LOCAL LIFE WORLDS: THE TIMORESE FOOTBALL CLUBS

As we have shown above, the Timorese migrants in Dungannon and Cookstown have faced considerable social, economic and linguistic challenges in securing housing and employment as they have built their new lives there. At the same time, within their local life worlds, they are actively creating spaces for solidarity and conviviality. Focusing on the ways in which Timorese men and women were mooring (or in some case re-mooring) in these small Northern Irish towns gave us a keen sense of their agency in building new lives, in new spaces, despite the challenges facing them.

There are different groups of Timorese, with particular interests, who have formed particular communities of practice. There is, for example a choir that sings once a month in the Catholic Church. There is also a traditional women’s dance troupe. However, in this section of the paper, we focus on one particular (all male) community of practice that we encountered during our research: One that has developed out of a keen interest in football.

We provide an account of three different aspects of the activities that were developing around football when we were conducting fieldwork in June 2015, and we introduce some of the key social actors involved. The first aspect is that of the naming and branding<sup>7</sup> of the clubs. Here, we focus on the ways in which the linguistic and semiotic

7. We use italics on the term branding since it is a term that is normally used to refer to advertising discourse. In the case of the Timorese football clubs, we intend it to mean making each club distinct in the eyes of other Timorese – in Northern Ireland, in Timor-Leste and in the wider diaspora.

practices involved in the naming and branding indexed different Timorese identities. The second aspect is that of the leadership of the clubs and the organisational practices of the club managers<sup>8</sup>. Here, we focus on the ways in which the managers, and club organisers, were able to draw on the language resources and funds of knowledge available to them in their organisational activities. We also point to the ways in which Timorese cultural practices were incorporated into the ethos of some of the clubs. The third aspect is that of the scheduling of football tournaments (around key dates in the history of the establishment of the nation of Timor-Leste). Here, we also draw attention to the friendly away matches and the use of Facebook and YouTube in the representation of all the football matches (in the tournaments and the friendly matches).

### 6.1 The naming and branding of the clubs

It was in October 2014 that we learned that there were nine Timorese football teams for men and boys in the Dungannon/Cookstown area. They are listed in Table 2 below. The names of the clubs indexed the identity of the players in different ways. Different language resources (including Portuguese) were drawn upon. The players in FC Tahi Calu and FC Moko United were mostly Fataluku speakers, from Lospalos, in the Eastern region of Timor-Leste. The names of their clubs signified a regional identity. Similarly, the regional identity of the players in FC Matebian was indexed in the name of their club: They were mostly from the Baucau area, and from the eastern and central regions, and most of the players spoke Makasai.

TABLE 2. The Timorese football clubs in Dungannon and Cookstown

Names of the clubs	English translation	Languages used in the name and the acronym
FC Lao Rai United	FC Travellers United	English, Tetum & English
FC Estrela Oriente	FC Eastern Star	English & Portuguese
Fitun Unidade (based in Cookstown)	Star United	Tetum & Portuguese
FC Tahi Calu	FC Rough Sea	English & Fataluku
FC Moko United	FC Sons of Los Palos United	English & Fataluku
The Young Crocs	–	English
AS Bidau	AS + Name of a neighbourhood in Dili, Timor-Leste	
FC Matebian	FC + Name of a mountain in the east of Timor-Leste	
Ramkabian	Compound name, including three mountains in Timor-Leste: Ramelau, Kablake and Matebian	

The Young Crocs team was organised for Timorese boys, aged 14-19, who were growing up in Northern Ireland, speaking Irish English. The name of their team signified their new orientation to English. However, the reference to young crocodiles in the name of their club indexed Timorese-ness, since the image of a crocodile is often evoked in Timor-Leste because the shape of the island of Timor is said to resemble that of a crocodile. The name of FC Tahi Calu had multiple associations, including gendered ones: Literally, it means male sea: This name makes a geographical reference to the South East of Timor-Leste, where the tides are known to be stronger. It also has a

8. The term manager was used by some of the Timorese we interviewed. However, the managers of the clubs were all volunteers not professional managers with a salary

masculine connotation since, in Fataluku (as in Tetum), a calm sea is described metaphorically as female sea, while a rough sea is described as a male sea.

The six other teams included a mix of adult players, originating from different districts of Timor-Leste. In these football clubs, members were represented as having a shared national identity, as Timorese. When we interviewed the two organisers of the Ramkabian club, they explained that they had created a name that included parts of the names of three different mountains in Timor-Leste: Ramelau, Kablake and Matebian. They had done this as a way of emphasising inclusivity, dealing with difference and the building of solidarity. One of the organisers outlined the aims of the club. Blending Portuguese with Tetum as he spoke, he pointed out that one of the aims was: “*Criar amizade que [é] forte, la’os ba iha ne’é deit maibé iha fatin hotu-hotu*” (Creating friendship that is strong, not only for this [club] but everywhere). (Interview with both RS and HA, June 7, 2015 – all Portuguese words are shown in italics). FC Lao Rai United was also represented in a similar way. One of the organisers said that he saw the football club and participation in tournaments as giving an opportunity for Timorese from different districts of Timor-Leste to get to know one another. The use of the term Lao Rai (Travellers) in the name of this club indexed the shared identity of the players as people on the move. A third club, AS Bidau also had an inclusive ethos. The name, AS Bidau, refers to a linguistically diverse neighbourhood of Dili. The players in this team had mixed language backgrounds.

All the names of the football clubs were compound names and included words from a regional language, from Tetum or Portuguese, or from English. Moreover, the use of the acronyms FC and AS echoed the wider conventions of international football leagues. FC indexed the Anglophone world, although the acronym FC came before the name and thus followed the word order used in the names of football clubs in the Portuguese league. According to one of the club organisers, it actually stood for the English words: “Football Club”. AS is an acronym commonly used in the Italian football league (as in AS Milan), but according to one of our interviewees, it stood for the Portuguese word Associação (Association), so – for the members of AS Bidau - it indexed the world of Portuguese football, which is closely followed in Timor-Leste.

A range of semiotic resources were creatively employed in the branding of each of the clubs. Each of the clubs had its own colours and its logo, giving it a distinctive identity. We include in Figure 1 below, the logos for FC Lao Rai United, Ramkabian, and the Young Crocs.

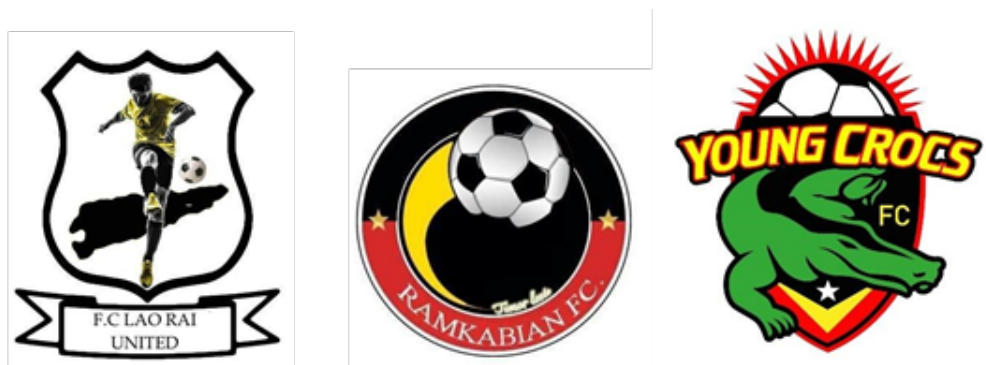


Figure 1. The logos for three of the football teams – posted on Facebook

All these logos incorporate images that link them to Timor-Leste. This includes: the map of Timor-Leste in the logo for FC Lao Rai United; the dominant image of the crocodile in the logo for the Young Crocs; the star in the national flag and the colours – red, yellow, black and white - of the flag that appear in the logos for the Ramkabian and Young Crocs teams. All these logos were created online and were primarily used as virtual images which circulated on digital texts.

Colour was used symbolically in other ways too: in the design of the football shirts, the jackets and even the ribbons for the medals and the cups – all incorporated the red, yellow, black and white of the national flag. FC Lao Rai United had also commissioned the weaving of a traditional Timorese tais in yellow, black and white with the name of the club incorporated into it. We had two tais placed around our necks, at the end of our interview with members of the club. This is a formal Timorese gesture of thanks. One of these tais is shown in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2. A black, white and yellow tait with the name of FC Lao Rai United. Photograph by Estêvão Cabral

## 6.2 Club leadership and organisation

Our interviews with football club organisers, and managers, gave us a window on the amount of organisation that went into the clubs. Most of those who took on a leadership role in a particular club were able to communicate in English with some ease and fluency. They also had funds of knowledge about UK practices around fund-raising, and around the scheduling and the organising of sports events in Northern Ireland. They had to find funding for the team and for the tournaments. They also had to book pitches for the tournaments and hire Irish referees. In addition, they had to arrange local sponsorship. A local law firm sponsored Ramkabian and a local taxi firm in Cookstown sponsored Fitun Unidade. The sponsorship funded the purchase of football shirts and jackets for the players, along with medals and cups for the football tournaments. Two of the players in the Lao Rai club had been in the national team of Timor-Leste before migrating to Northern Ireland, so they also brought a professional touch to the organisation of that club's activities.

Some of the club organisers and managers incorporated Timorese cultural practices and values into the management of club funds. This was, for instance, the case with the FC Lao Rai club. This practice came to our attention during an interview we held with one of the managers (Interview with MFB, June 2015). Blending Tetum with Portuguese and English as he spoke, he pointed out to us that this football club took care of the welfare of its players well beyond matters pertaining to football. For example, if someone needed help to pay for a return trip to Timor-Leste (e.g., for a family funeral), club funds were contributed towards the cost of the airfare. As he described this practice, he made explicit reference to the Timorese cultural practice known as *lia mate, lia moris*. This refers to the customary obligations on members of an extended family in Timor-Leste, and cultural rituals (*lia*), relating to death (*mate*) and life (*moris*). These obligations and cultural practices constitute a key aspect of the organisation of the life worlds of Timorese in Timor-Leste and in the diaspora. They involve providing material and moral support at times such as funerals, weddings, christening and so on. All those associated with the Lao Rai club paid £10 each per month towards the running of the club. The club manager also noted (in English) that all the football clubs had grown in importance in bringing people together and had become "better organised in the last few years" (Same interview with MFB, June 5, 2015).

## 6.3 The football tournaments, the friendly matches and their representation online.

The football tournaments involving these Timorese teams in Dungannon and Cookstown, were (and still are) scheduled to coincide with dates of national, political significance in Timor-Leste. They are held either on May 20 (the anniversary of Independence) or on August 30 (the anniversary of the decisive Referendum on Independence in 1999). In Figure 3 below, we include two photographs of the cup won by Fitun Unidade in the 2014 tournament of May 20, along with the medals won by individual players (e.g. as man of the match, or as highest goal scorer).

The photograph on the left shows the cup and it shows the ribbons, which are draped around the cup and which are tied to the medals. The ribbons are in three of the colours of the national flag of Timor-Leste: Red, yellow and black. The photograph on the right shows the date of the tournament engraved on the base of the cup, in Portuguese and in English.



Figure 3. The cup and medals won by Fitun Unidade during the May 20<sup>th</sup> tournament in 2014

*Photographs by Estêvão Cabral*

In addition to the annual tournaments, individual clubs organise friendly matches with Timorese teams in other regions of the UK. Thus, we learned that, in 2014, the FC Lao Rai United football team extended its range of football fixtures and travelled to Northwich, just south of Manchester, in England for a friendly match with a Timorese football team there. Since then, there have been other friendly matches and tournaments (e.g. in Oxford and in Peterborough). Photographs and video-recordings of all of these matches, and the festivities following the matches, are posted on Facebook and on YouTube. They are viewed and commented on (mostly in Tetum) by friends and family members in Timor-Leste and by other Timorese across the diaspora, in the UK, in Portugal, in South Korea and in Australia. There is considerable interest in football in Timor-Leste. There is a national team and, as noted earlier, a former member of that team was playing for the FC Lao Rai team in Dungannon when we carried out our research. Football is also played in local schools in Timor-Leste but there are insufficient resources to organise regional football teams. The matches of leading football clubs in Europe (e.g., the national team of Portugal or regional clubs in the UK, such as Manchester United) can be viewed on television or online in Timor-Leste and choosing to support particular football teams has become quite popular.

## 7. REFLECTIONS ON THE DIVERSE PRACTICES EMERGING WITHIN THE FOOTBALL CLUBS

Narrowing our research lens, and focusing in on the different activities taking place around the football clubs gave us revealing insights into the complex and multi-faceted processes of identification at work in this migration context. Diverse Timorese identities were being constructed in ways that related to the past and the present. These identities were indexed in the use of linguistic resources, and also in a range of semiotic resources, including images, colour and different material, textual and online resources. As we saw in Table 2, there were clubs that asserted a regional identity and others that emphasised inclusivity and a broader Timorese-ness. Some of the branding practices, such as the use of the colours of the national flag in the logos in Figure 1, and in the ribbons for the medals, in Figure 3, indexed national identity. In addition, some clubs adopted symbols of cultural heritage, such as the woven tais and the image of the crocodile. Furthermore, linguistic resources and symbols associated with international football culture were imbricated with these diverse ways of representing Timorese-ness.

Despite this diversity in the team-specific practices of identification, the annual scheduling of the tournaments around dates of national significance in Timor-Leste foregrounded the shared national identity of the players. The tournaments brought all the clubs together in sports events so that, in this Irish context, they were seen as part of one diasporic community, with its origins in the nation of Timor-Leste. Of particular significance too is that fact, mentioned above, that details of these tournaments were regularly posted on Facebook and YouTube and viewed by people in Timor-Leste and across the diaspora. These regular postings were part of wider digital practices and intense uses of mobile technology across the transnationally connected Timorese diaspora. One further insight that we have gleaned thus far is that the particular migration trajectories, communicative repertoires and funds of knowledge of some Timorese in this setting in Northern Ireland have positioned them in ways that enable them to take a lead in setting up group activities of a distinctive nature, whether it be a football club with a particular ethos, or cultural groups (such as the choir mentioned earlier) that are oriented to particular aspects of Timorese cultural heritage. So, for some, there is considerable scope for exercising individual agency, at least within local life worlds – scope for creating spaces of solidarity and conviviality, through organisational practices that involve complex and situated uses of linguistic and semiotic resources. At the same time, through these processes of mooring in the new country, a strong sense of shared history and belonging, tied to the nation of origin, is also emerging.

## CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Our aim in this paper has been to make a contribution to the new sociolinguistics of multilingualism and mobility, focusing in on one particular transnational population movement from the global south to the north and west. The case of the Timorese migrants in Northern Ireland throws the following points into sharp focus: First, the importance of moving away from purely synchronic description and analysis and of taking account of the historical context of particular migration movements, of the particular nature of the south/north entanglements involved and of the ways in which memories of key moments in past political struggles, along with emblems of national identity, contribute to the forging of a sense of solidarity and belonging.

Second, an orientation to national identity is, for some migrants, coupled with an orientation to other identities, such as having particular ties to particular region of origin or a particular urban neighbourhood in that region.

Third, the case of the Timorese migrants in Northern Ireland demonstrates the value of adopting the notion of trajectory as a conceptual compass: It enables us to foreground two processes in particular: (1.) the ways in which educational backgrounds, combined with migration trajectories, shape the communicative repertoires, language resources and funds of knowledge available to migrants; and (2.) the ways in which individual migrants, with particular linguistic repertoires and resources, which have higher value on the local linguistic market, are able to assume local leadership roles in creating local communities of practice and organising life world activities around sports like football.

Fourth, the dual focus on mobility and on the processes and practices involved in mooring makes it possible to counter-balance accounts of detachment, dislocation and precarious positioning in migration studies with vivid and revealing insights into the situated ways in which moorings (and re-moorings) occur, foregrounding the agency of those involved. In addition, close attention to the linguistic, cultural and other semiotic practices of specific groups, such as the football clubs we have discussed here, enables us to build an understanding of the complex ways in which local forms of mooring activity come to be imbued with multi-layered social meanings.

And, finally, undertaking detailed ethnographic research into the use of digital resources for multimodal documentation of the conviviality of life world practices for family members and friends in the country of origin provides us with a deeper understanding of the dynamic nature of diaspora. Diaspora are not bounded social groups but the outcome of intense communicative practices and processes of identification with a homeland orientation.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Both authors participated in the planning and writing of this manuscript. The manuscript is based on research that was conducted jointly.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The only public data (about recent migration to Northern Ireland, UK), which is cited in this study, is taken from the article by Doyle, C. and McAreavey, R. (2010). This article is listed in the References The interviews with the Timorese migrants are not publicly available as this material contains information that could compromise the privacy and safety of the research participants.

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