Attitudes towards English in post-Brexit referendum Germany

A qualitative study on attitudes towards English as experienced by British expats in Germany

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Abstract

English today has reached global dimensions no other language has reached before. While there are other lingua francas in certain geographical regions in the world, English is the most dominant lingua franca in many important international domains, including international affairs and its use as the lingua franca of official organisations, such as the European Union (EU).

In the wake of the result of the British referendum, voices were raised for the discontinuation of the use of the English language within the EU after Brexit. While this topic has received attention from journalists throughout Europe, to date there are very few studies on attitudes towards English in a post-Brexit referendum Europe. The present study aims to contribute to the filling of this gap by investigating attitudes towards English experienced by British expats living in Germany, employing semi-structured interviews with six British expats. Also included in the study is information about the expats’ use of different languages for different purposes. The findings indicate that i) they do not see the emergence of a Euro-English likely; ii) that their language choices are determined by inclusiveness; iii) that there may be different attitudes towards English in different parts of Germany; iv) that English is experienced as a door opener; and finally, v) multilingualism is a desired notion for them all. Combined, they suggest there is a discrepancy between the EU political line and the grass root reality.

Keywords

English as a lingua franca; language attitudes; European Union; Brexit; British expats; actual language use


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1. Introduction

Today, the English language is the leading lingua franca, both within Europe and globally. The term lingua franca refers to the language two individuals who do not share a common first language, L1, use to communicate with each other. Lingua francas are used in many domains, and it is not only English that is used as a lingua franca but the other ones, like Russian, Spanish and Arabic for example, are mainly centralised to certain regions of the world (Graddol 1997, pp.8, in Björkman 2013). Furthermore, there are several historical lingua francas that have now lost their status as such, like Latin and German. However, the current situation is that “it is English and English alone that has achieved a truly global lingua franca status” (van Parijs, 2011, pp.11, in Björkman, 2013).

So far, one of the most extensive research projects focussing on the English language in Europe has been the English in Europe-project that ran between January 2012 and October 2014, which was a co-operation between several European universities and resulted in a number of conferences and also a 6 volume book series, focusing on different aspects of the English language in Europe (Linn et. al., 2015 & Linn, 2016a). Some of the general findings that kept recurring in the studies was the discrepancy between older and younger people’s knowledge of and attitude towards English. The younger informants tended to have a higher level of competence in English as a second language, L2, and they responded more positively than older respondents to the influence of English in their lives.

Shortly after the studies English in Europe-project was finished, the UK held a referendum on June 23 2016 on whether to remain in the EU or not. An issue that followed in the wake of the Brexit referendum is the future role for the English language within the EU. Although English is the most dominant lingua franca in the world, not long after the referendum, voices were raised from a number of European politicians that English could no longer be a working language within the EU, on the basis of it seizing to be an official language of a member state after the implementation of Brexit (Linn, 2016b). On May 5, 2017, a little while before the French general election, the president of the European commission, Jean-Claude Juncker declared in a speech that “Slowly but surely English is losing importance in Europe…”. (Rankin, 2017). Mr. Juncker’s speech caused major headlines around the world and was the spark that ignited a curiosity for the subject of English future role in the EU. So far, research has not attended this topic, other than some argumentative pieces (Modiano, 2017) & (Georgiou, 2017) and blog posts (Vítores, 2016). Linguists have generally been fairly moderate regarding the effect of Brexit on the English language and some, like Andrew Linn and John O’Regan, argue that the British exit from the EU will have no effect on the English language whatsoever, as it is no longer tied to Britain for its importance, but to the US. (Linn, 2016) and (Georgiou, 2017). The possible evolvement of the English language is discussed in the special issue of World Englishes, where Modiano’s (2017) article envisages the English language in Europe developing away from the current Anglo-American norm for learning and teaching the language as a foreign language, EFL. Modiano argues that the future of the English language used in the EU will be a common English, a Euro-English, with its own grammar and expressions that he sees will include common aberrations from the Anglo-American standard, made from L2 learners of English within the European Union. (Modiano, 2017,
There have been various responses to Modiano’s predictions (see section 2.2. for a review of some of them).

One research note issued, was made on perceptions of Brexit, but the interviewed subjects were people labelled ‘the elite’ (Taggart et al., 2017). What have not yet been researched is what effect this new situation has on people living in Europe. What are the attitudes towards the English language now, in the midst of a major political event like Brexit? How and when is English used in the everyday life of British expats in Germany and what is their perception on the future for the English language in the EU? The present paper, with the backdrop of Mr. Juncker’s statement, aims to look at attitudes towards English as experienced by people living in close proximity, but who are not part of the corridors of the EU headquarters, and that have English as their native language.

The aim of this research paper is to explore the experienced linguistic climate after the British referendum regarding its EU membership, by people living in Germany. Will there be any perceived attitudes from Germans towards the English language and its role within Europe and the European Union? The reason British expats were selected, was that they are more likely to pick up on any changes in attitudes towards the English language due to it being their native language which they are likely to use it regularly. The term ‘expat’ (short for expatriot) was chosen as it was the interviewees’ own term for describing themselves. Germany was selected as the location because the country has one of the strongest economies of the EU, it is situated very close to the heart of the European Union, and the German language was an important lingua franca of Europe before the first and second world wars and is still one a big language in numbers of speakers of it. (Darquennes, 2016, pp.93)

2. Literature review

2.1 Attitudes towards English in Europe

Attitudes towards the English language is a topic that has gathered a lot of interest from scholars in recent years. This can be seen in the project, ‘English in Europe: Opportunity or Threat?’, that ran between January 2012 and October 2014 which addressed a multitude of questions concerning attitudes towards the English language in Europe. The resulting book series, English in Europe, volume 1-6, provided “for the first time a properly informed and nuanced picture of the reality of living with and through the medium of English.” (Linn et. al., 2015. pp.10). One of the papers presented in volume 1, covers German undergraduate university students’ opinions and attitudes on the multilingual situation of Europe, the English language norms increasingly affected by L2 users rather than native speakers, and the role of English as a lingua Franca of Europe (Gnutzman, Jakish, & Rabe, 2015, pp.372-431). More than 1000 students from the university of Braunschweig answered a questionnaire, plus a free writing question, the latter covering attitudes towards a possible implementation of Euro-English, as advocated by scholars such as Modiano (2001) and Fiedler (2011). The paper takes a stance to question the validity of the current language policy of the EU that promotes pluralism and instead suggests English as the common European lingua franca as a more effective means for cross-border communication and for the possibility of creating a European identity if a common Euro-English was to emerge (see below for more on the concept of Euro-English). The results show the importance of the English language for young adults...
in Germany and Europe today, who seemed to be sceptical to the EU stance promoting all EU citizens learning two foreign languages on top of their L1. However, the students did not favour a monolingual language policy from the EU, thus rejecting the promotion of English as the single common language between EU citizens. Finally, they strongly disagreed to a common Euro-English and preferred to strive towards native-speaker norms, something that the authors discuss:

“… one reason could be that higher effectiveness and prestige are attributed to native varieties rather than to Euro-English, … Another important motivation for this rejection of an ELF-based variety could be seen in its perception as artificial.” (Gnutzman et. al. 2015, pp.402)

The concept of Euro-English, a term that is described by Motschenbacher, is the hypothesized idea of a common European variety of English for L2 (not L1) speakers of English in Europe, that would constitute a fully-fledged variant of English (Motschenbacher, 2015). Euro-English was being initially researched during the early years of the 21st century, however, the idea that this ‘Euro-English’ would develop into a variety in its own right, not following the current Anglo-American norms, is mainly abandoned these days. Research, that tried to distinguish if Euro-English could qualify as a separate variety of English, has had a negative outcome, as the supposed features of Euro-English was not a common but rather individual trait amongst some speakers (Mollin 2006 & 2007, Durham 2007, Rosenberger 2009 & Dröschel 2011, in Motschenbacher 2016, pp.159-164). However, Modiano argues for the concept of Euro-English and he sees Brexit as an opportunity for Euro-English to emerge and to put the spotlight back on the subject. More on this in section 2.2.

Walsh’s (2015) study on attitudes towards English in France researches attitudes on non-official level by L2 English speakers in the French speech community. Although little research has been done on the subject, there is a perception that the French speaker is wary of their language mixing with English. The study covers the multiple language-preservation measurements that the French government has implemented to avoid foreign words and expressions, mainly Anglicisms, to enter the French language. And it aims to uncover if the general population’s stance follows the official one or not. The method used was a combination of quantitative, from 401 respondents to an online questionnaire, and qualitative, from interviews with 36 participants. The results indicated clearly positive attitudes towards the English language and the attitudes towards the use of Anglicisms in French were nuanced and did not express any stoic opinions of keeping the French language free from the influence of the English language. The study shows a distinct discrepancy between the official stance to actual language use by the general population. Therefore, it highlights the necessity for anchoring perceived truths in research. Furthermore, the discovered discrepancy mirrors the findings of the study from 2013 by Bolton and Meierkord, in which actual language use on a grass root level in Sweden is researched in relation to official language policies. (Bolton & Meierkord 2013). Walsh (2015) highlights the need for this type of study with:

"it is important to distinguish between attitudes at the official level and attitudes of the speech community more generally. Many studies on language policy or on language and national identity do not take the wider speech community into account.” (Walsh, 2015. pp.83)

The English in Europe-project was completed in late 2014 and the books were published between 2015-2016. Therefore, all the research made is from before the ‘Brexit’ referendum on June 23, 2016 and thus, they do not include the aspect of Britain voting to
leave the EU. The author and director of the *English in Europe* project, Andrew Linn addresses this issue in the last volume, and calls upon the importance of research done, as well as future, in the wake of these drastic political events:

"As this book was going through its final proof stage, the United Kingdom held a referendum on membership of the European Union and voted by a narrow margin of 52% to 48% to leave the Union. This outcome has dramatically affected the status of Europe and the relationships between its constituent countries, and at the time of writing it is anticipated that further instability will follow. Effective communication, tolerance and awareness of the needs of others across the continent are now needed more than ever, as is a strong body of research to inform them.” (Linn, 2016a. pp.9)

### 2.2 Attitudes towards English in Europe after Brexit

Straight after the outcome of the referendum, the French MEP and then presidential candidate, Jean-Luc Mélenchon tweeted that “L’anglais ne peut plus être la troisième langue de travail du parlement européen #Brexit“ (Transl. “English can no longer be the third working language of the European parliament.”) (Linn, 2016b). However, disregarding articles in popular media, reporting on statements like the one above, not many studies have been carried out so far concerning the issue of the use of English in the EU post Britain leaving the union, and the subject remains largely under-researched. The reason for this is likely to be time dependent; Brexit being a relatively recent development, it is still shrouded in uncertainties. The young subject may be a reason for the limited amount of scientific material written about it and that what has been written so far is fairly limited in depth and references, and only covers certain aspects of the issue.

Nevertheless, there is a small number of published works that pertain to the use of English in a post-Brexit era. This section aims to cover the main material that has been published via different channels, starting with a special issue published in *World Englishes* on English in a post-Brexit EU (September 2017). The main piece by Modiano, where Modiano argues for a Euro-English, is evaluated and responded to by ten scholars, all being of interest to the present paper.

In the article, Modiano argues for what he deems the most likely development of the English language in the EU after the UK leaves, the development of a ‘Euro-English’, common to all L2 speakers of English in the EU, with its own codification and standard, different from the current Anglo-American norm. Modiano writes that when Britons have left the union, the majority of the ‘owners’ of the Anglo-American norm are no longer present to influence L2 speakers of English to use the language according to their norms. Modiano likens the development of a common Euro-English to how English has evolved in former colonies, like India and Singapore.

According to Modiano, a common European version of English, different from the current Anglo-American norm for learning and teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), would be easier for English L2 speakers to acquire. Furthermore, he argues that everyone would be on the same level and the higher status that natives currently enjoy would disappear. As mentioned in section 2.1, Euro-English is not a new concept and it has traditionally been regarded as a hypothesized development into a European variety of English that would need a bottom-down approach to have any chance of being
implemented. However, Modiano seems to argue for the likelihood of Euro-English emerging unaided, as a bottom-up process, by the leaving of Britons from the EU.

Modiano builds most of his argument on Braj B Kachru’s (1985) categorisation of World Englishes into three concentric circles, where the inner circle Englishes are English spoken in countries where it is spoken as the L1 and is the default language for private and public communication. British and American English are examples of such inner circle standards. The outer circles, circle two and three are both using English as their main L2, but the second circle includes countries that used to be colonies to inner circle countries and have, often as an emancipation process, developed its own standard of English. The third circle lack a colonial past and English language is acquired as a foreign language, EFL. These countries rely on the 1st circle English variety norms for their language use of English. (Motschenbacher, 2016, pp.155) Modiano argues that when Britain, an ‘inner circle’ English country, leaves the EU, it can give place for a context where the ‘outer circle’ countries of the rest of the EU (apart from Ireland and Malta) can liberate themselves from the Anglo-American norm and create a new European standard of English and thus also strengthen a common European identity, similar to what has happened in the former British colonies such as India and Singapore. (Modiano, 2017a).

The responses on Modiano’s article show a high degree of scepticism towards the idea of the emergence of Euro-English fuelled by Brexit, albeit not entirely dismissive. Seidlhofer and Widdowson (2017) argue that “A more likely consequence of Brexit than the nativized Euro-English predicted by Modiano is quite simply a less inhibited and stigmatized use of English as a lingua franca (ELF).” (Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2017, pp.361). Saraceni (2017) shows agreement with Modiano on the use of English in Europe is not dependent on the presence of Britons, but he finds Modiano comparing the former British colonies development of versions of English to Europe questionable: ‘the attempt to impose a World Englishes (WE) analytical framework onto a context that is very different from those about which the framework was developed. “…There are no British clutches that language practises in Europe need to be liberated from.” (Saraceni, 2017, pp.350-351).

In Modiano’s response to the comments on his article, it becomes very apparent that Modiano deems Anglo-American English norms as oppressive to the European EFL learners and the creation of a Euro-English would signify the liberation of the European L2 users of English. In one passage of the response text, Modiano criticizes Edgar Schneider for referencing Sandra Mollin’s study, mentioned in 2.1 above. Modiano points out that the respondents in Mollin’s study were middle-aged and thus does not qualify, in Modiano’s view, as they were taught English in a time before large scale globalization and the birth of the internet. He argues that:

“If one is eager to see how the English language is adapting to new linguistic realities in continental Europe, the best place to study such a phenomenon is to observe how young people use English as an L2, and to study their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours.” (Modiano, 2017b, pp.365).

However, we only need to look at section 2.1 above, to find precisely such a study performed. The large study on German 1st and 2nd year undergraduate students’ attitudes carried out such a study, and it specifically asked about their perception on a possible implementation of a common Euro-English, to which the results were distinctively negative. (Gnutzman et. al. 2015)
In an interview concerning *Language ideology and the Global Dominance of English*, O’Regan argues that the dominance by the English language has got nothing to do with Britain anymore:

“What is relevant is that the USA continues to be the centre of the global world system and the EU is one of the biggest markets in that system. For this reason, I cannot see the EU giving up English, because this is the language the EU trades in with the United States, and with the rest of the world system.” (O’Regan in Georgiou, 2017, pp.103)

Furthermore, even though French is globally a strong language and was, before the UK joined the EU, the most widely used language within the institutions of the EU, O’Regan considers the likelihood for it gaining its former strength very slim. He explains his reasoning for this with: “…I cannot really envisage the countries who have joined the EU in the last ten or fifteen years all falling over themselves to make French the first language of their school system.” (O’Regan in Georgiou, 2017, pp. 103). Gazzola (2016) adds to the argument with pointing out the fact that it is not the EU who makes the decisions on the education policies, but each individual country. The EU can only influence the countries on their policies. “…the development of a bilingual education system…requires considerable investment in teacher training. Member states are not necessarily willing to give priority to such investments…” (O’Regan in Georgiou, 2017, & Gazzola, 2016).

**2.3 The present study**

The present study looks at the current linguistic state, thus post the Brexit referendum but before Brexit, as perceived by British expats living in or around Bonn, Germany. It also covers what is the believed future for the English in the EU may look like, taking into account the knowledge of the current *status quo*. As Linn (2016a) presses, it is of great importance to have research to back up or contradict statements made by politicians and media in the current political climate concerning Brexit and to promote tolerance and inclusion (Linn, 2016a, pp. 9-10). The research done for this essay aims to look at what the present *status quo* is, as experienced by British expats; the attitudes towards the English language and the respondents’ perceptions of the actual daily language use by people at grass root level amidst the political climate. If we can map out the current situation, then we have a possibility to discover how attitudes may – or may not change over time as Brexit is being implemented. Choosing Germany as the setting for the research was with the intention of drawing on the country’s importance in Europe and the European Union, having one of the strongest economies of the EU, neighbouring Belgium and the EU headquarters, and being an important lingua franca of Europe up until the WW1 and WW2 (Darquennes in Linn, 2016a,pp.93). Contrary to the previous attitude studies on the English language, discussed in section 2.1, where L2 speakers of English constituted the informants, the current study used British first- or second-generation expats as interview subjects. This was chosen due to them using both English and German in their everyday lives. The assumption that they use English to a greater extent than the average German would make them more likely to notice any changes in attitudes towards the English language.
3. Method and procedures

3.1 The subjects and the setting

The sampling in the present study can be considered as ‘snowball sampling’ as defined by Dörnyei (2007). The geographic distance between the researcher and the interviewees for this study would have made the finding of subjects difficult otherwise. The initial contact was Adam, who located people, that suited the required criteria for inclusion in the study, from ‘The Bonn Players’; an English speaking amateur theatre group in Bonn, Germany, and asked if they wanted to be part of the study. The theatre group consists of a majority of British expats.

3.1.1 Presentation of the selected interviewees

The subjects chosen varied in gender, age and profession. The common denominator for them all was that they are 1st or 2nd generation British expats, with English as their native language, who currently live in- or in the surroundings of Bonn, Germany.

Six people participated in the study and they all signed a consent form prior to the interview, where they were informed about their right to withdraw from the study at any point and that their identity would be protected (see appendix A). The names of the participants have been altered for identity protection and the only connection to the original names are the gender. The order of the interviewees presented below, corresponds to the order in which their interviews were performed.

Adam: Retired in 2013 from Ford Motors Europe headquarters in Bonn, where he worked as head of marketing. He was born in Newcastle, and also went to university there, where he studied German. While at university, he met his future wife Diana (her name altered as well), who, like Adam studied Swedish as a minor subject. Adam speaks fluent English (native) and German, Swedish (to some extent) and ‘school’ French to a limited level. He has two adult children, a daughter and a son. The reason the family located to Germany was because of Adam’s work at Ford Motors, which he worked for in the UK as well prior to moving to Bonn. They moved to Germany twice, the first time as a three-year assignment in 1978 and the second time in 1989, after which they stayed.

Beatrice: Is 62 years old and is a retired teacher. As a newly qualified teacher, she moved to Turkey in 1980 to teach English as a foreign language in a school in Turkey. Whilst there, she met her future husband who is Turkish, and as he could not speak English and was already settled in Germany, they decided to move to Germany together. It was thought to be for a two-year period, but they have remained there. Beatrice speaks English, Turkish and German fluently, plus a little French and Italian, however, she does not consider herself multilingual in comparison to a lot of European people. At the time of her moving to Germany, she only knew a little bit of German and as they settled in Bornheim, a small village outside of Bonn, she struggled with social life in the beginning.

Celia: Was born in 1985. Her father is British and her mother is German and she was born in Germany. However, Celia’s father is a retired British army officer and as Celia grew up, the family was catered for by the British army, so Celia’s schooling was in British schools, located in Germany, set up for the children of British soldiers. Therefore, all teaching was in English and the schools followed the British curriculum. As a result
of this, although being fluent in both English and German and despite being brought up in Germany the slightly stronger language for Celia is English. She did an MA in translating and interpreting but is working within insurance now. She lives with her English-German bilingual boyfriend, in Cologne, ca. 30 kilometres outside Bonn.

Duncan: Is 60 years old and he started working in computing when he was 17 in London, where he is from. When he was 20, he reached what he describes as ‘an early midlife crisis’ and went travelling in Europe to broaden his horizons. He ended up in Munich and then continued on to Bonn, where he eventually met his future wife, and they settled. They have a teenage daughter together. In 2016, he took early retirement and has now embarked on a new journey: to become a professional actor and is doing his first year at one of Germany’s most prominent drama schools.

Edmund: Is Beatrice’s son. He is 32 years old and has an older sister. His father is Turkish and his mother British, but his two main languages are English and German, as his parents worried about his late speech development and thus chose to abstain from speaking to him in Turkish. Having his roots in three countries, Edmund does not feel limited by borders regarding where in the world he should live. Up until a few months ago, Edmund lived in China and Malaysia for several years, so Brexit happened whilst he lived out there. He moved back to Germany with his Danish fiancé in order to settle in Germany.

Fransisca: Is Adam’s daughter. She is 41 years old and moved to Germany as an adult in 2009, although her family settled in Germany in 1989, but then Fransisca went to boarding school in Britain and only came home on the school holidays. Therefore, she was not fluent in German when she grew up, despite her parental home being there. Since moving to Germany eight years ago, Fransisca has made a conscious effort of improving her German. Her fiancé is Dutch and despite them speaking English amongst themselves, they both make an effort of speaking German when out and about, to integrate, socialise and to respect the country they are in. Fransisca makes it clear she considers herself a guest in Germany and thus does not expect people to be able to speak English, so makes an effort to speak German. She works as a teacher at an international private school, with children age 6-7, where all the teaching, conversation and even children’s play are in English.

3.2 The setting
Choosing Germany for the setting of this research meant that the interviewees experiences were formed in a place which is located in the heart of Europe and in close proximity to the governmental bodies of the EU. The country is one of the economic leading nations within the EU and the German language was, until WW1 and WW2, a lingua franca of Europe and an important scientific language (Darquennes in Linn, 2016a, pp.93) Bonn used to be the capital of West Germany, but is now since the German reunification, a multi-national city which holds an array of international institutions. Amongst them the main German UN body and the representation of the European Commission in Germany (Bonn, official website. 2017)
3.2 Procedure

The study consists of semi-structured interviews (Dörnyei, 2007) where the questions are formed as an ‘interview guide’ (see appendix B), designed to prompt the interviewee while at the same time support him/her to explore and elaborate on the issues raised. Due to the semi-structured format of the interviews, the execution does not always follow the exact same regime: “Usually, the interviewer will ask the same questions of all the participants, although not necessarily in the same order or wording, and would supplement the main questions with various probes…” (Dörnyei, 2007, pp.136) The questions for the semi-structured interview (see appendix B) were piloted in order to make sure they were worded in an optimal way to avoid any misunderstandings and misinterpretations. The pilot study was performed on one subject only, due to time restrictions. The subject for the pilot study was chosen out of convenience, but fit the inclusion criteria with the exception of the location of living, which is Stockholm, Sweden, rather than Bonn, Germany.

3.2.1 The interview guide

The interview guide was formed as a series of mainly open-ended questions, meant to inspire the interviewee to elaborate, rather than providing simple yes or no answers (Appendix B). This is in order to gather information about why things are done in certain ways as well as how they are done. The guide starts off with 8 completely demographic questions (section ‘Background/Demographics’) and then moves into combining the background with the linguistic aspects (sections ‘Family’ and ‘Education/Work’). Under the bigger heading ‘Life as a British expatriot (expat) in Germany’ the first five questions concern the social environment in terms of being a Brit living in Germany (section ‘social environment’). This then means to link to the following 10 questions concerning the linguistic aspects of his/her life, covering their language use and any perceived attitudes towards this (section ‘English language’). The last section, ‘Brexit’, covers questions concerning their reactions and feelings to Brexit, how it affects them, any reactions they have had from people and so on. The penultimate question, number 9, provides them with three different standpoints regarding the future for the English language in the EU after Britain’s exit from it and they are asked to provide thoughts on which of these- or any of the statements resonates most with them and why. Due to its directness, it is placed second to last in order not to lead the subjects and colour their answers (the last question is the open ended: “Anything else you would like to add that you can think of?”).

3.2.2 The interviews

The chosen subjects had already agreed to participate when being asked, but were made aware that they could choose to withdraw from the project at any point, should they so wish. Before conducting the interviews, the subjects were emailed a consent form regarding their participation, their rights and how the data would be handled (see appendix A), which had to be signed and returned to the researcher prior to the interview. The interviews were conducted via Skype or Facetime, due to the distance between the subjects and the researcher. The medium chosen was down to the preference of the interviewee, and the interviews were between 45-60 min each. The use of video links made it possible for the interviewees to be in their own environment where they could be relaxed. As always, when relying on technology, it could potentially falter and provide great problems in conducting the interview. To ensure disruption would be minimized, two recording devices were used for all the interviews to secure backups.
3.2.3 Processing the data

The interviews were noted down following the structure of the interview guide, but with added extra notes where additional relevant points were mentioned. The interviews were selectively transcribed, parts were transcribed completely, including any hesitation or repetition, other parts were described. When going through the data, themes, which related to the research, appeared that were repeated by many of the interviewees. These themes formed the headings for the result section.

4. Results

Presented below are themes that emanated out of the replies from the interviews. While these may not all be themes about attitudes towards English per se, they are all deemed highly relevant to the topic of attitudes towards English.

4.1. The emergence of a European English

When presented with the three strands on ‘qualified guesses’ from various publications (see Appendix B, question 9 in Brexit section), some informants would agree with Modiano that there may develop a slightly different English within Europe once the British influence is gone within the EU. Duncan described how he, when speaking English with fellow Germans, had developed a way of speaking which was slower and clearer, in order to be understood:

“I got in the way of speaking an English with reduced vocabulary… I found that I learnt to speak very clearly in English … I found that I reduced my vocabulary, as it’s important to me that everybody understood exactly what I was saying. You got into the way of speaking very short sentences… single words, but making sure you’re very, very clear what your argument is… I wouldn’t be surprised… if that is what people in the EU would do as well… when you listen to EU politicians… speaking English, it’s not always eloquent, but it’s simple, short sentences and I find that I was doing exactly the same, working with my teams.”

Duncan believes something what could be described as a ‘Euro-English’ emerging, but not in the codified way Modiano envisages, but rather a simplified and more direct way, where the politeness strategies used when speaking English would most likely follow the native languages ones, rather than the British. He contemplates his own politeness strategies: “I’m a bit blunt, maybe I’ve become a bit of a German.” However, Duncan strongly believes that any change to the English language in the EU would come from the speakers of it, “not a political decision.” In other words, he argues it would be a bottom-up process.

Celia has experience from her workplace regarding communicative ability over correctness concerning English:

"my colleagues all work independently, but sometimes they’ll ask me for help, …if they don’t understand what someone – and often the people who write the emails will, won’t be native speakers either… And when they write emails back to… people… I could correct them, like really, really focus and correct them properly, but sometimes I, I know that what they’ve written isn’t quite correct but if I understand what they’re saying, fine. If I understand it, then someone else should as well. … I often feel quite, quite mean as well if I … overcorrect…”
She chooses not to ”overcorrect” the L2 speakers’ mistakes as the communicated message takes priority over form and also as a way of not hurting the feelings of the L2 speaker.

One issue that came up in the interviews was that there is a distinction between the language of the EU institutions and the language spoken by the people living in the EU and that these two may not be the same. Celia, who did her master’s degree at university in interpreting and translations, has friends who work as translators in the EU administrations and during her training she went to the EU in 2009, to sit in and practice for a week. She finds the possible prospect of the EU moving away from using English in their work very interesting, as in her experience the English translators and interpreters were the ones who were by far the busiest. “The Irish booth had very little to do (as they would translate to Irish, not English) …English was the main language in the EU… They had the most to do by far.” But she did not find the possibility of EU relinquishing English impossible, however, the prospect of English losing its importance as a L2 language amongst the population of the EU is a different matter and she describes the strong position the English language has in Germany:

“I don’t think it would make a difference if the UK would leave really… within the EU it might be different because then you think, ok what would be the language then that all …the parliamentarians, all the commissioners and so on would speak. What would life be like for the interpreters, that would be an interesting one”

Celia argues that the German language is so intertwined with English because of the influence from America and social networks, and thus will not be affected by Brexit, regardless of any future changes in EU language policies. This is something that is reinforced by Fransisca, who says that the idea of the English language not being used in the EU post Brexit would mean that the EU would cut its ties to the US rather than anything else, because that is where the current influence for English comes from.

4.2 Language choice determined by inclusiveness

A recurring theme in the interviews, regarding the way the interviewees chose to speak (what language with whom and when), is that there is no national pride involved when deciding what language to speak. The choices are often function driven and/ or to be polite and avoid excluding people. Adam’s immediate family are all British, except for his daughter in law. His description on their language negotiations shows the dominant drive is to communicate, not in what language the communication is spoken:

“…there is one exception to that … we had a son … who died… and his widow still lives here… And she is Peruvian. … And she speaks German…And she doesn’t…speak English. Well, or very sketchily… her focus was to making her life in Germany. Now, she did a number of years ago and is permanently resident here, so her German’s pretty good, but she’s never…got round to learning any English. And so, we actually have, in the family… when she’s with us, and so, we see her quite often, when she’s with us then we all speak German. As that’s our common link.”

The ‘common link’ is a telling expression and it can be transferred to different contexts in which language negotiations occur. Adam describes the situation at his old workplace, Ford Motors Europe, (the official working language was English):

“you could have a meeting; there would be an almost unspoken, kind of radar … scan and if everyone realised that everyone in the room was German, or a German speaker, they would automatically just start having the meeting in German. …and, so the meeting could be carrying on in German, the door could open and in could walk one Brit or one Italian… who people … realised
doesn’t speak German and instantly, without saying anything, the language would just change to English.”

For Fransisca and her fiancé, it is important to make an effort to speak German in the village they live in, to socialize and integrate with their neighbours. As they live in a small village, even though people understand English to a large extent, it is not like in the multicultural Bonn nearby, but they want to make sure people feel like they are trying their best to speak the language of the country they are in and not expect to be understood speaking English.

4.3 Different attitudes in different locations

Both Fransisca and Celia mention the tensions and the rise of right-wing parties in eastern Germany, differentiating it from the international and inclusive attitudes they have encountered in Bonn and Cologne. Fransisca:

“Again, where we live,… I’ve heard it could quite possibly be really different. In the former east. … I shouldn’t really say it because I don’t speak from experience, but the perception over here is that they’re not as tolerant at all. You know, that’s where all the kind of right-wing stuff is coming from, from the former east, uh, and, … I don’t know whether, if I went over there, with my bumbling English, whether they would say it was charming or whether they would think I was an Ausländer*… I don’t know.”

* negative word for foreigner

Celia describes how she has not come across any negative attitudes from Germans when it comes to her being a native English speaker or the English language in general. Regarding Brexit, she describes the German reaction:

“It’s more just complete disbelief … here, in Cologne, you have … lots of people from all over the world …, it’s just normal. …if I were living … somewhere in Eastern Germany, where … there are the rise of the, the populist right party, … but again… in the west here in Germany, the parties are still pretty much… more centre-left… so we don’t really, well at least I’m not experienced anyone who’s, … from the Germans, who said: ‘yeah it was a good idea’, or …’yeah I’m looking forward to you guys leaving’.”

Both Duncan and Fransisca mention how they and the Germans they have spoken to regard Brexit as very, very sad and bizarre, but that they, as Britons, have never been blamed for it. Fransisca suggests that a reason why Brexit came as such a shock to her was because she, like most people, was in a personal social ‘echo-chamber’, i.e. we socialize with people of similar mind to ourselves and get a tilted way of general attitudes and perceptions. However, Duncan argues that he feels the Germans are generally “fed up with Britain always having a special deal” as no one else in the EU has that, referring to Thatcher’s rebate in 1984. And he displays a worry, together with Celia and Fransisca, that the attitude towards Britons may change in the case of Britain striking an unfair deal in the Brexit negotiations. Fransisca: “You do imagine, if we (Britain) crash out and refuse to pay our money …, and then the Germans gonna pick up the bill, … then maybe, maybe then it will be that people will start to suffer over here a bit because, you know. I hope not. “
4.4 English as a door-opener

“The biggest language challenge in the world today is English. School children are expected to learn it, and the need to succeed in English is often fired by parental ambition and the requirements for entry into higher education, no matter what the proposed course of study.” (Linn, 2016, pp.7). This statement can be found in the preface to Andrew Linn’s *Investigating English in Europe*, English in Europe, volume 6, and highlights the importance of English for higher education. As can be seen in the testimonies from the interviewees below, the importance of English can have both advantageous and sometimes negative effects for its native speakers. Claire testifies how the Germans often express a very positive attitude to English and a desire to learn and improve their language skills. Fransisca describes it as the Germans often find it very interesting that she is English and compliments her on her lovely accent. Celia’s response to the question whether the ability to speak native English is an asset to her life in Germany, shows how having the global lingua franca as your native language can work in favour for you on the job market:

“…I would say so, definitely…I work in insurance, I don’t have any background in insurance at all…I basically went there for a translating job, …they said: ok, you don’t have that qualification, you don’t have an insurance broker or any…sort of background in that, but we’ll train you on the job …which is quite unusual I think for German companies to do. And I think the only way I got in was… purely through my language skills.”

The experience above has similarities to when Fransisca applied for work in Germany. Although she had already worked as a teacher when she was living in Torquay, her German was not proficient enough when she moved to Germany, so an important asset in applying for her job apart from her teaching experience was the fact she is native in English. However, the facilitative capacity of English to open doors, varies between locations, as exemplified by Beatrice. Due to her knowledge of English, she got a job in Turkey as a newly qualified teacher (in combination with her profession), but when Beatrice moved with her husband to Germany she struggled socially in the beginning as her German proficiency was too low to be able to socialize with their fellow villagers.

4.5 The isolated, monolingual Briton

As the interviewees are all fluent in at least two languages, English and German, it was surprising they often described themselves as lacking in multilingual competence. When being complimented by the researcher as very talented, knowing so many languages, Adam (he knows four languages, five including Latin, to a varying degree), replied that maybe he was, in terms of being British: “Yeah, … especially Brits, … tend not to be too strong on languages and so, … yeah, I’m more than the average for a Brit.” There is a distinct difference in attitudes towards languages from the interviewees and the average British person. Fransisca thinks “it is sad that Britain doesn’t embrace foreign languages…I think it’s a shame.” and she has heard that L2 lessons have become voluntarily at school in the UK nowadays, which she thinks would only worsen the situation further.

The interviewees for this research have all realised that simply speaking English alone is not enough to cover them for all contexts they operate in. This may be more noticeable to them because they live in a different country to the one they were born in (or where
one of their parents was born). They are all linguistically aware and none of them holds a staunchness about wanting to speak English, or expresses any nationalistic pride regarding the English language. They all show curiosity and interest in languages and convey an awareness of the advantages of speaking a number of languages, for example: Adam learnt Swedish at university, Beatrice learnt Turkish by consciously choosing to integrate with the local population when she was working there and Edmund did not hesitate to move to China before knowing any mandarin, but learnt it when he got there. In the case of Celia, when she enquired into becoming a translator in the EU administration, she was actually told she would not be as desirable as many other applicants, due to her ‘only’ speaking two languages (despite both English and German being her native languages). This linguistic awareness is likely to be an effect of them living in a place where it is easy to travel to neighbouring countries and thus get exposed to multiple languages as well as people who are multilingual. Also, as the interviewees are all 1st or 2nd generation expats, they would already have a pre-dispositioned openness towards other countries and languages, otherwise they would not have moved away from their native country in the first place. This openness contrasts with how Duncan perceives his fellow Britons in the UK with regards to Brexit. He describes an arrogance from the British towards the EU now, as well as historically and he has a simile to the current demands from the Britons of staying within the single market, despite leaving the EU: like wanting to stop paying the membership fees for a tennis club, but still expecting to play.

However, given the result of the referendum was very even, many Britons are opposed to Brexit and there has been a surge in British people seeking to obtain EU passports in order to avoid isolating themselves and to allow continued travel and the ability to settle freely within the EU. As many Britons have Irish heritage, the applications often go via Ireland: “…Irish passports are among the most sought after by UK citizens seeking to maintain an EU passport following the Brexit referendum in June 2016.” (Boland, 2017, §4, line 1-3). Similarly, Adam, Duncan and Celia testifies of a great increase in applications for German citizenship amongst the British expats as there is a strong feeling of uncertainty regarding their ability to stay in their country of residence as a result of the Brexit referendum. This subject was often one of the very first ones mentioned when covering Brexit in the interviews, which indicates it being a matter of great concern. Duncan speaks about having just signed up for a newly created expat community called ‘The Brexit community’, as, according to most of the interviewees, people are very worried and Duncan estimates 90% of the British expats are applying for German citizenship. Amongst the interviewees, it is only Francesca who does not have a German passport yet, as it was only eight years since she moved to Germany as an adult, but Brexit has made her consider it. She is not certain though, as there are emotions and construction of identity, affiliated to her nationality:

“I am considering it. I don’t really want to. I don’t know why, it just seems strange to me, …. … I don’t have to lose anything – like then why wouldn’t I, in a way? Why wouldn’t I? Because I get... the best of both worlds, I get two passports – that’s really cool. But there’s another part of me that thinks: oohh, I don’t know! I can’t explain it. …”

The uncertainness about the future of English in the EU post-Brexit did not seem to have been on people’s mind to a great extent. However, considering the possibility of them having to leave the country they have settled in, their focus is understandable. Furthermore, in combination with the fact that the interviewees had not noticed any
negative attitudes emerging towards them or the English language, it is only logical that
the future fate of English in the EU takes a lower priority.

5. Discussion and conclusion

The current essay has focused on the effect Brexit has had on the English language within
the EU, so far. The main findings are: i) The participants do not think the emergence of
a Euro-English is likely, ii) Their language choices are mainly determined by
inclusiveness, iii) There may be different attitudes towards English in different parts of
Germany, iv) They have experienced English as a door opener, v) Multilingualism is a
desired notion for them all.

The nativized Euro-English envisaged by Modiano (2017), is not something that
resonates with any of the interviewees. Their idea of a European English, is one where
the focus lies on communicational clarity, and less on being correct. This is echoed in
some of the responses to Modiano’s article, like Seidlhofer and Widdowson (2017)
mentioned above, who sees the possibility of EU citizens using an English lingua franca
that is “less inhibited and stigmatized” with the removal of British influence (Seidlhofer
& Widdowson, pp.361)

There seems to be a flaw with Modiano’s reasoning around the possible emergence of a
Euro-English with consistent grammar for all speakers of it. This is that if a Euro-English
would develop which includes aberrations commonly made by the L2 speakers, then for
the aberrations to be the same it requires the interfering L1 of the speaker to be similar.
The languages of the EU, despite many of them being Indo-European and thus related,
still have distinct differences between the Germanic and the Roman languages.
Furthermore, Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian and Sámi belongs to the Finno-Ugric
languages that are unrelated to the Indo-European ones. (Branch, 2017) Gerritsen (2017)
lifts precisely this issue in her comment to Modiano’s article.

Although Crystal (2017) agrees with Modiano on the possibility of the emergence of a
Euro-English in theory, he argues such a thing could only occur under the right
conditions, such as a common sense of a European identity, of which he sees no
indication. Rather, the identities of people living in the European Union are tied to
countries and nationalities. Celia and Fransisca on the other hand, both concur with the
stance of O’Regan (see section 2.2.), who argues that Britain leaving the EU is not a factor
in the development of the English language in the EU, as it is the link to the US that is
the defining one (Georgiou, 2017).

Similar to the results from the studies by Bolton and Meierkord (2013) and Walsh (2015)
(see section 2.1), the testimonies from the participants paint a different picture from the
one described by Mr. Juncker and other EU politicians (see section 1). There have not
been any reported negative attitudes towards the English language and nothing indicating
that the importance of the English language should be declining, rather the opposite. What
the interviewees describe in terms of language preferences is linked to the situation and
has more to do with being polite and inclusive than any desire to express a certain national
identity. The data thus seem to indicate a discrepancy between the EU political line and
the grass root reality. These results could be understood in the light of what Ferguson (2015) describes how the spreading of the English language works:

“...the spread of English, in Europe and elsewhere, is largely a ‘bottom-up’ process, an aggregation of thousands of individual and institutional decisions to learn and use English because of the actual and imagined benefits proficiency in the language can confer.” (Ferguson in Linn et. al., 2015. pp.27)

The interviewees report on how uncertain the outcome of Brexit is, and worry that if negotiations go sour, they could experience colder attitudes from the German population. Taggart et. al. (2017) noted an irritation from the German elites towards their British counterparts in their study and Duncan reports of irritation from the Germans concerning the British government wanting to leave the EU but remain within the single market. However, none of the participants reported any negativity directed towards them personally.

English can often serve as a door-opener as reported by the interviewees. This is due to its role as the leading Lingua Franca in Europe, and Anglophones can often get a head start compared to English L2 speakers because of their proficiency and lack of interference from the native language. However, Ferguson (2015) explains some of the thoughts by Van Parijs (2011) and Graddol (2006):

"the competitive advantages Anglophones currently enjoy will not only be eroded but reversed in the long run. This will occur as more and more young Europeans develop bilingualism (or trilingualism) in English ... The monolingualism of many Anglophones will then turn into a competitive disadvantage ... in situations where languages other than English are required.” (Linn, Bermel & Ferguson, 2015. pp.27).

Their argument may mean that the privileged position Anglophones have enjoyed with regards to English as a door-opener, could lessen over time. Should that happen, it might make it harder for the mainly monolingual British population to gain employment in Europe, unless British language polices regarding education, change into making multilingualism a priority. A notion that the interviewees already have adopted.

The aim of the current study was to explore the linguistics at grass-root level in Germany, and to see whether there would be any perceived attitudes towards the English language and its role within Europe and the European Union. The results have shown that the participants have not experienced any negative attitudes towards them as Britons or towards the English language. Rather the opposite has been the case, where their British nationality is seen as something interesting, the accent adorable, their ability to speak the language as an asset in workplaces and the Germans have shown a great interest in- and influence by the English language.

With regards to the limitations for the current study, the small number of participants prevents generalisations to be done from their replies. The participants were a convenience sample from a group of British expats who all are connected to the English-speaking theatre group ‘the Bonn players’ and thus maybe a more homogenic sample of people than if they had been chosen completely at random.

Despite the fact that Modiano’s paper is an argumentative article, based on one main theory without empirical work, it has gathered considerable attention, as will be clear from the present paper. Modiano in his response to the comments calls for research himself into the attitudes of young people living in Europe in order to gain insight in what
the L2 speakers of English in the EU today perceive as important. As Linn (2016a) states in his addition to the introduction, more research is needed to broaden the field, increasing the perspectives and most importantly uncovering the actual language practices and processes in people’s everyday lives. Such work could inform the practices of language policy analysts and would be useful for language practitioners in general.

What is evident from the current study, and that resonates in several of the comments to Modiano’s article, is that a distinction needs to be made between the linguistic reality within EU institutions and the outside, normal life. Both areas need more research and it would be interesting to look at the linguistic practices of people working at the EU institutions and map out their linguistic negotiating strategies in both official and unofficial contexts. With regards to the language spoken by the people living in the EU, Seidlhofer and Widdowson say “a less inhibited and stigmatized use of English as a lingua franca (ELF)” may develop in the wake of Brexit, rather than a normative Euro-English as described by Modiano. (Seidlhofer et al., 2017, pp.361). As highlighted by Bolton and Davis (2017), ELF research would be a good approach of looking onto “what kind of English (in linguistic terms) we expect to be spoken by European ‘second language’ speakers of English when communicating with one another” (Bolton et al. 2017, pp.308-309), due to it being pragmatic and following the language usage, rather than dictating it.
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Appendix A

Consent form – adapted from
https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/irb/consent/forms.html

Attitudes towards the English Language in Europe

What you will be asked to do: You will be asked to participate in an interview on attitudes towards the English language in Europe via Skype. The interview will take approximately 45-60 min.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to be in the study you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. Participating in this study does not mean that you are giving up any of your legal rights.

Your answers will be confidential: The records of this study will be kept private. All data and records from the interviews will be kept at a personal computer, secured by password. Any report of this research that is made available to the public will not include your name or any other individual information by which you could be identified.

If you have questions or want a copy or summary of the study results: Contact the researcher at the email address below. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Informed consent note
I have been informed by the researcher, Josefine Bergström, of the overall aims of the research project on attitudes towards the English language in Europe. I understand that the data (interview and other recordings of interactions) will be used interpretively in the bachelor research paper, in publications, conference presentations and other research outlets by the researcher or any other researcher with whom she might need to collaborate in the future. The data will be anonymized so that no part of it can be traced to any individual in any of the recordings. I have been guaranteed complete confidentiality and anonymity by the researcher, and I have been given the right to see any paper prior to its publication. I have also been given the right to withdraw from the study at any stage.

Name: 
Signature: 

Date: 

The researcher: 
Josefine Bergström 
josefine.bergstrom68@gmail.com 

Supervisor: 
Beyza Björkman 
Associate Professor, Docent. 
Department of English, Stockholm University

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Appendix B

Interview guide – semi structured interviews

Background / Demographics

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Year of birth
4. Do you speak any other languages other than English? If so, to what level?
5. Current country and place of residence
6. Year you moved to your current place of residence
7. Reasons for moving there
8. Any other places you have lived in the world / in Germany

Family

9. What is your relationship status? If you live with someone, does this person have the same native language as yourself, or a different one? If different, which language?
10. Language/s spoken with your immediate family?

Education / Work

11. What is your educational background? Where did you study? What? And to what level?
12. Your current profession.
   - Are you currently working? If so, where and with what?
   - What is your working language/s? Why?
- If you are using more than one language, estimate to what extent each language is used.

- Feelings involved with that

- How would people react if you were to speak English in this situation? (if that is not the prevalent language used in this situation)

**Life as a British expatriot (expat) in Germany**

**Social environment**

1. What was your experience of moving from Britain to Germany?

2. If you were to describe your way of life, in terms of customs / traditions / routines / aspects, would you say they were mainly:

   - British?
   - German?
   - A fairly even mix between the two? Describe
   - Something else? If so, describe what.
   
   Reasons why.

3. In your opinion, do people see you as a Brit or a German? Possible reasons why.

4. People’s attitude toward you being British:

   - Speaking the language
   - British customs, such as celebrating Christmas on the 25\textsuperscript{th} of December instead of the 24\textsuperscript{th} for example.
   - British food.
   - British politicians, British policies

5. How does it feel to be a British expat in Germany? How do German people feel towards British expats?

**English language**

1. What language/s do you use in your everyday life?

   Contexts:

   - Work
- Family
- Friends
- Any other context you can think of that you want to mention?

Follow-on questions:

- Why do you choose the other language over the other/s?
- How is that met from people around you?
- If more than one language is used in a context, estimate how often you speak one and the other.
- How would people react if you were to speak English / German in a situation where that is not the prevalent language commonly used?
- In what context do you feel it is accepted to speak English?
- Is there a context where it is definitely not ok, in your opinion, to speak English?
- Do you feel that Germans in general are happy to converse in English?
- Is there an expat community of Brits where you live? If so, do you take an active part in it? Describe. Are there Germans involved in this community too?

2. How was the language situation when you moved to Germany?
   - Which language did you use most then?
   - Did you learn German and if so when?
   - How was your experience of learning German, if you did so?

3. What is your perception of the status of the English language in relation to German and French? (The three working languages of the European Commission.)

4. Have you noticed any attitudes, good or bad, towards the English language?

5. Do you speak English every day? Why, why not? If yes, in what context?
6. Is your ability to speak English an asset in your life in Germany?

7. In your perception, does your fellow peers deem it an asset?

8. Do you have a noticeable foreign accent when speaking in German? If so, is it distinguishably British? Attitudes on this from German native speakers?

9. Out of German and English, which language are you most comfortable speaking? Reasons for that.

10. Out of German and English, which language are the people you meet in your daily life most comfortable speaking? Describe who would be most comfortable with what language and possible reasons why.

**Brexit**

1. What is your perception of Brexit? What are your thoughts surrounding it?
   - What was your reaction to the British vote to leave the European Union?
   - Do you feel it is a matter of great importance or not so important in reality?
   - Is this something you feel strongly or weakly about? Or would you say you are indifferent to the matter? Why?
   - Do you feel that Brexit have/will have an effect on your daily life?
   - Do you feel, as a British expat, Brexit will have more of an effect on your life than if you were German?

2. What reactions on Brexit have you noticed from other people?
   - Family members
   - Relatives
   - Friends
   - Work colleagues
   - Any other reactions you have noticed that you want to mention?

3. Have you noticed any reactions on Brexit from journalists / politicians in media outlets?

4. Is ‘Brexit’ a subject that you discuss in your life?
- If so, with whom do you discuss it? Other expats, German friends, friends with different nationality than British or German, work colleagues? Someone else?
- If not, why not?
- Are there any situations that - or group of people with whom you feel it is inappropriate to bring the subject of Brexit up? If so, when, who and why?

5. Did you notice any reactions, or was anything said to you with regards to Brexit from your fellow Germans, during the campaign leading up to the referendum and after the result of the same?

6. Do you think Brexit will have consequences for:
   - The English language
   - How British people are met
   - Possible prejudices towards British people
   - Attitudes towards British traditions

7. Have you noticed if there have been any discussions (in media outlets or from people on the street) with regards to the English language in relation to Brexit?
   - Given that English would not be the officially chosen language of any of the member states of the EU once Britain leaves.

8. Have you generally noticed any advantages/disadvantages with Brexit?

9. Different texts propose different outcome for the English language with regards to Brexit;
   - Newspaper articles, reporting on some European politicians calling for an abandonment of English within the EU, as it would no longer be an official language of any member state, once Britain leaves the EU. The most hard-core stance for ‘English losing its importance in the EU’.

Scolars;

- Interview with Dr. John O’Regan, UCL, Reader in Applied Linguistics at University College London, who means that there will be no change to the English language due to English being the working language in all the major financial institutions.

- Marko Modiano’s article in *World Englishes* (Scientific journal)
The emergence of a ‘Euro-English’; a variety of English that is less focused on being ‘correct’ British English, but rather a type of Lingua franca English, where the need to communicate and to be understood is the main goal. Everyone is on the same level, in a way, with English as their second language.

Useful tool of communication.

Which one of these standpoints/qualified guesses resonates most with you?

10. Anything else you would like to add that you can think of?