

Call for Papers

Rethinking Language and Community: Diversity in Global Settings

The University of Manchester
16–17 May 2019

Keynote speakers

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‘Community’ remains a frequent topic of debate, both in public discourse and academia. In the contemporary globalised landscape, shaped by increasing mobility and complexity in linguistic and cultural diversity, it has become increasingly problematic to label any selection of people who share a language, nationality, ethnicity, geographical origin, religion or space as a ‘community.’ Recent social and technological developments have encouraged the strengthening of translocal ties, which may result in formations of ‘transnational community’ identities.

The purpose of this interdisciplinary two-day workshop is to explore and discuss different and new ways of understanding ‘community’ in its relationship with language, and to critically assess the notion’s relevance from a range of perspectives. We will address the variety of challenges linked to defining ‘community’, taking into consideration the complexities of language practices and formations of social groups in times of superdiversity. Key guiding questions include:

- (How) is the term ‘community’ still relevant?
 - (How) does language play a role in understandings of ‘community’?
 - How do the fuzziness of language boundaries and actors’ multi-layered language repertoires shape everyday understandings of ‘community’?
 - What are the implications of transnational links to notions of ‘community’?
 - What is the relevance of ‘self’- and ‘other’-perspectives in defining ‘community’?
- What role does the diverse urban environment play in shaping ‘communities’?

We aim to bring together PhD students and early career researchers working on the topic or related aspects from across disciplines, including language, linguistics, literary and cultural studies, film/media studies, area studies, migration studies, human geography, ethnography and anthropology.

Abstracts of 250–300 words (excluding bibliography) should be sent to mlm@manchester.ac.uk by 22 March 2019. Please use ‘Community Conference 2019’ in the subject heading and include authors’ names, affiliation and contact details in your abstract.