Report

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The role of language in the signs of four multicultural areas of Manchester, and how representative they are of the population in each

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1 Introduction

This paper examines the multilingualism in some of Manchester's most diverse areas by analysing the signage of businesses, homes and those provided by the council, whilst comparing them with the latest census data on ethnic diversity, population and religion to see if these signs are representative or not of each area and its residents. Our conclusions can also indicate whether some minorities are being under or over represented, either in terms of the amount of businesses or the amount of signs provided by the council, and we shall identify the reasons why this may be the case.

The four main multicultural areas of Manchester we decided to investigate were Cheetham Hill, Whalley Range, Rusholme and Levenshulme (Appendix C). Rusholme is home to the 'Curry Mile', so one might expect an obvious array of nationalities and languages spoken in this area, Levenshulme has experienced an influx of different nationalities in the last 60 years, having previously been a very middle class, white neighbourhood; now with a population of around 15,000 of which only 9,000 classify themselves as white with the predominant minority group being of Pakistani origin. Whalley Range has a similar population of just over 15,000 and shows even more diversity with only around a 50% white population. Finally, Cheetham Hill is possibly the most diverse area of them all with only 8,000 out of the population of over 22,000 that live there describing themselves as white. Bearing this data in mind, it is interesting to see whether this is translated into the signage of these areas, and if these signs reflect the percentages of each ethnic group in each area. However it is imperative to remember, these statistics are based on the 2011 Census, so migration patterns in the areas may have altered.

Our research is unique because although you could predict there will be signs in Urdu in Rusholme due to the Pakistani community living there, there may be some languages one may not expect to find due to the 2011 Census not being entirely thorough. With this in mind, we are expecting to find a vast array of languages in each area, given the respective amount of non-white ethnic groups in each location, as shown by the graph in Appendix D.

2 Background Research

2.1 Previous Literature

Using previous linguistic study, we developed our research aims incorporating their successes and conclusions in order produce our own novel data. For example, Backhaus's study also deals directly with multilingualism in signs. He reinforces the sentiment that signs "escape the evanescence of speech", and he comments on the wildly different nature of collecting data from signage.
He proposes an exciting concept in that the communicative quality of signs can be "dissolvable from the circumstances of their production", something that would be interesting to explore in our own

endeavours. This led our team to believe that languages can be viewed as a resource in two senses. Firstly, as a resource from the perspective of the target audience of the sign - how they possess the necessary linguistic capabilities to interpret the language of the sign in its entirety. And secondly, as a resource from the perspective of the developer/facilitator of the actual sign – whether it is a business owner that has commissioned the sign in order to draw attention towards their commercialised business or whether it is the council that has commissioned the sign for the benefit of the community.

After further research into the subject, we found that there are other supporters of the view that language can be viewed as a resource, one being Ayo Bamgbose (2000). It is interesting to consider the reasons why sign facilitators choose to accommodate for non-native English readers when creating signs. Their book provided some satisfactory answers of which we were pleased to discover about language policies. Despite the studies of this book focusing on African policies, the points raised are still applicable to languages in a wider sense. Bamgbose recognises language as an underrated 'powerful symbol in society'. It is possible that sign facilitators/commissioners choose to include other languages on signs in order to give the non-native readers of English a sense of identity within their local community. Bamgbose talks about how language 'is supposed to facilitate communication and foster a sense of belonging'. We think that this is the reason signs cater for speakers of non-native languages; in order to make the non-native English readers feel comfortable with the message that the sign conveys because they can see that the creator of the sign has taken the time and effort to cater for their personal language needs. If someone sees a sign that is in their mother tongue, the readers are more likely to pay attention to the message on the sign; whether it is a public order or whether it is commercial and so on. Bamgbose summarizes these points by saying how: "language [can be seen] as a major instrument in national integration." Bamgbose summarises the importance of language with regards to the role it can serve in a community in order to integrate its citizens into the societal norms of that community.

Durk Gorter (2006) recognised the representation of languages in signs, identifying it as: "cultural globalisation." He describes this as the: 'revitalisation of minority languages.' This is a positive aspect of multilingualism in signs we believed, showing how important it is for sign facilitators to use languages other than English in order to try and conserve minority languages in areas with a diversity of languages. As a group, we believe that if a language dies out, so does some of the cultural heritage that is associated with it. So as well as serving a commercial or public order purpose, by printing their signs in a variety of languages that are not English, sign developers are aiding the preservation of minority languages in counties of which it is not native. Gorter goes on to discuss Hicks (2002) work of which he addresses the 'overpainting' of signs such as 'public signs', 'commercial billboards' and 'shop signs' in Wales. It has been done because people were 'concerned with the use of language in its written form in the public sphere'.

Of course, the written form of language could be described as a lost form with spoken English language being more desirable to learn in language lessons rather than learning to read and write. This act of 'overpainting' on signs in minority languages therefore compensates for the lack of ability

to read language in communities, which is beneficial for potential customers and/or citizens of the local community.

By collating this previous research, our team maintained our original idea of using signage, interviews and the 2011 Census to construct a research paper which proposed novel findings into the linguistic landscapes of four of Manchester's both multicultural and multilingual area. From here we were able to decide on our five definitive research questions.

2.2 Research Questions

1)   Which languages are spoken where?

2)   Does the signage of the area reflect the population according to the census?

3)   In the cases of businesses, why do they have the sign in a particular language?

4)   What does this tell us about multiculturalism and multilingualism in these areas?

5)   How accurate is the 2011 Census in terms of representing multilingualism in these areas?

3   Methodology

In order to acquire more than the simple raw data supplied by the 2011 Census our research questionnaire (Appendix A) featured questions pertaining both quantitative and qualitative data. By doing so, our findings will contain a compendium of statistics, as well as the subjective opinions of our interviewees.

The quantitative questions followed a regimented tick-box format for quicker examination of the signs and interviewees. In our findings (Section 4) we graphically display the discrete data, so we were then able to compare our independent findings about signage with the previously collated results concerning language and population in the 2011 Census.

By applying our outcomes to the Census, we will be able to identify whether both studies give parallel results and if the relationships we draw between signage and each community, is indeed correct.

Adding depth to our report was integral, so to attain theory behind our numerical data we will include qualitative questions. These revealed how and why certain policies were in place. We believed this to be essential, as each community's motivation towards language choice regarding signage reveals

invaluable information; something unobtainable just through pure statistical investigation. This two-pronged approach is supported by Moyer (2008; 27), who claimed 'the qualitative approach is not only to understand experience from the point of view of members of the group, but also to adopt a theoretical framework that provides an explanation of localised practices in a wider societal context.'

As in our original proposal, our team continued to adopt stratified sampling whilst completing our qualitative research. This means the subjects were chosen randomly to an extent, but only if they could provide information on the commissioning of relevant signs. This means a lot of our interviews could have had the potential to be based on ethnic appearance, which we counteracted by specifically asking for the employee who commissioned the sign. These individuals were then informally interviewed after being briefed on our aims and how they can withdraw their responses at any time (Appendix B).

An obstacle our team did encounter was deciding on the definite isoglosses dividing Rusholme, Levenshulme, Whalley Range and Cheetham Hill from their neighbouring areas. Deciding on strict boundaries between each district is near impossible, hence why even the 2011 Census has had to account for changes. The Manchester City Council website (2014) notes 'that boundaries for output area geographies have changed (merged/split) since 2001' highlighting the lack of clarity on this subject. We tackled this problem in our original methodology by targeting signs in the centre of each community to ensure that they were well within each region and applied definitively to the diversity of the population in each.

Each member of our group was allocated one of the four chosen areas of Manchester, in which they used our questionnaire to research the signage of each and interview relevant individuals.

4 Findings

4.1 Levenshulme

With a sharp population increase from 768 in 1830 (Clarke, 1830) to 15,430 in 2011 according to the Census, Levenshulme is an area of the North West positioned at the forefront of welcoming immigration and diverse cultures; reflected by this statistical rise. What began as a traditionally English middle-class township in the nineteenth century has become a suburb harbouring an Irish population of approximately 7.0% which is twice the Manchester average, along with a large influx of people of mainly Muslim South Asian origin.
These demographics have been altered further by a constantly growing number of Africans settling in the district, along with many Eastern Europeans who are predominantly Polish descending in recent years. Our team recognised formulating research in such a melting pot of nationalities and ethnicities could be fascinating due to the vast array of data and resources at our dispense. With a high street comprising of multiple fast food restaurants of varying cuisine, numerous language learning

companies as well as convenience stores marketing specialist foreign items, a range of relevant signage is on offer for multicultural and linguistic investigation.

The 2011 Census data revealed Levenshulme to be the home of 6,345 people of non-white ethnicity, with those of Pakistani origin counting for almost half of this demographic. Bangladeshi, Black African and Mixed Race groups each individually accounted for over 300 people in the data set explicitly highlighting how diverse this small area 3 miles south of the city centre actually is. The recent Census also uncovered that the area boasts 41.1% of people to be of non-white ethnicity from its total population at the time of 15,430. Using these statistics one could make the assumption that due to the high amount of different ethnic backgrounds, a variety of languages would suitably be spoken to cater for the diversity and this in turn would be reflected within the choice of signage implemented by business owners and potentially even by those commissioned by the local Council. It should be noted though, our team made imperative that we didn't confuse ethnicity as the determiner of people's L1 language, and only used this to guide our predictions. With this in mind, we can however know English to be the dominant language nationwide or the de facto official language of Britain with accordance to the *Kwintessential* (2013) website, with over 70% of speakers being monolingual in English; which perhaps is not the in the case of Levenshulme. By having such a multicultural area with high levels of language contact between foreign vernaculars such as Urdu and Bengali, it is likely language use here behaves differently to the rest of the United Kingdom, and more importantly other districts of Manchester with regards to our research.

The 2011 Census also brought to light 12.6% of people in Levenshulme lived in households where nobody used English as their main language; which is 4% higher than Manchester as a whole. From here, we predicted that the language usage was perhaps misrepresented in the Census, and was actually more diverse than the Census data explains. To determine whether the Census does in fact give a false analysis of the language usage in the area, we compiled both quantitative and qualitative data in order to see if our findings correlated with the previous results. Using public and business signage we were able to observe which languages were frequently adopted, and by interviewing shopkeepers that commissioned them formulated opinions and explanations for why these languages were chosen as well as providing more evidence to compare with the Census in the form of our linguistic questionnaires. By collating this data, we could then deduce whether the 2011 Census is not actually a fair representation of the language usage in the area, because Levenshulme's linguistic landscape is so diverse in terms of signage and the vernacular of local sign commissioners.

Using our questionnaire (found in Appendix A) we interviewed 10 shopkeepers in Levenshulme who commissioned signs in varying languages. To begin with we wanted to get a linguistic profile of them, using questions 1 and 2 to determine which languages they speak most fluently and would refer to as their first-language, as well as asking which languages they are also able to speak fluently if they identify as multilingual. Unsurprisingly English was the most common with 60% of sign commissioners saying it was their first language, which in a predominantly English speaker city is to be expected. The

graph below also shows Urdu to account for 30% of L1 languages and Bengali for 10%, with these languages also featuring heavily as some of the second languages of the shopkeepers. Every person interviewed was able to speak English fluently, with one supporting this by claiming it was "an essential part of owning a shop in England". Half of the people questioned were fluent in Urdu which is a true reflection of Urdu being the second most popular language spoken in Manchester, as determined from the 2011 Census. All of these speakers explained this as being a cultural norm in Levenshulme, with many people primarily of Pakistani descent using Urdu for conversations socially and in the home, making it an essential tool in their everyday life. An interesting insight from a worker in a local convenience store 'Kingsway Superstore' revealed that many employees would adopt either English or Urdu interchangeably on using a preconceived analysis of customers. For example when serving someone of what is assumed to be Pakistani descent the employees open their exchange with Urdu, to build a rapport and relationship whilst personalising the dialogue. Our team regarded this as an ingenious marketing technique which emphasises the ingenuity of shop workers in this multicultural area, which in turn encourages trade to include all demographics. Arabic and Gujurati were the two other most common languages spoken by our interviewees, which correlate with the fact 40% of them were from Indian or East African origin; where their birth countries name these two as official languages. Furthermore, when comparing our findings to that of the 2011 Census it appears that the two differ slightly in the percentage of speakers who consider English to be their first language.

The previous study found 75.5% of Levenshulme residents to hold English as the first language, compared to 60% in ours. The significantly lower number shows that perhaps the Census is a misrepresentation, which could be resultative of individuals not completing it accurately, and giving more honest answers when questioned on a more informal basis like our own questionnaire.

This statistic also highlights how Levenshulme is more culturally diverse in terms of language usage than the 2011 Census gives it credit for, with people choosing to speak other tongues rarely from the Indo-European family than the raw data protrudes.
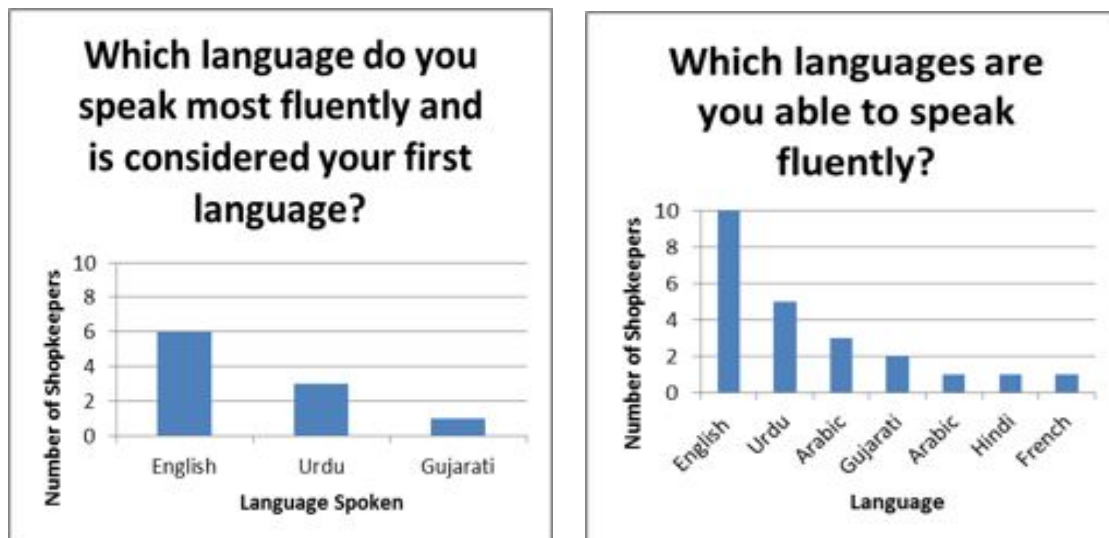
(Appendix A: Q1 and Q2)

Questions 3 and 4 address Levenshulme's linguistic landscape by targeting the language choices within the commissioned signs, whilst also determining the factors that contributed to forming these finished products. Our findings allowed us to construct data which can be compared to the 2011 Census to see if the demographics of ethnicity recorded in the area are justifiably represented in terms of their language choices in terms of the signage found. Appendix E encompasses photographs of a selection of signage found in Levenshulme, featuring a range of languages all chosen for varying purposes. One must consider the fact only a selection of signs that were recorded as part of our data set are used in our study to represent the area as a whole, which adheres to our research purpose as it isn't the sheer number of signs that our work gravitates around; but more importantly the amount of languages present within them, and how and why these have been imposed to meet the multilingual standards of the area.

We observed by far the highest proportion of signs to be written in English, which is to be expected in a predominantly English speaking city. Furthermore, we found no establishments that did not feature a sign written in English, revealing regardless of the language spoken by the employees or customers, in Levenshulme English is viewed as a standard and integral part of communication within its commerce. Chains of shops common on the high street such as 'Autospares' and 'Cash Converters' also heavily impact on the frequent presence of English, because nationwide their policy is to work and advertise in English foremost, meaning this will be the language of choice in Levenshulme irrelevant to how multilingual it may be. We found examples of Chinese Mandarin on fast food outlet signs, but on no other type of establishment. These were purely translations of the shop's name, for example 'Encore Room' situated in the eastern edge of the district. This is arguably

proportionate to the 1.2% of residents in Levenshulme of Chinese ethnicity displayed in the 2011 Census, as occurrences of this language were rare.

The sign commissioner from 'Encore Room' explained there is no real need to use Chinese Mandarin in the signage, because their customers all order in English and by making their menus or signs bilingual (other than the takeaway name), would be "confusing and unnecessary".

A particularly interesting sign which is commonplace upon Levenshulme's high street is that which signifies Halal. Every restaurant owner we interviewed insisted that this was an integral tool for maintaining trade with local consumers, and found this to be an essential sign to attract Muslim people from Levenshulme who can only consume certain foods under religious law. The word Halal is used universally by all Muslims, regardless of their level of understanding of the Arabic language. It is a word that is considered part of the basic vocabulary of those who choose to follow the Islamic faith and hence its meaning should be understood (Wilson & Liu, 2010). A range of examples of Halal being written in English and in Arabic (حلال) can be seen in Appendix F, from small family-run businesses to larger chains of takeaway like 'Subway'. This famous sandwich outlet supplied our team with an interesting insight into corporations are clearly very culturally aware, because their inclusion of a Halal sign is not something that is exhibited in every Subway window. Educated choices have obviously been made to include the sign in Levenshulme which is known to be highly multicultural, and not in certain stores of the city centre where the percentage of non-white ethnicities is roughly 10% lower according to the Census. In Levenshulme sign commissioners are fully aware of the important information the sign discloses, and in every example catered for the needs of Muslims and non-Muslims by using English and Arabic. This taught us that when a sign is so crucial to a community because of religious reasons, a range of languages are adopted to access the majority. This was reinforced by one shopkeeper informing us of the globally recognisable properties the Halal sign in Arabic has, which communicates its semantic message to all Muslim people whether they speak Arabic, Urdu, Hindi or any other language present in Levenshulme.

We formulated more quantitative results from the answers to Question 3, asking which languages featured on the signs of the establishment. A graphical representation of that can be found below, showing that as previously discussed; English appeared on the signs of every shop we interviewed. Half of the establishments incorporated the Arabic language into their signage, usually communicating the Halal produce they had on offer. 30% of the shops featured Urdu which correlates to the Census data, as it is the second most common language spoken in Manchester, and these statistics reflect its prevalence particularly in such a multilingual area. An insight into the manufacturing of the signage enlightened our team to a contributing factor of language choice we had not previously considered, surrounding the printing of Urdu. 'Kingsway Superstore' explained that for their shop, it is actually more expensive for them to print in Urdu than in English when their signs are being made, and in order to keep costs minimal they would rather choose the latter.

This revelation perfectly exhibits the contemplations that are involved in sign commissioning, and the struggle some businesses have in whether they should choose to prioritise multilingual communication for a wider market share or keeping printing expenditure down.

Which languages feature on the signs of your establishment?
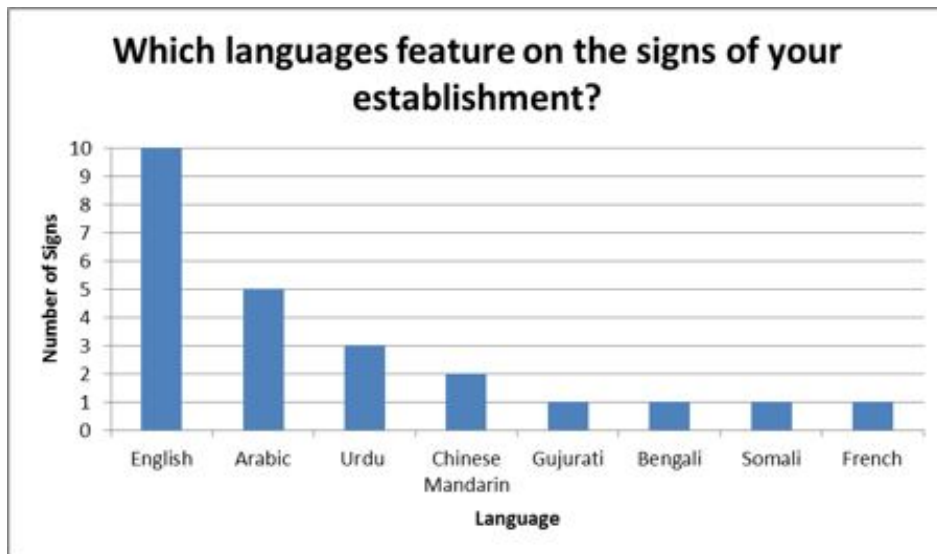
(Appendix A: Q3)

Gujarati, Bengali, Somali and French were found on the signage for a popular language teaching business called 'Citizenship and ESOL', nestled on Levenshulme high street. Their advertising strategy was "to encourage as many people from all backgrounds in Levenshulme to improve their communication skills" which was executed by using the same poster campaign, but translated in the range of languages discussed prior, as well as English and Urdu. This makes our graph look extremely varied in terms of languages found in the signage of Levenshulme, but it is key to remember that as this was a language teaching business, this approach could have been implemented nationwide and not just in Levenshulme because of its multilingual reputation. That led us to conclude it is possible the results are misrepresentative, in terms of the languages commonly found on the high street – for example Somali. Furthermore, with regards to religious beliefs recorded in the 2011 Census, we are able to see Christianity as being the faith of choice for 38% of people in Levenshulme which is 10% less than Manchester as a whole. More importantly 28% of people identified as Muslim which is nearly double the amount of Manchester as whole. The link between the Muslim faith and Arabic script shows the cultural importance of the relationship between a religion and a language, and would explain that Arabic was found so commonly because of the high number of Muslim residents. This shows the signage in Levenshulme to correlate with the 2011 Census data in terms of language usage with religion, to cater for the needs of its multicultural and multilingual citizens.

A final point we wanted to investigate was which language was regarded the most dominant in Levenshulme by the interviewees who live and work in the area routinely. Only the two most common spoken languages in Manchester were given as answers: English and Urdu. 70% of people of varying

ethnicities declared English as the predominant language, with 30% deciding Urdu was top, showing the more uncommon vernacular still accounts for a high statistic. The 2011 Census reported 11.9% of people in Levenshulme as having nobody in their house who speaks English as their main language, which when compared do not completely match with our results. By this we mean English was not regarded as dominant in our more informal questionnaire compared to the government findings. There are a few possible explanations for this. We must remember our investigation is not as thorough as the Census in terms of the sample size; meaning the Census could be more accurate. It is also possible we only asked people who predominantly speak English or Urdu by chance, as our narrow range of results doesn't account for the other citizens who may decide another language is more prevalent. For example if we targeted more Chinese takeaways in the area, then perhaps Chinese Mandarin would take a large proportion of our pie chart. It could also be said that as our research was more informal those asked would be more honest, allowing our findings to form a more accurate picture of the linguistic landscape of Levenshulme. It is this final explanation that our team deemed to be correct, meaning in terms of the 2011 Census and our primary data, the dominant languages do not correlate to the same statistical degree. The formal Census may agree that English is the most dominant language, but we have concluded that in Levenshulme languages like Urdu do actually account for a higher percentage than previously proposed.

(Appendix A: Q5)

4.2 Cheetham Hill

Cheetham Hill (population: 22,562) is universally recognised as an area in north-north east Manchester with a multi-ethnic population. In 1838, the township of Cheetham was amalgamated into the borough of Manchester then terminated its township in 1896 when it joined Manchester's township. Cheetham Hill is multi-ethnic due to waves of immigration to Britain. The Great Famine brought many Irish people into the long-standing industrial area in the 19th century. Then many Jews settled fleeing persecution in Europe in the late-19th and early 20th century. More recently, since the mid-20th century, people from India, Africa, Eastern Europe and the Far East have migrated to

Cheetham Hill. With such rich immigration history, we predicted that the languages used on signs in this area would be greatly varied. According to the 2011 Ethnic group census by ward, 6,353 of the residents of Cheetham Hill are of Pakistani origin; this converts to 28.2% of the whole population of the area so I expected to find that a lot of Urdu was in use in the signage of the area.

In order to gain some insight into the language choices of the area, we used the questionnaire (found in appendix A) and asked the shopkeepers of the establishments with a sign that featured a language other than English, a series of questions. The conclusions that can be drawn for Cheetham Hill are as follows:

In correspondence to the first question, we asked 10 different shopkeepers what their most fluent language was. As the bar chart below shows, the joint most dominant language was Urdu with 30% of the people interviewed claiming that it is their most fluent language.
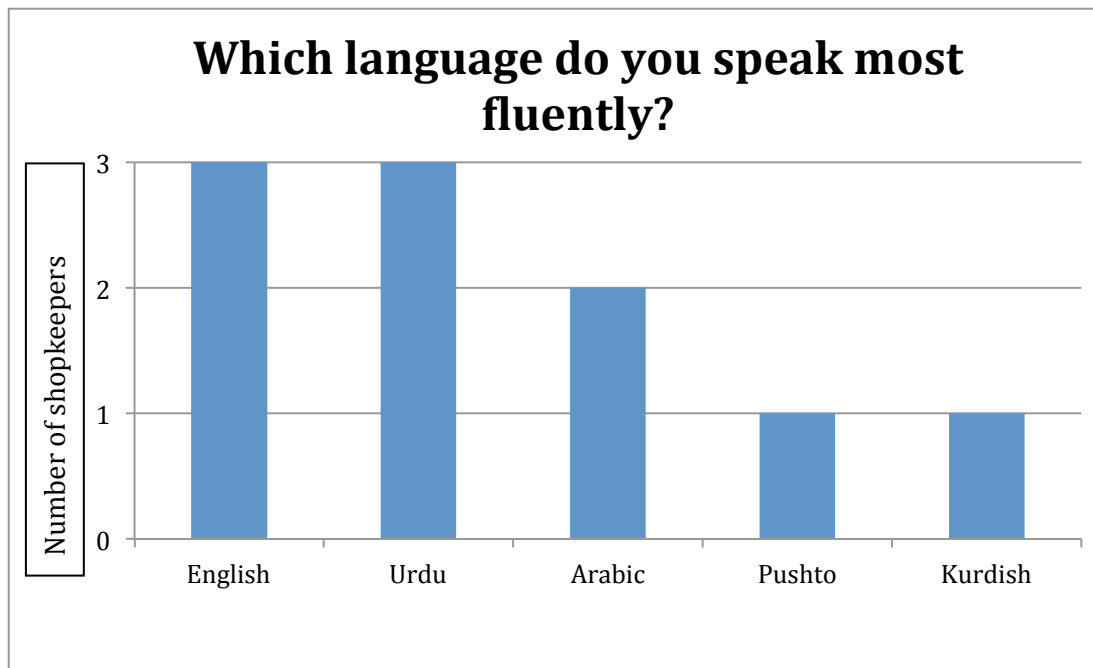

Figure 1: Bar Chart: Appendix A - Question 1

Urdu is the national language of Pakistan and with 28.2% of Cheetham Hill residents being of Pakistani origin, this figure appears to be representative of the 2011 census, there is a mere 1.8% difference in the two figures and is exactly what we expected to find.

In terms of fluent English speakers in Cheetham Hill, according to the census there are 8,400 white residents in total. One would then expect that a similar percentage of residents would speak English most fluently which should translate to roughly 37.2%. In reality, from the ten shopkeepers that we interviewed, the figure is closer to 30%. With a 7.2% difference in correlation with the 2011 census,

we would have expected perhaps one more of the ten interviewees to have claimed English to be their most fluent language. However, in my experience of questioning the shopkeepers, some of them were torn between their choice of language as they could speak English just as well as their other strongly fluent language. They were on the fence about which to claim as their most fluent language as they were bilingual since birth. One of the interviewees chose Urdu as his most fluent language in order to try and preserve his national heritage. A few of the interviewees were in a similar predicament and ultimately the decision was simply 50/50 and could have been answered either way. This recurring 50/50 decision could have skewed the results slightly, but overall, are still fairly representative of the census.

Besides English, the most dominantly fluent languages in the shopkeepers are Urdu and Arabic, accounting for around 50% of the whole sample tested. It is interesting to now see how these figures correlated with the use of signs in Cheetham Hill. From the photo evidence collected displaying all of
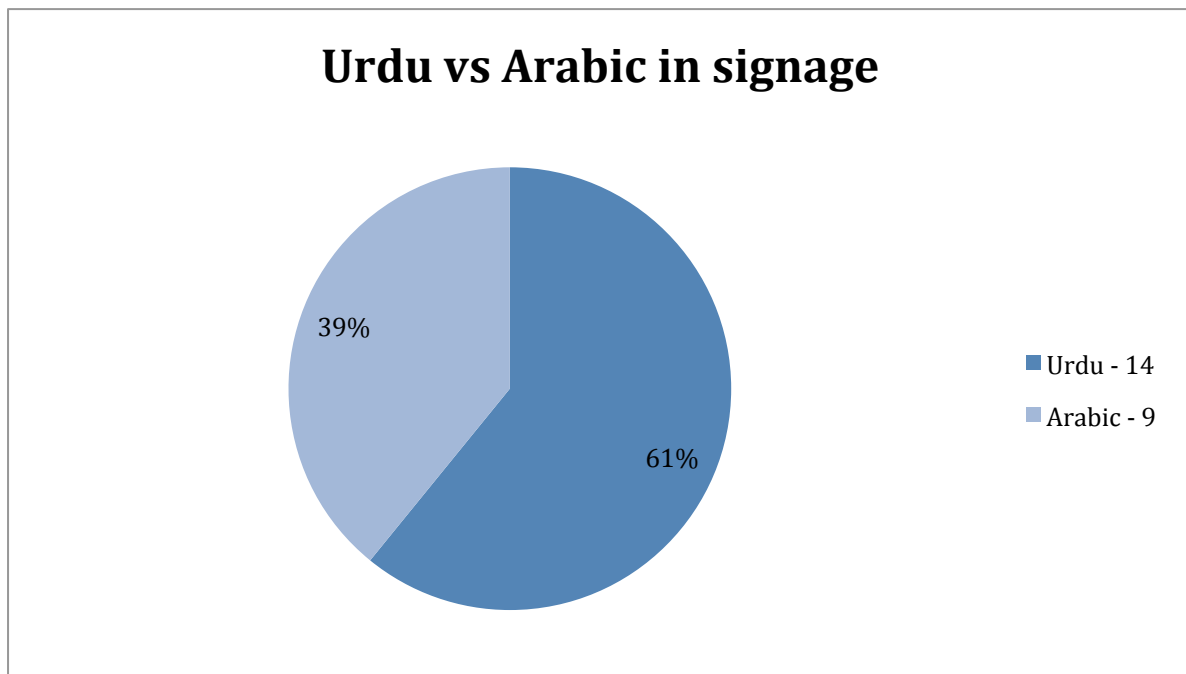

Figure 2: Pie chart: Urdu vs Arabic

the non-English signs from the area (appendix G) we calculated the ratio between Urdu and Arabic in order to see which prevails as the most used, See pie chart below:

As you can see, Urdu is the most dominant language featured in the use of non-English signage. This is fairly predictable as this correlates with the graph featuring the most fluently spoken languages, Urdu was more widely fluently spoken than Arabic, and this reflects in the difference in usage of the two languages in signage.

The second question on the questionnaire was asked to find out how many languages the shopkeepers could speak fluently in total. The results are shown in the following bar chart.
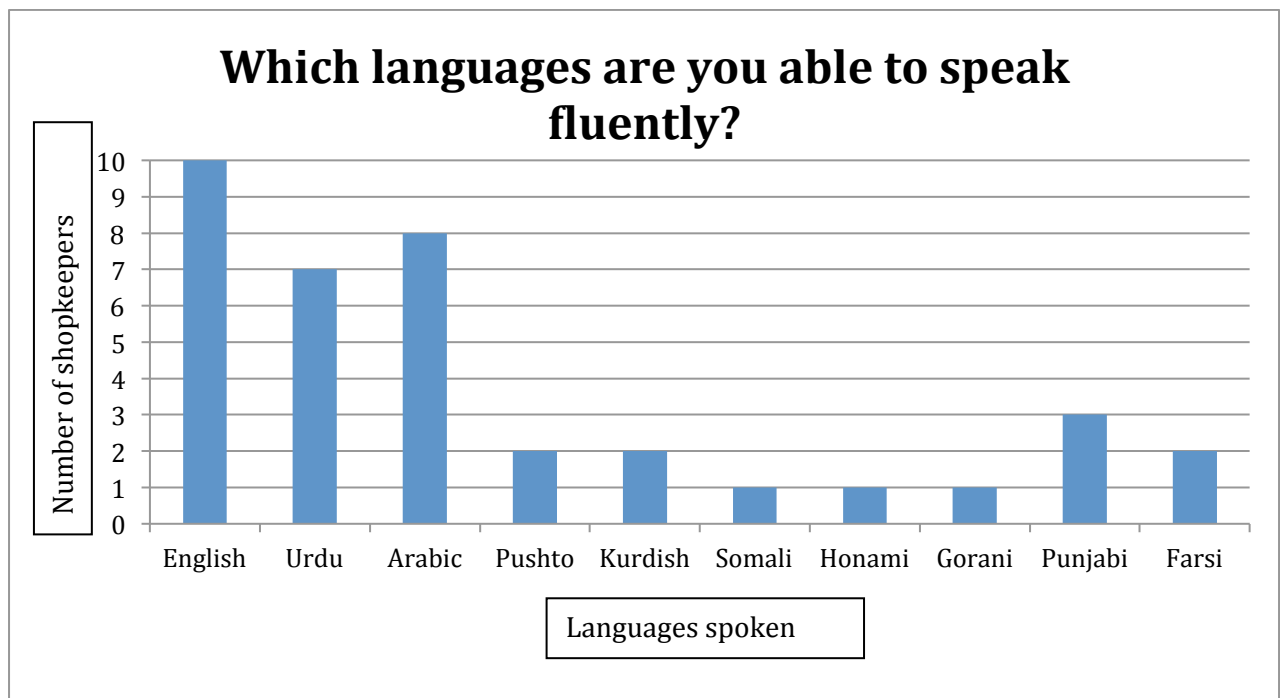
Figure 3: Bar Chart: Appendix A - Question 2

Understandably, all of the shopkeepers that we surveyed claimed that they could speak English fluently, however in some of the conversations that took place between ourselves and the shopkeepers, there were numerous instances of miscommunication and there was blatantly a lack of understanding present in some of the conversations that took place. This would suggest that some of the interviewees were in fact not as fluent as they thought they were. They may speak English very well as a second language; however it could be argued that they were not fluent in the language. It is worth mentioning that they may be fluent in subject specific language that relates directly to their job role or line of work in the shop, i.e. fluent in an everyday use perspective of English. However, I myself am a native speaker of English and could recognise that they weren't fluent and that they seemed to speak in somewhat broken English. In my opinion, about seven/eight of the interviewees were actually true fluent speakers of English.

Interestingly, more of the shopkeepers know Arabic in comparison to Urdu. With Urdu prevailing as the most spoken non-English language in question 1, we expected that it would have also ranked higher than Arabic in the total languages spoken enquiry. Arabic is spoken by 8 of the 10 shopkeepers, whereas Urdu was spoken by just 7 of the 10 shopkeepers. Due to a higher frequency of Urdu signage in the Cheetham Hill, as discovered whilst investigating the first question, one would expect more people to be able to speak Urdu than Arabic in total.

From the chart, you can see quite a few languages spoken by just one of the shopkeepers: Somali, Honami and Gorani which were all spoken by the same man. When I asked him about these languages, because no other interviewee claimed to speak them, he was happy to explain how he knew these languages due to business arrangements with some of his shop's suppliers. He explained

that he learnt the languages specifically for three separate business arrangements with three different suppliers within the last fifteen years. He did this in order to be able to converse with them on a more personal level and bargain with them about getting special discounts on supplies instead of having to pay the stock price. This may not contribute greatly in our investigation of the linguistic landscape, however it is still interesting to know which lengths to which some shopkeepers will go to in order to secure healthy business arrangements.

The third question on the questionnaire looked at which language featured on the sign of the establishment. Of the 10 shopkeepers questioned, the results are shown in the graph below:

this is different to the previous pie chart which compared the use of Arabic and Urdu in signage in the whole area, this graph just focuses on the interviewees' shop signs
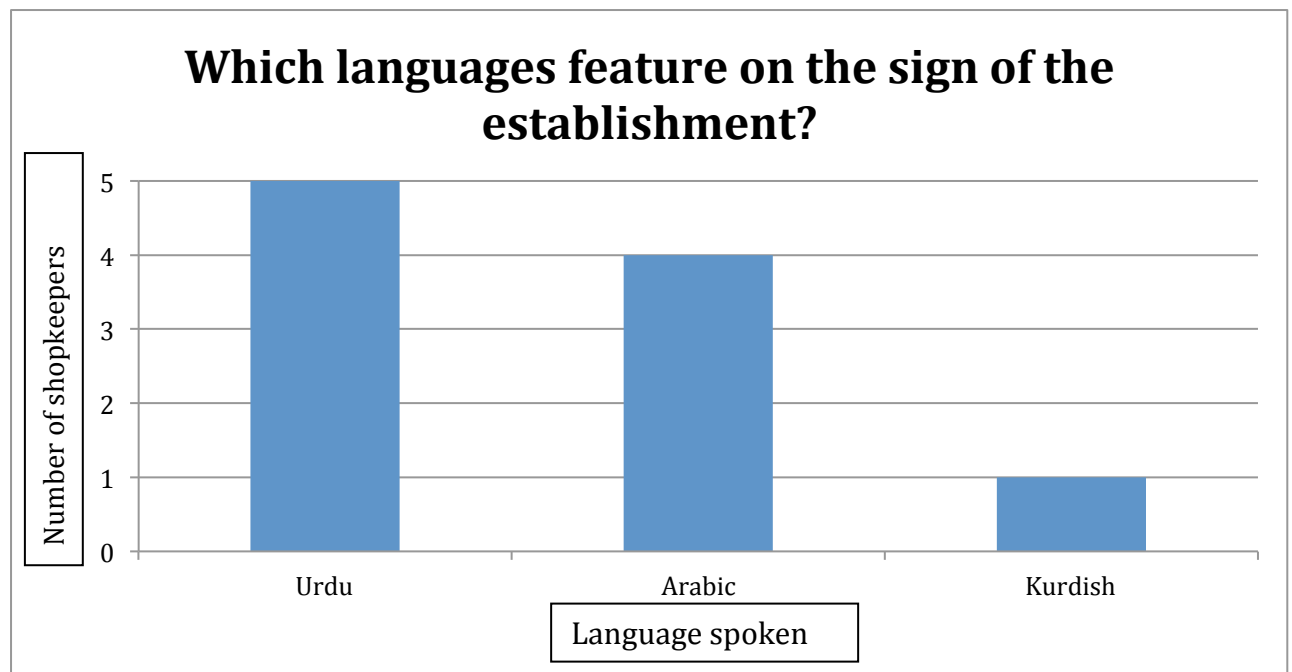

Figure 4: Bar Chart: Appendix A - Question 3

The data displayed in this graph shows us that in the ten shops of which we interviewed the shopkeepers, Urdu was the most dominant language used in signs. However, from our own research, we have found more Arabic signs in Cheetham Hill than Urdu, so in the bigger picture, the shop owners do not reflect the rest of the area accurately in terms of languages used in signage. This could be because Arabic and Urdu are very similar and perhaps speakers of Urdu can read Arabic as well as Urdu.

Question 4 on the questionnaire was designed to discover the reasons why the non-English signs featured on the establishment. Interestingly, we managed to discover the local sign production

company sign itself and it was printed mainly in English. This sign assumes that all of the potential customers are able to read English, which supports our finding from the bar chart that was explored in second question of the questionnaire which shows how all of the shopkeepers claimed to speak English fluently. There were a few recurring reasons as to why the signs featured the language of which they did. One of these reasons was simply because it was the shopkeepers' main language (L1) and it made sense for them to advertise in their own, main language. A similar reason to this also kept arising, a lot three shopkeepers said that a lot of their regular customers did not speak or read English at all so it was beneficial for themselves to feature a non-English sign on their establishment in order to maintain customer relations and appear as though they are actively catering for a multi-ethnic range of customers. Another theme that was made apparent was the frequent uses of the translation of 'Halal' into Arabic, letting customers know that they serve halal meat as in accordance to Islam law. One shopkeeper, a butcher suggested that because the translation for 'Halal' into Arabic is now so easily recognisable due to overexposure, he has attracted a lot of new custom from white people who for other reasons only eat halal meats. Another reason which one of the shopkeepers printed their sign in a non-English language is interesting; she told me how the sign translated into the name of her daughter in order to pay tribute to her. It is interesting to consider how some signs are commissioned for personal reasons and not just for reasons to do with business. Finally, the last reason why some of the shopkeepers questioned chose to print their signs in a non-English language was to do with production price. I was told by one of the that printing the signs in Urdu and/or Arabic was cheaper than printing the signs in English.

It is also worth mentioning that not all of the signs were commissioned by shopkeepers and in the windows of high street, terraced shops; some signs were featured on the outskirts of Cheetham Hill on signs on a Mosque and Islamic Educational Centre and a building titled: "The Salafi Centre of Manchester". After looking up: 'Salafi', I have discovered that it is a different religious movement/methodology to the other mainstream religions found in the Cheetham Hill area. The sign is in Arabic and when we asked about it, the worker was reluctant to be interviewed and went back inside and shut the door, so for this reason, not much is known about the Salafi Centre sign. The worker that we interviewed at the Mosque and Islamic Educational centre however was more helpful. She told us that the sign was in Arabic as it is the first language of many Muslims in the area therefore easy for them to find.

The fifth question on the questionnaire asked the shopkeepers what language they thought was the most dominant in the area. A bar chart displaying the results in below:
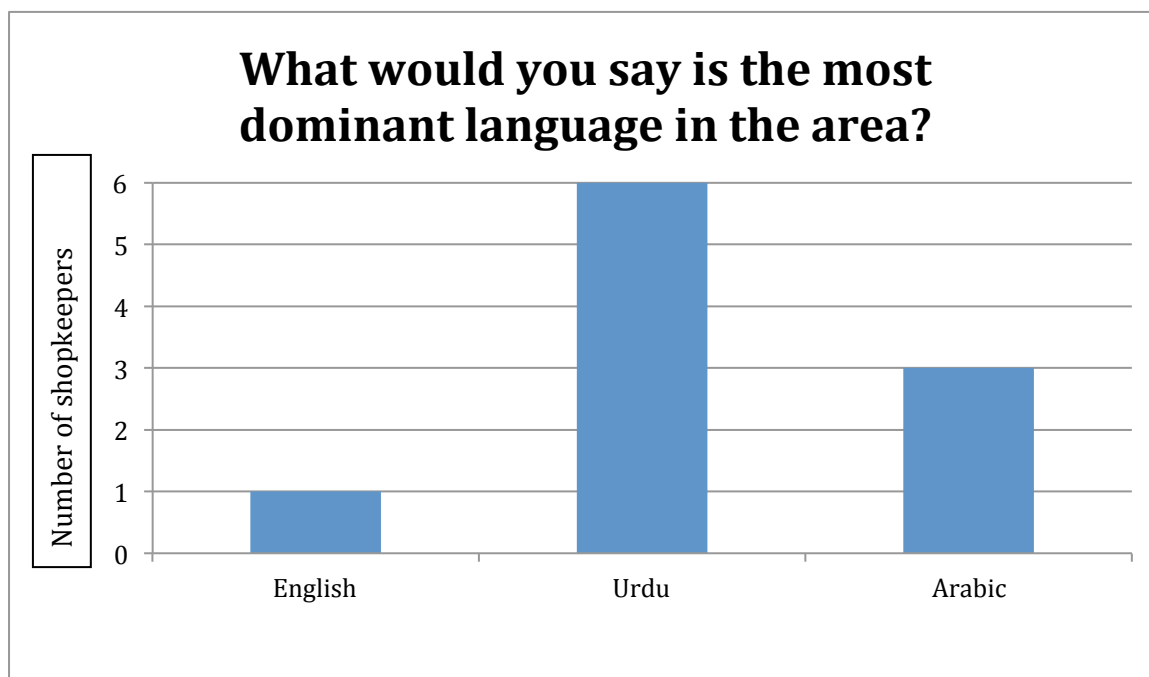
What would you say is the most dominant language in the area?

Figure 5: Bar Chart: Appendix A - Question 5

As you can see, the shop owners as a whole considered Urdu to be the most dominant language in the area with 60% of the votes. 30% then thought that Arabic was the most dominant language. Then only 10% of the shopkeepers considered English to be the most dominant language. This does not reflect the census at all. According to the census, 37.2% of the area is populated by white residents; therefore one would expect English to be the most dominant language. A possible explanation for this boosted perceived number of Urdu speakers could be down to the personal experience of the individual, personal experience of the interviewees and their own day to day linguistic landscape. For example, if they own or work in a shop that exclusively targets Muslim customers due to the sale of halal meat, therefore they are bound to encounter more speakers of Urdu and this is bound to alter or skew the interviewees' personal linguistic landscape, leading them to believe that Cheetham Hill is an area populated by more speakers of Urdu.

Question six on the questionnaire was asked to round up the interview with any additional comments. Most of the shopkeepers were fairly busy and happy to continue with their jobs as it was a busy time of the day and had no additional comments. However, one shopkeeper explained how he was more likely to speak Urdu at home, but speak English primarily in his place of work. He explained that this was because he is situated in England and because it is the official language of England, it is more universal to begin any transactions speaking this language; then if the customer begins to speak in Urdu or Arabic for example, he is able to shift his language seamlessly to the language that best suits the customer. He begins all transactions speaking in English because he does not like to assume that the customer is a speaker of a certain language because of their appearance and ethnicity. It was his way of being impartial when dealing with customers.

4.3. Rusholme.

Rusholme is one of Manchester's more recognizable and renowned ethnic communities. Home of the locally dubbed "Curry Mile", it is a veritable hotspot in terms of its concentration of metalinguistic business and their owners. With over 70 ethnic restaurants and a smattering of ethnic fashion establishments and shisha bars, Rusholme paints an informative and telling picture on the patterns behind the businesses here and on the advantages of including a second language on a property. As a rather small suburb of Manchester (in the lower quartile at 13, 643 residence), the focus of metalinguistic data necessarily had to be collated on curry mile as it not only was the biggest concentration of data of this nature, but curry mile also actually runs the length of the whole town – giving a more accurate picture of the distribution of different languages across the suburb.

Rusholme has a telling distribution of ethnicities according to the data. Aligned with the rest of Manchester's ethnic population, and especially considering its renowned reputation for Pakistani cuisine and ownership, it's no surprise that the predominant non-English language in the area is indeed 'Asian or Asian British'. The surprise in actuality is the extent that this is true; 39.9% of
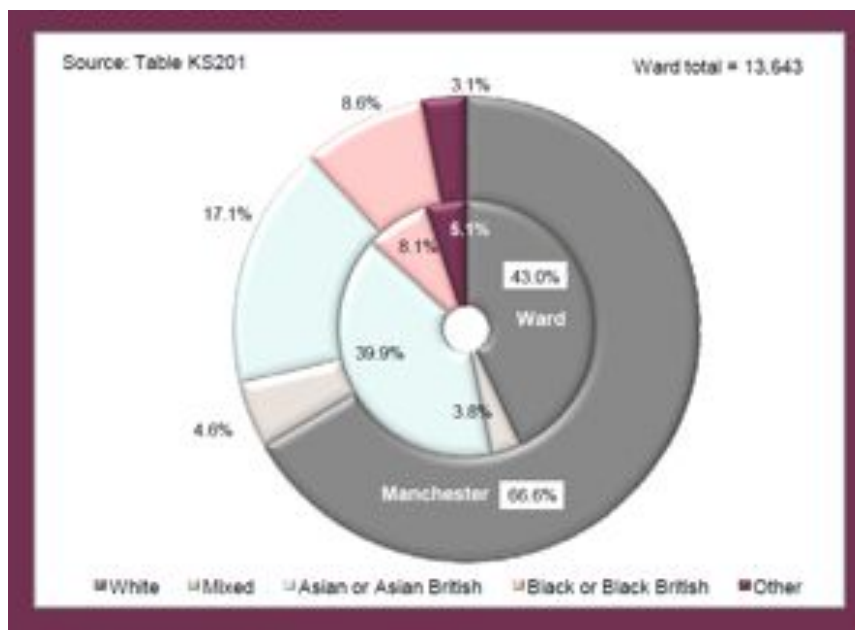

Figure 6: Manchester City Council pie chart demonstrating ethnic distribution in Rusholme in relation to Manchester.

people in Rusholme being of Asian descent - interestingly close to the white population percentage of 43%. This is a far cry from the vastly differing 66% Caucasian proportion that is the average for Manchester in general. The rest of the statistics seem nominally aligned with Manchester's averages, further supporting the conclusion that Rusholme has taken on a definitive Asian identity in its commerce, population and culture. This is also reflected in (figure 7) where it is revealed that only

61.2% of households speak English as the main language at home where conversely Manchester as a whole demonstrates a full 20% increase in this statistic. 18.2% of people identify different languages as their main at home, and 20.6% have a mix of languages at their residences. This exhibits that not only is the population of a Rusholme largely of ethnic origin, but their preferred vernacular remains that of their home town within a closed setting, which is reflected in their businesses. It is this resilience in completely adopting English that drives the necessity of using Urdu and Arabic in a professional setting in order to attract the more linguistically limited foreign speaking customers.
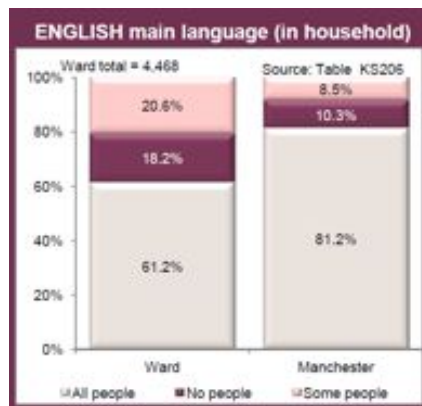

Figure 7: Manchester City Council Table showing languages spoken in the home.

Commerce, in particular, is an easily identifiable and quantifiable figure to assess when investigating multilingualism as businesses necessarily use certain languages to attract customers (hence the focus of our study). From the questionnaire, (question 2) it is predictably revealed that the most spoken languages are that of English and Urdu, in keeping with the noted patterned trend of the Ethnic communities adopting English yet partially keeping, in some cases completely maintaining, their heritage language at home and in the work place. An interesting somewhat significant data point in the Rusholme is that, although fairly nominal, there is evidence of L1 languages that do not appear in keeping with the Middle Eastern trend that the ones expectations of the curry mile would indicate, with a Spanish serving and speaking establishment existing and Kurdish appearing as the predominant language at a restaurant. Furthermore, it appears that the dilution of exclusively Asian restaurants and by extension the emergence of different languages appeared the further down curry mile one travels (in a northerly direction.) This was an interesting pattern, and one that reflected the sentiments of the community with one shop owner responding to question 5 on the survey with "Which area are you talking about? The strongest language in Rusholme can change if you go to a different area of it".

The data obtained from question 2, furthermore, is proportionally reminiscent of the 2011 census, with the data we collected translating to around 45% of speakers with English as their first language and 36% speaking languages from Asia – an impressively accurate corroboration considering the inherently limited data sample. This means that the businesses in the Rusholme area reflect the population proportions closely, supporting the notion that the use of multilingualism in a professional setting is reactive and dependent upon the predominantly spoken languages in a given area. Furthermore, the 'other' languages category on the survey is equally as nominal as our data would indicate – again a nice supportive statistic which validates our own research and in turn makes our findings, analyses and conclusions more valid.

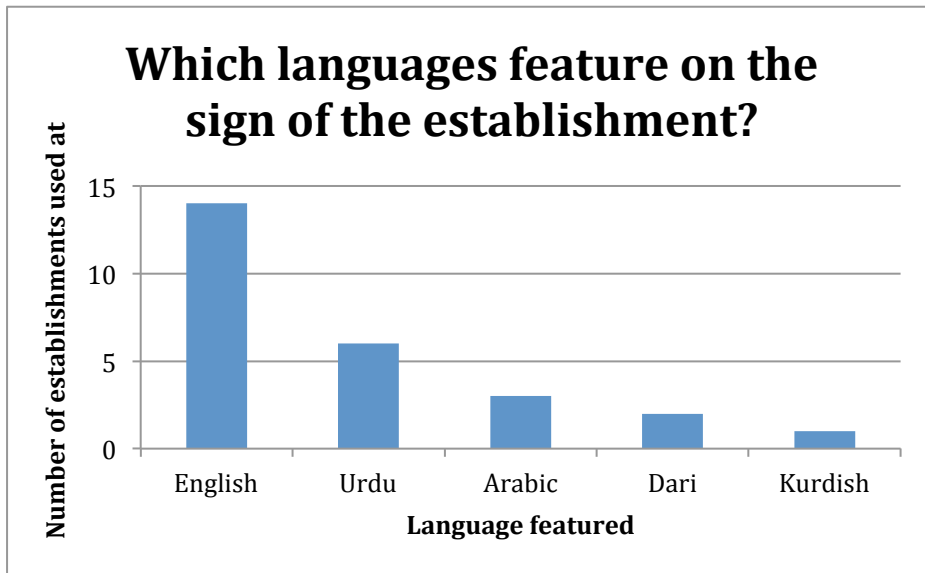**Bar chart: Appendix A; Question 1**

In what languages can you speak fluently?
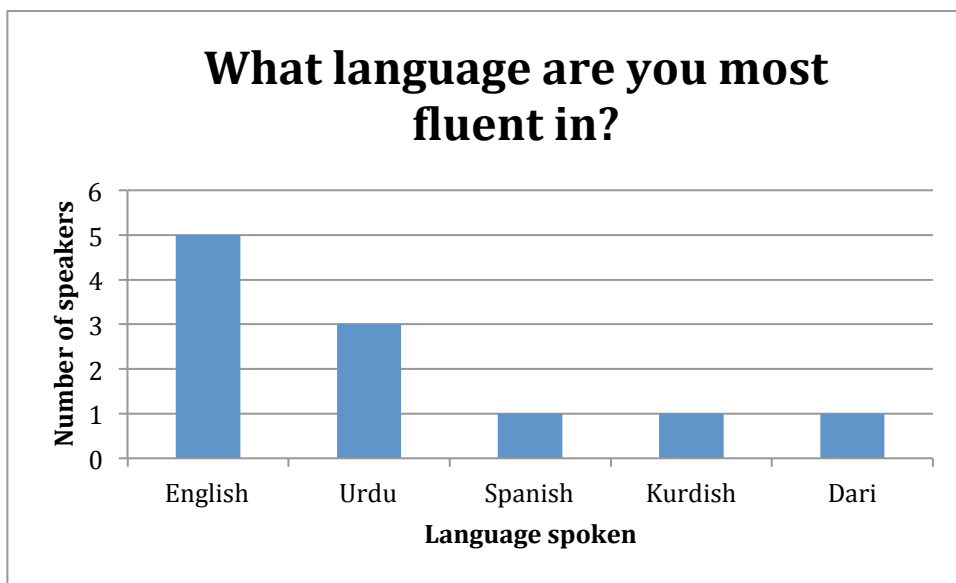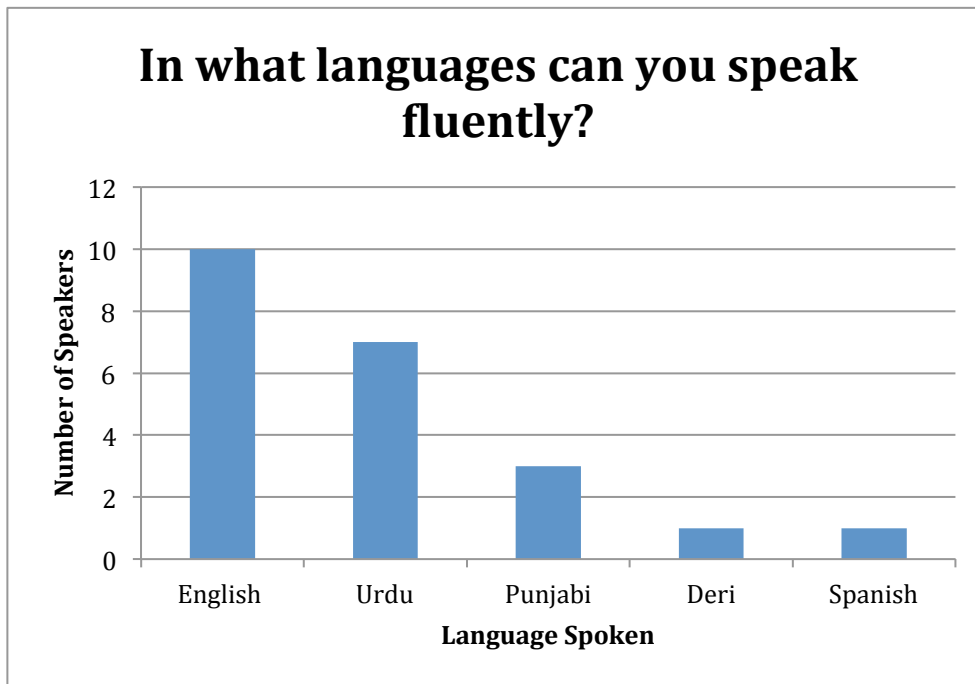
Bar chart: Appendix A; Question 2

Question 2 yields similar results. Of note is the fact that every person interviewed was multilingual, a trait that seems vital to stay fiscally afloat in the area. While all of the business owners were capable of English, and a sizable proportion of them capable of Urdu, it was interesting cajoling the languages the owners usually used in the establishments. Question 4 of the survey inquired about just this, and while the majority of the answers where the expected obvious reasoning of "because our customers speak this language", the question uncovered a few insightful answers. The owner of the 'Worldwide' mini-market reasoned that his diverse linguistic knowledge gave him a tactical advantage and didn't isolate any particular group. He said he 'often spoke the language he [intuitively] thought the customers spoke', his own linguistic ability encompassing English, Pashto and Dari and Urdu. Another store owner stated simply his choice of languages held a sentimental value, with the Dari on the store pertaining to his mother's heritage and the Pashto to his fathers – much like the owner of one kebab house who claimed his use of Urdu was due to national pride. This reveals that beyond the statistical and tactical advantage that warrants the use of multiple languages on a business, there is involved an element of emotional attachment and personal investment in including ones heritage in their work.

Geographically speaking, it was interesting to note that some of the shop owners did not list Urdu or an Arabic language as one of their mains, and did not use them anywhere on their respective establishments – significantly, such cases appeared again at the northern end of the 'Curry Mile', indicative again that the Asian influence might be less potent up in this area of Rusholme. If the participants spoke in an Asian language, their unwillingness to share it was significant in and of itself.

The signs that were featured on the establishments largely (and expectedly) aligned with which respective languages the owners spoke and which were their prominent language. Every business predictably had English as the dominant mainstay of their signage, with Appendix H demonstrating how the graphic designs of each establishment revolved around a focus on English advertising, with supplementary second languages repeating the name of the place or providing customer specific information (which usual involved denoting of Halal meats).

Which languages feature on the sign of the establishment?

Bar chart showing "Number of establishments used at" (y-axis) versus "Language featured" (x-axis):
- English: 14
- Urdu: 6
- Arabic: 3
- Dari: 2
- Kurdish: 1

Bar Chart: Appendix A; Question 3

Where a secondary language was used, it was predictably in a Middle Eastern language, followed closely by the lesser spoken but consistently emergent Indian languages. This is aligned again with the former analysis and reasoning that the outward projection of language of an establishment is reflective of its customer base. In particular, its use in the form of ethnic specific information and supplementary sentiments to such a community is a clever way to lure a customer base with the sense of inclusiveness, and what is arguably a form of exclusivity. As can be witnessed from the pictures retrieved from the field study, the use of such methods can manifest in either prominent use of such a language on the main signs or smaller, more discrete usage on shop windows and inside the establishment.

As an aside, we decided to include in the survey a question that inquired if the participant had any further comments on the topic. This produced some interesting opinions and insights about the nature of multi-ethnic business practice and multilingualism in a competitive environment. Most had a comment on how they placed their second language prominently so as to state their intended consumer base and how they had a rapport with their customers, how the area had a real sense of community and inclusion. The stand out comment was however from one Mr Hanif, who took the initiative and opportunity to be sent the work upon completion so that he might garner some insight on

the area's language use. It was this that revealed the value the business owners placed on multilinguism signage and how important it was to know how the populace of the town is constituted.

4.4 Whalley Range

Whalley Range was originally one of the most affluent suburbs of Manchester, and was built to house the more affluent figures of the Manchester Industrial Revolution in the early 19th century. The area faced a noticeable decline during the Second World War, as homeowners moved away from the area and the city in general to move to the country, and as a result many of the houses suffered damage and went into decay. This has led to a demolishing of lots of the original houses built on the area, being replaced with multiple occupancy properties and modern flats. The Whalley Range Conservation Area was designed to bring a stop to this trend and as a result many of the old houses still remain. What this has all meant is a change in the demographic of the area, and fluctuations in the population, with around 3% of the population of Greater Manchester now residing in the Whalley Range area. The shops in the area were mainly general stores or small local businesses, along with things like bookmakers and estate agents, with not many restaurants or takeaways being present, establishments that traditionally may have provided signage in a diverse range of languages.

According to the 2011 census, 48.2% of Whalley Range considered themselves 'white' with 51.2% describing themselves as 'non-white ethnic'. Of the non-white ethnic group, the largest proportion is of Pakistani descent, around 23.5% of the area, but the remaining 27.7% is quite evenly distributed between Indian, Black Caribbean, Black African and Mixed demographics. Like Levenshulme, you might then assume the signage would be in many different languages to accommodate these different cultures and the different languages that must be spoken to go with them.

What I found when interviewing shop keepers in Whalley Range using our questionnaire (Appendix A) was a surprisingly high number of staff who could not speak very good English, and who referred me to a member of staff who could speak better English, such as Mahboob's halal meat store, where the staff spoke predominantly Arabic, but they also required staff fluent in Urdu as 'many of their customers speak Urdu'. This was reflected in the sign as the Urdu symbol for halal was displayed, alongside the English sign which the store owners say is necessary because they can attract people from many cultures, and English is often the only language they may share (for example with the Black Afrcian community or indeed the White British community present). This sign was not a one of in being in English however, as every sign in Whalley Range contained English either on its own or alongside another language. When asked, shopkeepers gave me a similar reason as the owners of Mahboobs, that English is the one language they 'expect' the majority of people in the area to know.

In quantitative terms, every sign in Whalley Range was English or was in a foreign language but accompanied by an English translation. So as a percentage of signs in the area, 100% had English on them. This may surprise some people, but is probably to be expected as even shops that don't specifically target English speaking communities choose English for their signs, to reach as wide an audience as possible, and sometimes simply because the sign is cheaper if ordered in English, which

played a part for many of the shop owners. Frequently the shop owners themselves would construct Arabic and Urdu signs, perhaps showing that they do not feel it is worth the price to have it on the predominant sign of the establishment. Of the thirty nine business and public signs I found in Whalley Range, twenty seven contained only English, seven contained Urdu and English, three contained Arabic and English, and there were one each containing Polish and English, and Cantonese and English. As only 48.2% of the residents of Whalley Range describe themselves as 'white' it is perhaps surprising to find that twenty-seven of the thirty-nine shops contained only English, as the remaining 51.8% of the population come from backgrounds other than 'White British' and live in communities where a other languages are commonly used and are almost universally spoken in some backgrounds.

This disparity does however ft in well with some of the other findings of the data collected in 2011 by Manchester city council, which found Whalley Range to be one of the most well integrated communities in the whole of Manchester.

Perception Measure	Whalley Range	Manchester
The percentage who agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in the local area	94%	88%
The percentage who feel there is a problem with people not treating one another with respect and consideration in the local area	25%	35%
The percentage who state that they have been treated fairly by public services in the last year	92%	92%

94% of the residents asked said that people from different backgrounds get on well together in the Whalley Range area, compared to 88% for the whole of Manchester. Only 25% said there was a problem with people not treating each other with enough respect and consideration in the local area, which is down from an average of 35% for all of Manchester. This shows that the integration and good relationships formed in the community can directly impact signage of businesses, as shop owners in the area feel people of all different backgrounds are their market rather than perhaps those only from the same background. This was reflected in the answer from one shop owner in the questionnaire who said Whalley Range 'felt different' to other diverse areas they had previously lived in. Residents also feel as a whole that public services have treated them well in the last year, meaning that the majority believe the council caters well for their community, at least to some degree. This has

demonstrated on a larger scale that, although signs can be used to identify dominant communities and can give a reasonable estimate to the number of people living in these areas, that they cannot be used as the only diagnostic, and this may go some way to dispelling lots of popular myths about certain areas being 'dominated' by people of certain backgrounds. Simply looking at the shop fronts of areas often help form these judgements, but what we have found is that this can only give people a very rough idea of the diversity of the population.

There are lots of groups who are not represented at all in the signage, yet have a sizable community in the Whalley Rnage area. Black African and Black Caribbean people make up around seven percent of the area, yet there were no signs in any African or Caribbean languages, and not even any shops with English signs suggesting an African and Caribbean community. With Moss Side being in close proximity, with many African and Caribbean shops itself, this could perhaps explain this, but it still demonstrates there is not a direct correlation necessarily between the signage and the community.

5 Conclusions

It is essential to remember throughout the analysis of the multilingual areas, the results we produced are from a much smaller sample number than the 2011 Census, as well as potentially not being completely random due to us targeting sign commissioners in overtly multilingual organisations; increasing our chances of yielding more interesting findings. Our data is intended to give a more accurate understanding of the linguistic landscape, concentrating on the previously unexplored details such as why certain languages are adopted. With this being said, we do believe our research has shed light on some fascinating linguistic insights; both qualitative and quantitative. We concluded English can maintain its status as the main languages of England, as our results show everybody we interviewed to be fluent.

Levenshulme:
Furthermore Levenshulme has been reinforced as a "Multilingual Mecca" as described by a local employee, with evidence of a range of minor languages such as Somali being prevalent. The signage commissioned by local businesses reflected this range of tongues, highlighting the intelligent marketing choices adapted to attracted multicultural customers. Our research even uncovered factors such as printing costs to influence language decisions to an extent we had not as a team previously considered. By then comparing our conclusions with those formulated on the local 2011 Census, we were able to see if any similarities were present and if we were able to determine possible inaccuracies it encountered. In terms of language choice and the religious proportions of Levenshulme it was deemed to correlate and match our work, but when questioning the local dominant language it could arguably be scrutinised. We concluded the Census only asks of English as the main language in households, which does not disclose enough information to accurately construct an answer to this question. We also believe that because it was filled out under formal

conditions it was not answered as honestly as our questionnaire, something supported by Mazar, Amir and Ariely's (2008) academic research into human honesty in commonplace situations.

Cheetham Hill:

In Cheetham Hill, our findings in response to the first couple of questions on the questionnaire were as predicted and mirrored the expected findings in accordance to the census. The third question was also fairly accurate in what we had expected to find. The fourth question gathered a few interesting answers for us to think about. The fifth question however was not what we had expected to find. With only 10% of the shopkeepers considering English to be the most dominant language in the area, this seems strange. And the sixth question was a nice, friendly way to end the interview and then thank the interviewee for participating in our investigation. In reflection to the study of this area, to improve the reliability of our results, we could have interviewed a larger sample of people. Another improvement could be to interview the shopkeepers at a more appropriate time of day. The interviews took place at roughly 2pm-6pm which ran into a busy meal time rush for a lot of the shops. The interviewees that we asked before 4pm were more attentive in answering the questions than the ones we asked after 4pm. This could have been avoided by perhaps making two separate trips to the area in less-busy times.

Rusholme

The majority of business in the Rusholme area is influenced and governed by the growing necessity to partake in the ethnic identity of the area. The use of foreign language here isn't just born out of the logistical dependency on the community, but also the renowned reputation the area has garnered as the epicentre of Asian food. Using Arabic signage is serving a practical purpose as much as it pandering to its newfound expectations as a melting pot of ethnicities, languages and cuisine. The questionnaire systematically revealed that the residence of the area are aware of this fact, and the subtle facets of multilingualism are not lost on them as they justify their usage through anything from attracting a particular customer or instilling national pride.

Whalley Range:

As evidenced in Appendix I, many of the signs appeal to the non-white community whilst still being in English. This further proves the idea that the area is well integrated as the local owners feel the language of the signs should be as inclusive as possible. The idea that any area can be deciphered by analysing signage alone has been debunked, and instead much more sophisticated social reasons are the factors behind shop owners choices of sign and the signs the council provides. It also shows there may be communities of people under represented and this needs to be addressed and reasons asked why. This would make for interesting further research – as to why some communities may be able to impose their language more than others.

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Appendix A Our questionnaire featuring our research questions.

1. In what language do you speak most fluently?

○ Arabic

○ Armenian

○ Chinese

○ English

○ French

○ French Creole

○ German

○ Greek

○ Gujarati

○ Hindi

○ Italian

○ Japanese

○ Korean

○ Persian

○ Polish

○ Portuguese

○ Russian

○ Spanish

○ Tagalog

○ Urdu

○ Vietnamese

○ Other (please specify)

+ Add Question ▼

Q2

Edit Question▼

Add Question LogicMoveCopyDelete

2. In what languages can you speak fluently? (Please select all that apply.)

☐ Arabic

☐ Cantonese

☐ Mandarin

☐ English

☐ French

☐ German

☐ Korean

☐ Russian

☐ Spanish

☐ Tagalog

☐ Vietnamese

☐ Other (please specify)

+ Add Question▼

3. which languages feature on the sign of the establishment?

☐ Arabic

☐ Cantonese

☐ Mandarin

☐ English

☐ French

☐ German

☐ Korean

☐ Russian

☐ Spanish

☐ Tagalog

☐ Hindi

☐ Urdu

☐ Polish

☐ Vietnamese

☐ Other (please specify)

*

4. Why do these languages feature on the sign of the establishment?

*

5. What would you say is the most dominant language in the area?

◯ Polish

◯ English

◯ Urdu

◯ Arabic

◯ Hindi

◯ Somali

◯ Chinese

Other (please specify)

6. Are there any other comments regarding language use in this area?

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+ Add Question▼

Appendix B: The Ethical Form we gave to our interviewees explaining confidentiality.

Ethical Form

Please take a moment to allow us to ask you some questions.

Who we are and what our aim is:

We are students from the University of Manchester looking at multilingualism in the city of Manchester. We are interested in which language/s you speak, who you speak them to and whether you feel services in Manchester cater for your language.

Confidentiality:

Your questionnaire will remain anonymous; we do not need to know your name and we do not need any contact details from you.

Opting Out:

Participation is optional, but would be gratefully appreciated.

Further Questions:

If at any time you wish to opt out of our investigation into multilingualism in Manchester or if you have any further questions regarding our research feel free to ask for our email address.
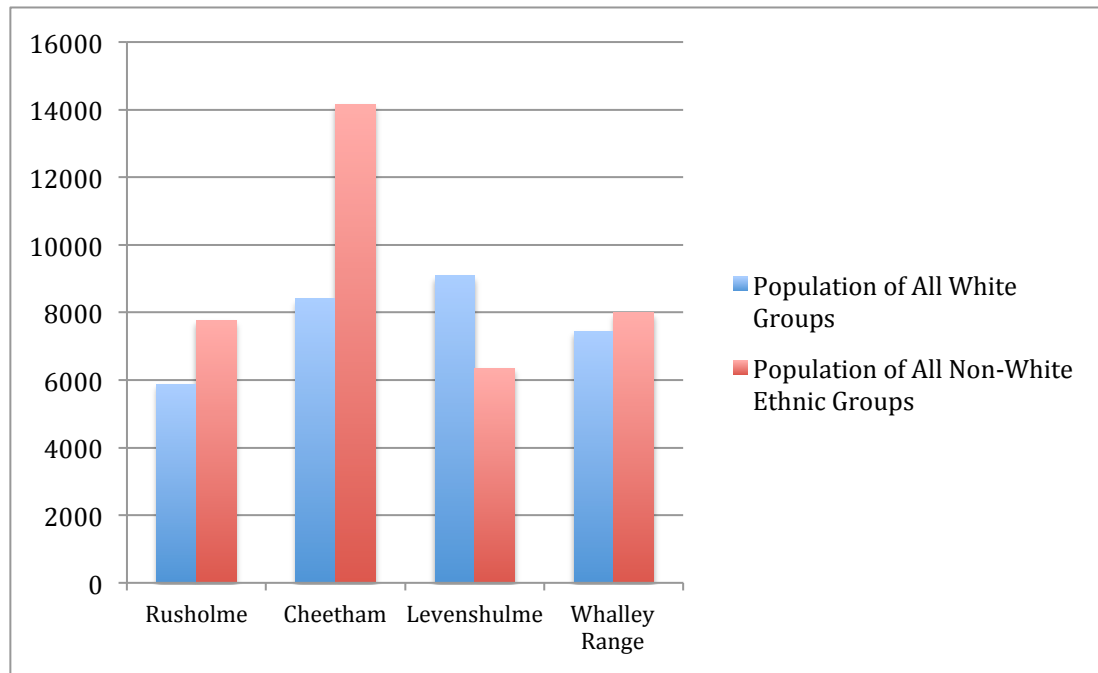
Thank you for your time

Appendix C: Map of Manchester showing our four areas of specific study: Cheetham Hill, Fallowfield, Levenshulme and Rusholme

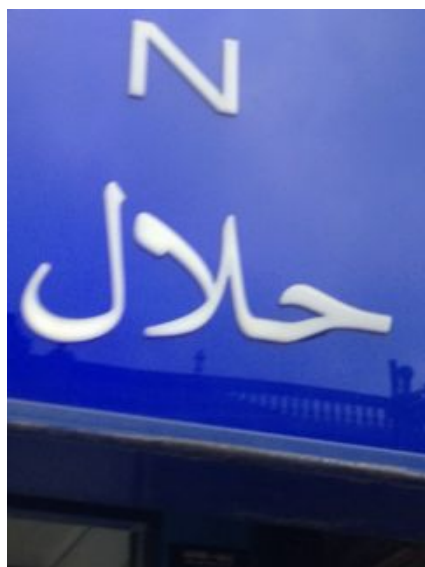https://mapsengine.google.com/map/edit?authuser=0&hl=en&mid=znAURjp9m0Z4.kNr3pxiXTP6U

Appendix D: Graph showing the populations of the areas we are studying and their ethnic diversity.

Appendix E: A selection of signs in the Levenshulme area in varying languages.

Appendix F: Examples of the Halal sign in English and Arabic, in Levenshulme.

Appendix G: Examples of multilingual signs in Cheetham Hill

Appendix H: Photos from businesses in the Rusholme area

Appendix I: Photos from Whalley Range