The politics of identity in diasporic media

Abstract

By following a sociolinguistic, ethnographic approach, this paper explores the intricacies behind the construction of a collective identity in the practices of a community radio station, off- and on-air, that serves the Spanish speaking Latin American community in London. The analysis of the information gathered from a 6-months ethnography conducted in a well-established radio station in South London, allowed me to document how the politics of identity delivered on air, far from being a straightforward process, entails some decisions regarding what to say and how, in order to deliver harmonious relations. The shared use of the Spanish language, albeit in different varieties, and some perceived shared values, become the salient markers to present this harmonious identity. Projecting a unified group identity is seen as an important aim for migrants when navigating diaspora in the UK.

Key words: diasporic media, migrant broadcasters, Spanish-speaking Latin Americans in London, strategic collective identity

The politics of identity in diasporic media[1]

1. Introduction

This paper is concerned with the construction, negotiation, and performance of a collective identity amongst the radio producers and audience, in the off-air and on-air daily communicative practices of a community radio station, addressed to the Spanish-speaking Latin American (SsLA) community in London. Being part of a recognised "ethnic community" is imperative for those migrants seek access to housing, funding, and political representation in the UK. For that reason, even though the imagined members of this social group come from different national origins in Latin America (mostly Colombia and Ecuador), and are diverse in terms of age, gender, class, arrival moment, etc., the fact that they speak Spanish, albeit in different varieties, and share some historical links and cultural traits, leads them to present themselves with the pan-ethnic label "Latin American" -and more recently "Latino/a" and "Latinx"-[2]. (cfr. McIlwaine and Bunge 2016, Montañez 2020, Peró 2011, Román and Retis 2020). The media produced by migrants needs to mediate between the perceived needs of the social group they claim to represent and the interests and realities of the owners and producers of the media. I chose to observe how these processes occur in a six-months fieldwork between the end of 2016 and the beginning of 2017) conducted in the newsroom of a community radio station located in Central London, which was launching a midday news programme at the time. In the first part of the paper, I describe the research context by focussing on a short account of the SsLAs in London (section 2). Then I discuss the ethnographic sociolinguistic approach to the study of diasporic media (section 3) and introduce the site and social actors (section 4) For the analysis, in section 5, I initially will focus on how the four main social actors who participate in this media production construct and negotiate a "Latin American" identity, off air, by positioning themselves to different storylines about their job as migrant journalists, and the media they produce. In the second part, I will analyse the co-construction of this identity and the content that they deliver on-air. Spanish language is portrayed as at the core of the definition of the community and t harmonious relationships amongst the imagined members of the group. In the conclusion, I will discuss how the politics of collective identity amongst this migrant group is shaped at different scales: the conditions of diaspora, but also the different position that these actors occupy socially

2. Research context

Broadly speaking, "Latin American" is the umbrella term used by researchers in the UK to refer to "people who use Spanish or Portuguese as their first language and who were born in Central (including Mexico) and South America" (McIlwaine and Bunge 2016: 6). Even though, Brazilians[3] constitute the largest national group, the interests of this article are focussed on Spanish-speaking Latin Americans, constituted primarily by people coming from Colombia, Ecuador, and, to a lesser extent, Bolivia, Argentina, and Mexico (McIlwaine, et al. 2011). It is precisely the fact that they all speak Spanish, in its different varieties, and share some historical and cultural traits, such as culinary traditions and religious orientations/beliefs, that has allowed them to present themselves as a "community", although some researchers have been reluctant to consider them as such, as noted by McIlwaine (2011). It is the fact that these SsLAs have diverse national origins, along with reported tensions among the potential members in diaspora, (e.g. Block, 2007; Cock, 2011; McIlwaine and Bunge, 2016; Márquez-Reiter and Patino-Santos, 2017; Morales, 2018; Román-Velásquez and Retis, 2020) that gives rise to continual reservations about defining this social group as a "community".

The presence of SsLAs in the UK is nothing new, but the social composition of the group has varied. Thus, during the 20th c., the UK became an important destination for political exiles from the dictatorships in Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, and political refugees from Colombia during the 1970s and 80s. Such a situation would continue during the 1990s and 2000s, adding new cohorts of migrants from Latin America, such as students, tourists, and economic and professional migrants, causing SsLAs to be considered in seminal studies as a "relatively newly established group in the city" (McIllwaine, 2011: 97). This decade "initiated a generational division in terms of access to material resources and (linguistic) inclusion. Unlike SsLAs who arrived in the 80s and 90s, those who came after then could not access funded ESOL tuition or other forms of local government support. Although most of them fed into the low-skilled cheap labour market, a few of them soon saw entrepreneurship as a way to 'shortcut' the occupational ladder" (Márquez-Reiter and Patiño-Santos 2018: 3). These included the so-called Onward Latin Americans (OLAs), coming from secondary migration settlements, mostly from Spain in the aftermath of the economic crash of 2007/8. Onward migrants were entitled to live and work in the UK, but faced similar challenges to any other EEA national, for instance in terms of language learning, as mentioned above (Mas Giralt & Granada 2015). It is precisely the varied

patterns of arrival in the UK, which makes it difficult to estimate a precise number of SsLAs in the UK.

SsLAs remained underexplored in the literature until very recently in comparison to groups considered "new migrants", stemming, for example, from the incorporation of a number of Eastern Europe countries into the European Union, which granted their nationals free movement across Europe, including, at that time, the UK. Most studies conducted have provided information on the socio-demographic profile of the group. They have all foregrounded the emergence of a Latin American identity (Block 2007; Granada 2013) and their migratory experiences, especially in London, where we find an estimated 145,000 of the approximately 250,000 LAs resident in the UK (McIllwaine and Bunge 2016, Román and Reiter 2020). Apart from Argentinians and Mexicans, most Latin Americans are reported to be concentrated in the boroughs of Lambeth (10% of the total in London), where the radio station is located, and in Southwark (9%), and Haringey (5%)[4], where we find the most emblematic cultural enclaves, in Elephant & Castle and Seven Sisters respectively, consisting of small conglomerations of eateries, cafes, shops and leisure outlets addressed to this social group (McIlwaine and Bunge 2016). Both these small malls are in the process of gentrification, which has brought consequences for the Latin American retailers and employees, who perceive the revitalisation of the area as a "threat and dispersion of the community" (Román, 2014, Patiño-Santos & Márquez-Reiter 2018). As pointed out by McIllwaine & Bunge (2016), these boroughs are associated with high levels of inequality and poverty. For example, research on Southwark (Berg 2019; Montañez 2020) has foregrounded inequality and deskilling that leads to precarity for the workers of Latin American background. They are exposed to discrimination stemming from the fact that, even though most of them report higher education qualifications, they lack the English language skills, or the immigration status necessary to work within the qualified labour market. Berg (2019) maintains that some of the challenges they face also stem from the "'hostile environment policy" implemented by the Conservative government since 2014 that has led to cuts in resources and acts as a barrier to migrants' access to social benefits (housing, healthcare, education, etc.)

Additionally, research has shown the tensions amongst the members of the group arising from the lack of equal access to resources and their difficulties in organising themselves to fight for social inclusion (Block 2007; Cock 2011; Patiño-Santos and Márquez-Reiter 2018). In sum, as noted by McIlwaine and Bunge: "…despite being a well-educated population, many were unable to fulfil their potential in relation to securing decent jobs and housing or other economic

and social opportunities. The key barriers they faced included their concentration in exploitative elementary occupations, as well as lack of opportunities for learning English and difficulties in regularising their immigration status." (2016:5) (see also CLAUK.org)

Latino media in London

In common with other minorities such as the Indian, Pakistani (e.g. *Awaz FM*), and Polish (e.g. *Polish Radio London*, *Radio Orla*) communities in the UK, the SsLAs have their own media. As Román and Retis (2020) explain, this media presence has fluctuated since a proliferation of printed media (newspapers, magazines) and some pirate radio stations sprang up to serve those arriving with the new migration flows at the end of the 1990s. Over the years, and largely thanks to the emergence of the internet, these media have found new opportunities. More recently, Latin Americans have opted for "diversification of formats and online digital resources due to the proliferation of social media platforms" (Román and Retis 2020: 124). Currently, a significant number of digital media are produced by LAs in London on Facebook (FB hereafter), and in the form of online magazines (for details, see the Appendix to Chapter 6 in Román and Retis, 2020). However, in my fieldwork, I discovered that broadcasters prefer to gain audiences by acquiring licenses to broadcast on FM. As explained by Lewis, in the case of radio, broadcasting "is confined within the limits of [frequency] spectrum availability which national regulators assign in conformity with international agreement – necessary because radio waves can cross frontiers and cause interference" (Lewis, 2008: 6). Currently, *Ofcom* (the Office of Communications) regulates all broadcasting in the UK, but the difficulties in meeting the criteria necessary to apply for a licence (see Lewis 2008 for a detailed account) can give rise to piracy. At the time of this research, I was able to identify eight radio stations, seven broadcasting from Central London and one from the South of England, two printed newspapers that circulate across the identified LA enclaves in London: Elephant & Castle, Seven Sisters and Brixton, where there is an important presence of LA businesses (eateries, hairdressers, clothes shops and beauty parlours, amongst others) (McIlwaine, et al., 2011; Román and Retis, 2020). Two of the radio stations have licences from Ofcom and broadcast on FM, while the others use social media such as FB to transmit their content.

3. A sociolinguistic ethnographic approach to diasporic media

Media studies have identified various functions for diasporic media, such as that of mediating between the groups they represent and the mainstream society, whilst also acting as sites for socialisation processes within minority groups (Georgiou 2006; Silverstone, 2005; Silverstone and Georgiou, 2003). This is of importance mainly for migrants who do not speak the language of the dominant society and who rely on this resource to understand the necessary legal regulations for participation in society (e.g., regularisation and asylum processes, access to healthcare, etc.) (see Spitulnik, 1997). Where minority groups, such as the 'Latino' community in the United States, have a significant presence in society, ethnic media can contribute to broader social processes, such as the negotiation of citizenship, and become forces for social change (Matsaganis et al., 2010). This mediation entails negotiation, since these media represent political and economic interests. Thus, Siapera (2010: 97), following Habermas (1991) and Downing & Husband (2005), adds to the discussion on the role of diasporic media the normative and political role of these media organisations in the public sphere of multicultural democratic societies, as they balance the need to represent the social group in question against their need to survive as a business under the economic pressures of neoliberal capitalism. This situation raises questions about societies with respect to the forms of support available for such media (Downing & Husband, 2005).

Minority media have received some slight attention from sociolinguistic studies working on migration. Most of them have analysed the language use and language distribution in both traditional and new media (different genres on the web such as discussion forums) (Androutsopoulos, 2006), and the collective identities constructed and negotiated by broadcasters and audiences on-air (Busch and Pfisterer, 2010; Coupland, 2010; De Fina, 2014, 2015; Tseng, 2018; amongst others). Results have shown, amongst other things, the choices migrants have when discussing topics related to their own country and culture and those of the dominant society, and how language plays a central role in bringing together dispersed diasporas and transnational communities. Busch (1999) and Busch and Pfisterer (2010) identify three approaches to minority media in sociolinguistics, which include media produced by migrants, but also by indigenous populations with minoritised languages living in territories dominated by the so-called international languages. These approaches are: 1) a minority or human rights approach, which aims to look at questions of access and the participation of linguistic/ethnic minorities in national public spheres; 2) a Language Loss and Language Revitalisation approach; and 3) what Busch defines as a speaker-centred approach (1999,

2014), focussed on questions of the discursive constructions of hybrid identities made by the speakers themselves.

This paper aims to contribute to that body of knowledge in looking into diasporic media by taking a sociolinguistic, ethnographic perspective (Heller, Pietikäinen and Pujolar, 2018). This entails capturing how collective identity is constructed, negotiated and performed in the daily communicative practices of the actors that produce these media, and the rationalities that underpin their courses of action. Additionally, for the particular case of SsLAs in London, the Spanish language is the main marker in the conformation of such an ethnolinguistic identity. Looking into the identity performed in this radio station entails understanding the discursive production in the context of the social and historical processes under which it occurs. It also implies taking into account social actors' subjectivities, constructed in their discourses and their trajectories across time and space, in order to understand the positioning from which they are producing such discourses. Diasporic media are institutional spaces for their users, wherein what is broadcast about the social group, and the social categories that define its members, need to be negotiated. In the case of the LA diaspora, the categories that define them cannot be taken for granted.

I will focus particularly on *Daily News*[5], an LA community radio station located in Central London, where the definitions of the role of ethnic media and the LA community that they aim to serve and represent, can be encapsulated in the idea of *Unity in Diversity*. The notion of *Unity in Diversity* is rooted in the post-colonial ideology of *Spanishness*, produced in the 19thc. and it aimed, in part, to create a symbolic linguistic and cultural link between Spain and its former colonies in Latin America (Balfour, 1995, Del Valle, 2007), from which language and some other supposedly shared cultural traits (character, lifestyle, etc.) and historical links were brought to the fore. In the diasporic environment, *Unity in Diversity* underpins the ethnolinguistic identity "Latin American" that the media producers who participated in this research foreground and perform interactionally in what we refer to as the frontstage (Goffman 1959) - the on-air practices of the radio station, such as interviews, and the backstage - the off-air practices, mostly in conversations amongst the workers and with the researcher, where the staff express relaxed views about their work and their positioning as migrant broadcasters.

4. Fieldwork and participants

I visited four radio stations, three of them located in the South of London, and the fourth, in the south of England. The data for this paper come from a six-months fieldwork (end of 2017 – beginning of 2018) conducted in a diasporic media company that produces a printed newspaper as well as running the radio station in London. They struggle to survive as a self-sustaining business, funded by the publicity revenue from LA retailers based in London and subsidised by other businesses run by the owner. The company has been active for 18 years and, even though it has had various owners, the name has remained unchanged. The current owner, Freddy, originally from central Colombia, who defines himself as a Latin American entrepreneur, sees ethnic media production in Spanish as an investment opportunity:

"actually/ the only thing I want is to help out the community but such help has its problems/ in what sense?/ for example/ if I see that I'll lose a lot of money with the newspaper/ I'll get rid of it/ I'll get rid of it/ why? / because it's my capital and as my capital / I'm not gonna play with it/ it's not a matter of being a good or bad guy/ or that I do or don't think about the community but human beings need to think of ourselves and then of others / so here for example/ there is no real support[6]'

The radio station broadcasts from the same offices in which other businesses are run. Thus, physical spaces are put to multiple use and a single office might be used to broadcast a radio programme and then, a few minutes later, host a meeting for one of the other businesses or to discuss the sale of advertising, either through the newspaper or on the radio station. The employees of both the media outlets and the other companies share the same spaces for their work and their lunch breaks. Most of the employees and volunteers (15 in the other businesses, and 5 in the newspaper/radio station) are of LA backgrounds, predominantly Colombian (5), but also Venezuelan (1), Cuban (1), Ecuadorian (1) and Brazilian (2) although there are also workers from Spain (2) along with one British person with a high level of proficiency in Spanish.

The period in which I was present coincided with the early months of new a daily one-hour news programme, and a one-hour weekly magazine slot, broadcast on social networks. I visited them weekly for a total of 20 days, during which I collected 5 hours of ethnographic interviews with the manager and the three main broadcasters, 20 hours of audio-recording and fieldnotes covering the daily activities surrounding the programmes, 4 recordings of planning meetings

and 1 of a steering committee meeting, along with notes on the backstage during the broadcast of the news programme. For the purposes of this paper, I will also include within the data the on-air radio programmes that I observed. The news radio programme on social media had started a few months previously and was produced by Freddy and Alberto. Alberto presented it, along with Néstor and Vanessa. Alberto, who defines himself as a professional journalist and entrepreneur, came from a relatively small city in Colombia 17 years ago and, practically from his arrival in the UK, has been involved in the production and broadcast of radio and digital media targeted at LAs in the UK. Freddy and Alberto work as partners in the production of the media. Freddy supports the media financially, while Alberto organises the content to be broadcast and manages the staff. He is perceived as "the second in command" by the other workers. Vanessa came from a medium-sized city in Venezuela, escaping from life under President Chavez's (1999-2013) government, and arriving in the UK, via another European country, in 2004. She started working on the newspaper in 2008 and is paid as a full time employee. Néstor, escaping from the violence in Colombia during the conservative government of President Pastrana (1998-2002), came to the UK in 1999 and works part time in a supermarket. Thanks to his degree in economics and experience in Colombia as a journalist, he has been working on the Spanish language newspaper for about ten years and was recently invited to join the team of radio presenters. Néstor works as a part-time volunteer, living from his work on a shop. This was the situation, for nearly all the migrant broadcasters that I visited. Most of them worked for the community media during their spare time, making it difficult to research and produce original content, or to establish a stable timetable. In fact, most of the "Latino" radio stations run music most of the time to cover the time.

The daily news programme is broadcast at lunchtime, from 12:00-13:00. The presenters combine the style of a news programme with a magazine, so sometimes they comment on the news or chat amongst themselves. The topics addressed are labelled as either "national" or "international". Under the "national" label, the news bulletin, which normally opens the programme, presents information about the UK. When the news is related to migration, such as Brexit or the coming into force of new regulations, they focus on an analysis of the ways in which such issues might affect LAs in the UK. The "international" news section is a special slot for news related to Latin America and Spain, covering politics (presidential elections, protests, the independence drive in Catalonia, etc.), sports (mostly Spanish and LA competitions, such as "La Liga del Rey" or "La Copa América"), and social issues, such as natural disasters, forced displacements in Latin America or the national celebrations of each

country. A third slot focusses on issues affecting SsLAs in the UK. They normally invite a guest, either face to face or on the phone, to discuss health, social and cultural events or issues and the bureaucratic difficulties migrants might experience in diaspora. The audience fluctuates between 300 and 500 people streaming the broadcast live, but can reach 1,500-1,700 listeners since the programmes remain online. Audience members participate through Facebook Messenger by sending greetings, declaring themselves to be listening online, asking questions of the guests or sending in comments.

5. Analysis

I have organised this section into two main parts. The first one focusses on the ways in which the four main social actors define the role of diasporic media (5.1) and position regarding it, off-air, in conversations with me in the newsroom (5.2). Language is constructed as an ethnic marker, which is at the core of the "Unity in Diversity" ideology, but also as a commodity (Duchêne & Heller 2012). In consequence, the broadcasters make relevant contrasting subjectivities, either to align with what I have called the "romantic view" of the role of diasporic media, or to the economic side of it. In the second part, I will focus on how "Unity in Diversity" is co-constructed on air, with a guest and the audience. Language is put at the core of the definition of "our community" (5.3) as well as the polarised construction ("us-them") of shared values amongst the social group (5.4).

5.1 Language at the core of the "Latin American community"

In principle, the managerial staff and the presenters agree on the notion that the Spanish language (*Speech*) lies at the core of the community, as we can observe in Alberto's definition of the role of the radio station during the interview that I conducted with him.

Excerpt 1 The linguistic mission

1	**Author**: por qué la gente monta una emisora de	1	**Author**: why do people decide to run a
2	radio hoy en día?	2	community radio station these days?
3	**Alberto**: bueno / la gente la monta por muchas	3	**Alberto**: well/ people do it for many reasons /
4	razones/ una de ellas es porque es la voz que no	4	one of them it's the voice of those who don't
5	tiene-/ de los que no tienen voz// es el único	5	hav-/ of those who don't have a voice/ it's the
6	medio de comunicarnos nosotros en nuestro	6	only way we can communicate in our own
7	propio idioma/ a pesar de que la brecha se ha	7	language / despite the fact that the gap has been
8	recortado debido al Internet / (…) el problema es	8	reduced by the internet / (…) the problem is that
9	que nos siguen dando contenidos de allá/	9	they are still just giving us content from there/ so
10	entonces no hay nada que se genere desde	10	there's nothing produced from London/ (…) and

11	Londres / (…)/ y cuando está el impedimento del	11	when there is the barrier of language mainly
12	idioma sobre todo en los últimos años que ha	12	during recent years in which many Latino people
13	llegado mucha gente latina procedente de	13	have come from Spain / sometimes they -/ either
14	España / a veces a ellos-/ o les da pereza el	14	they can't face learning the language or they find
15	idioma o se les dificulta por alguna u otra razón/	15	it difficult for some reason / or they prioritise
16	o le dan prioridad es simplemente a hacer dinero	16	simply making money or their jobs so the priority
17	y a sus trabajos entonces la prioridad no es	17	is not the language and when they see that they
18	idioma y como ven que pueden trabajar sin	18	can work without communicating::/ some/ eh:
19	necesidad de comunicarse:: / algunos/ eh: entonces obvian lo del tema del lenguaje	19	then ignore the language issue

In this example, the ideology of *Unity in Diversity* is constructed in relation to "us" as the ratified audience (Goffman 1981), defined initially in a general sense as "those who don't have a voice", those who want to "communicate in our own language" and those whose need to know what is happening "here", not "there". This generalisation then becomes more specific when Alberto differentiates between "Latino people [who] have come from Spain" v. the people who came directly from Latin America. By drawing on this category, Alberto makes reference to the social group labelled by McIlwaine and Bunge (2016) as onwards Latin Americans (OLAs), mainly impelled by the economic crisis of 2007. In his definition of these new migrants as suffering from a language barrier and as sometimes prioritising work over bothering to learning English, he aligns himself with circulating ideas about this group amongst other Latin Americans. Thus, for example, he accords with my previous research on Elephant and Castle, in which SsLA retailers who have been established in the area for about 20 years represent OLAs coming from Spain as reluctant to learn English. This is coupled with the claim that they came to the UK with documentation allowing them to settle and did not have to make the great effort that the previous generation of migrants made (Márquez-Réiter and Patiño-Santos, 2018).

It is precisely this differentiation which allows Alberto to construct this radio station as distinct from other "Latino" media based in Latin America itself and available through the internet. The idea of creating content specifically in Spanish, for Spanish speakers in the UK was something remarked upon by all the staff members interviewed and is also highlighted in the presentation of the news programme. I can confirm what Alberto is describing, as I saw how, in four other radios stations that I visited in London and the South of England, content was produced by summarising information and reports extracted from the online editions of newspapers from Latin America, such as *El Tiempo* from Colombia and *El Comercio* from Ecuador. The employees of this radio station spend time, even during the weekends, attending

events related to Latin Americans in order to then report on them. The *Mes Amigo festival* (Amigo Month festival), held in London in October 2018, is an example of such an event.

The linguistic mission of the radio station was carried out in daily practices in the backstage, while preparing the script and the captions to be presented online, where spelling and the negotiation of lexical expressions and grammatical norms were also topics of conversation. The online DRAE (The Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Language Academy) was the only source for consultation. According to the Royal Academy itself:

> "The Dictionary of the Spanish Language is the result of the collaboration of all of the [Language] Academies, whose aim is to capture the vocabulary generally used in Spain and in the Spanish-speaking countries"[7]

However, as we shall see, the Spanish spoken in the radio station comes from a variety of regions within Latin America (central and northern Colombia and the north of Venezuela), and it could be argued that other dictionaries might represent regional variations more exactly.

5.2 Professional subjectivities

All the broadcasters and managerial team agree on the linguistic/communicative mission of the radio station, but contrasting ideas arise among the staff when they come to explain the aims of the community radio station and their role there. Even though they all construct what I have labelled as the *romantic view*, discussed in Excerpt 2, only Vanessa and Néstor seem to prioritise this in their daily practice.

Excerpt 2: The romantic view

1 **Vanessa**: (...) -/ yo creo que a mi- a mi lo que	1 **Vanessa**: (…) I think that-/ what I like and and
2 más me gusta y y creo que tiene que ver con el	2 I believe it has to do with journalism and with
3 periodismo y con el periodismo comunitario es	3 community journalism is the closeness that we
4 la cercanía que uno tiene con la gente y el hecho	4 have with people and being able to invite people
5 de traer gente como esta chica que vino hoy (…)	5 like the girl who came today (…) who don't/
6 que no / que no aparece en otros periódicos / que	6 appear in other newspapers / who don't appear in
7 no aparece en otros espacios y que está haciendo	7 other spaces and who are doing an amazing
8 una labor increíble (…) quizás e;- o quizás yo lo	8 job / (…) perhaps e:/ or maybe I do it a lot/
9 hago mucho/ o sea a mí me gusta entrevistar al	9 I like interviewing
10 sindicalista /al que limpia / a la que trabaja por-	10 the trade union leader / the
11 contra la violencia domestica (…): quizás son	11
12 temas que no le gusta a todo el mundo / a lo	12

13 mejor yo debería trabajar (…) / cosas más	13 cleaner/ the person who works against domestic
14 complejas/ no lo sé/ pero mi concepto sobre el	14 violence (…) perhaps not everyone likes
15 periodismo comunitario que que es lo que	15 these topics / maybe I should work (…) on / more
16 hacemos y si no es pues yo estoy mal en el	16 complicated things/ I don't know/ but my
17 concepto es ese/ es dar voz a la gente que está	17 concept of community journalism which which
18 con el día a día /que trabaja muchísimo y que	18 is what we do and if I'm not wrong about the idea
19 nadie lo nota (…) / además hasta para informarte	19 it's that/ it's about giving voice to people in their
20 porque ya la gente le dice a uno / "bueno esta	20 day-today lives / who work a lot and nobody
21 chica me puede ayudar"/ (…) que es algo que nos	21 notices it (…) in addition it's to become
22 hace falta/ que necesitamos y que – y que no- / o	22 informed because people tell you / "well this girl
23 sea fuera del interés económico si va ofreciendo	23 can help me" /(…) which is something
24 una publicidad o no va ofreciendo una	24 we really need / and that – and that doesn't- /
25 publicidad / me interesa lo que ella pueda decir	25 I mean beyond financial considerations whether
26 y lo que pueda servir para los demás / entonces	26 / she is offering us publicity or not I'm interested
27 en ese sentido la radio me parece que es una	27 in what she can tell us and what can help other
28 buena oportunidad y FB también	28 people / so in that sense the community radio
	seems to me a good opportunity and FB as well

Vanessa defines her work at the community radio station, as *community journalism* (l. 15) by voicing and refining Alberto's definition above: to give a voice to those "who don't appear in other newspapers [or] spaces" but who do 'an amazing job' (ll. 6-8), and then (ll. 10-11) offering more concrete examples: the trade union leader, the cleaner and the activists. Vanessa raises the issue of social class by echoing campaigns that describe Latin Americans in London as an "invisible community", based on the fact that their members are associated with cleaning services and unskilled jobs, often as a result of poor English language skills (McIllwaine, Cock and Linneker 2011, Berg 2019). Interestingly, she illustrates her point by referencing "the girl who came today", the psychologist who appeared on the programme on one of the days on which I conducted my fieldwork. I will draw on her participation that day specifically to discuss *Unity in (cultural) Diversity* in 5.4. Vanessa also mentions further features of the activist agenda in the way that she and Néstor understand it: closeness with people (l. 4) and supporting people (l. 20, l. 25). Importantly, in l. 23, she does not position herself in alignment with her boss, Freddy, and her colleague, Alberto, when she distances herself from the contrasting discourse on the economic priorities that a community radio station might present for them ("beyond the financial considerations, whether she is offering us publicity or not"). In sum, she positions herself as a community journalist.

Freddy and Alberto, by contrast and as the managers of the community radio station, emphasise its role as an ethnic business, aligning themselves with the ideology of the Spanish language and community service as a profit-making business:

Excerpt 3: It's also a matter of business

1 **Alberto**: (…) y también lo vemos como un	**1** **Alberto**: (…) and we also see it as a business /
2 negocio / obviamente no podemos dejar atrás y no	**2** obviously we cannot forget and we can't be
3 podemos ser hipócritas en decir simplemente es	**3** hypocrites saying that it's because we want to
4 porque queremos ayudar a la comunidad o	**4** help the community or provide a service to the
5 queremos dar un servicio comunitario/no //	**5** community / no// we also s
6 también lo vemos=	**6** ee it as=
7 **Author**: [o educar/ no?]	**7** **Author**: [or educate]
8 **Alberto**: [/=exacto/] también lo vemos como un	**8** **Alberto**: [=exactly] we also see it as
9 negocio porque nosotros también tenemos que	**9** business because we also need to stock our
10 llenar nuestra nevera /obviamente/ entonce:s si de	**10** fridge / obviously / so: if there's a way to
11 alguna manera podemos ayudar a contribuir al	**11** contribute to the development of the
12 desarrollo de la comunidad ofreciendo estos	**12** community by offering this content in our
13 contenidos en nuestra propia lengua y recortando	**13** own language and reducing the gap::/ we can
14 esa brecha:: / lo podemos también hacer e:	**14** also do that e: working in what we love the
15 trabajando en lo que más nos gusta que es lo que	**16** most which is what we know how to do which
16 sabemos hacer que son los medios de	**17** is mass media
17 comunicación	

The community radio station is also constructed as a business in ll. 1-9. Alberto distances himself from the merely romantic discourse on activism in order to present the station as a source of income. He brings to the fore their role as professional journalists who know their job and enjoy what they do (ll. 13-15), but also positions himself as a businessman. He does this by drawing on the metaphor: (ll. 9-10) "we also need to stock our fridge / obviously". Alberto's positioning is shared by Freddy, the owner of the community radio station, who we observed above (page 8), when he highlighted the fact that his capital has to come first.

I could see further discrepancies between the views of Vanessa and Néstor and those of Freddy and Alberto, such as their ideas about "serving the community" or the decisions about what news to present, and how to analyse it on-air but further explanation goes beyond the scope of this paper.
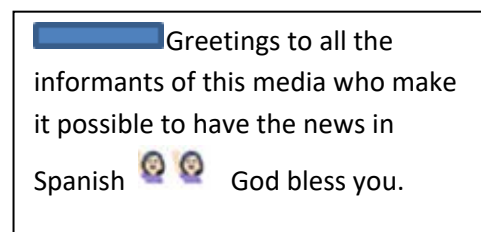
5.3 Unity in Cultural Diversity

Unity in Diversity is co-constructed on-air by the guests, the presenters and the audience, who communicate their ideas via FB in their comments, questions and emojis. The interactants construct *Unity in Diversity* by switching from individual national labels to group labels and by constructing a collective identity in opposition to mainstream society. The notion of 'our language' is voiced by all the participants, placing it at the core of the LA community, in alignment with the previous discourses of the broadcasters. The following excerpt is taken from my fieldwork in December 2017. The guest is Patricia, a psychologist of Bolivian origin, who

is concerned mental health issues. The interaction focusses on what they construct as the need to the LA community:

Excerpt 4: 'Our' language in diaspora

1 **Vanessa**: queríamos hacer hincapié en temas de
2 salud mental / (…) pareciera que por parte del
3 gobierno y de las autoridades en el Reino Unido /
4 no se le diera la importancia que merece // (…)//
5 precisamente para más detalles sobre esta
6 información vamos a estar conversando con
7 Patricia// ella es una psicóloga que trabaja aquí en
8 el Reino Unido / es de origen boliviana y SIEMpre
9 ha estado muy en contacto con la comunidad
10 ofreciendo ese tipo de asesoría / ese tipo de ayuda
11 en ESPAñol porque a veces es difícil conseguir en
12 tu propio idioma un tipo de ayuda como esta/
13 además en casos y en situaciones difíciles que no
14 puedes comentar lo que te está ocurriendo o no te
15 sientes con la confianza de hablar sobre tus
16 problemas (…) con cualquier [persona]
17 **Patricia**: [exacto] (…) sí/ bueno/ Gracias a ustedes
18 por tenerme hoy día/ (…) yo soy boliviana y vivo
19 en este país hace 14 años / e-/ me gradué aquí como
20 terapeuta e-/ mi pasión en realidad viene de que a
21 nosotros los servicios sociales- / como ya sabemos/
22 en nuestra comunidad ya están siendo cortados/
23 nosotros como latinoamericanos e::// cuando no
24 dominamos el idioma nos vemos que somos más
25 cortados todavía con los servicios que tenemos que
26 acceder / están @ pidiendo pasaportes ahora // e://
27 tenemos que ser realistas/ eso es lo que es /
28 entonces cuando llega la salud mental peor aún/
29

1 **Vanessa**: we'd like to talk about mental health
2 issues / (…) it seems that the government and
3 the British authorities don't give the
4 importance they deserve// (…)//
5 for further specific details about this we'll be
6 talking to Patricia // she is a psychologist who
7 works here in the United Kingdom/ she is from
8 Bolivia and ALWAys has been very much in
9 contact with the community offering this sort
10 of counsel / this sort of support in SPAnish
11 because sometimes it's difficult to get this sort
12 of support in your own language / additionally
13 in difficult cases and situations when you
14 cannot talk about what's happening to you/ or
15 you don't feel confident talking about your
16 problems (…) with [anyone].
17 **Patricia**: [exactly] (…) yes/ well / thanks for
18 having me today / (…) I'm Bolivian and have
19 been living in this country for 14 years /e-/ I
20 graduated as a therapist e-/ and my passion
21 actually comes from the fact that social
22 services- / as we already know/ in our
23 community are already being cut / we as Latin
24 Americans e::// when we don't speak the
25 language well / we are even more cut off from
26 accessing the services we need / they are @
27 asking to see passports now //e:// we need to be
28 realistic / that's how it is/ so when mental
29 health is involved it's even worse /

· 40:45 Un saludo a todos los informantes de este medio que hacen posible que nos lleguen las noticias en español 👩👩 Dios les bendiga.
Me gusta · 2 d   👍 1

Greetings to all the informants of this media who make it possible to have the news in Spanish 👩👩 God bless you.

Unity in Diversity is constructed in the first turn of this excerpt by addressing the ratified recipient as a Spanish speaker who needs support regarding mental health issues. Vanessa presents the situation by making an indirect evaluation of the UK regarding mental health to then introduce the guest Patricia, as a psychologist of Bolivian origin. Important to the portrayal of Patricia's identity as "Bolivian" is the added information that she has been in contact with "the community" (something that Patricia expands upon later to categorise herself as a member of the "community") and Vanessa further legitimises her professional role as a psychologist by

mentioning the fact that she offers her services "in Spanish – your own language". Patricia aligns with the introductory ritual (De Fina 2014) initiated by Vanessa by presenting herself under the national label "Bolivian" and reinforcing the role of the Spanish language in expressing situations that are difficult to explain in another language, as signalled by Vanessa in the first turn. Patricia switches into the inclusive collocation "us, Latin Americans" to construct her ratified addressees, position herself as an authority within the "community", and present the cuts to social services as a difficult issue. This is done by echoing the narrative about this social group as constructed in the media: "when we don't speak the language well / we are even more cut off from accessing the services we need / they are @ asking to see passports now //e:// we need to be realistic / that's how it is/ so when mental health is involved it's even worse /"

The centrality of language for the definition of the "community" is reinforced by a listener who adds a comment on Facebook thanking the broadcasters themselves for offering their service in Spanish. Messages thanking the radio station for broadcasting in Spanish and giving information about what happens in the UK that might affect SsLAs are a daily feature, which increases in critical moments such the regulations around Brexit.

Unity in Diversity continues to be the ideology when defining the values of the community, which is constructed in opposition to the values attributed to the British community. The following example is taken from a second visit that Patricia paid to the radio station a few months later. Since she already knew the radio presenters, this time her visit was more relaxed and the exchange was full of personal anecdotes and comparisons between the culture of 'our' countries and that of the UK.

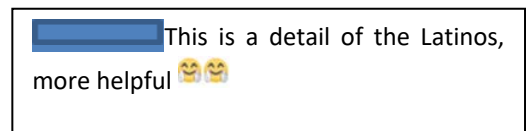**Excerpt 5: broadcasting an imagined *us* v. an imagined *them***

1	**Vanessa**: Patricia (…) aquí se habla muchísimo del	**1**	**Vanessa**: Patricia (…) mental health is an
2	tema de la salud mental (…) / se habla mucho de ese	**2**	important topic here (…) / it is covered much more
3	tema quizás en comparación con nuestros países en	**3**	than perhaps in our countries where it is not not
4	donde no no se le da tanta relevancia	**4**	given much relevance
5	**Patricia**: si/ sin lugar a duda **(…)** // yo he tenido la	**5**	**Patricia**: yes/ without doubt **(…)** // I've been lucky
6	suerte de viajar a varios países y algo que a mi me- me	**6**	enough to travel to many countries and something
7	impactó muchísimo fue cuando viaje a Cuba por	**7**	that really struck me was when I was in Cuba for
8	ejemplo que:- bueno en Bolivia nosotros también/	**8**	example that- well in Bolivia we as well/ (…) we
9	(…)/ allá tenemos un sistema similar en el que	**9**	have a similar system over there / in which we meet
10	nosotros nos vemos y eh *como estas?/ cómo estás?/*	**10**	and eh *how's everything?/ how are you?/ well I'm*

11 *ay estoy con la depre* //inmediatamente nosotros
12 desahogamos nuestros problemas/ OK?/ en cambio en
13 el Reino Unido/no // por eso es que-
14 **Vanessa**: más reservados
15 **Patricia**: más reservados / no hablamos del tema//
16 ahora el Reino Unido es uno de los países que tiene la
17 -/ el suicidio más alto a nivel mundial
18 [en Europa]
19 **Néstor**: [índice de suicidio?]
20 **Patricia**: (…) le están quitando mucho e- mucho por
21 ejemplo/ beneficios/ mucho dinero/ le están poniendo
22 trabas más fuertes a la sociedad / esto afecta y encima
23 nosotros no tenemos una sociedad en donde nosotros
24 hablemos abiertamente // yo: yo por ejemplo/ (…)/ yo
25 corro / no?/ y (…) estaba corriendo por cerca de mi
26 casa/ en el canal / me caigo y pasó una chica / inglesa/
27 me imagino/ que me mira y me dice / *estás bien?*/
28 nada/ le digo / *sí*/ OK/ [indicates with her hand]/ ah
29 me dijo! *No estas sangrando / estás bien/*
30 **Vanessa**: ah OK/ ella hizo el chequeo @/ ella vio que
31 no te estabas muriendo@
32 **Patricia**: cómo ustedes reaccionarían si ustedes ven
33 que me caigo y y
34 **Vanessa**: seguramente [te ayudamos a levantar/ no]
35 **Néstor**:   [pues yo voy y te levanto y:]
36 **Patricia**:   [pero]
37 **Néstor**: cómo estás?/ cómo te sientes y en qué te
38 puedo ayudar
39 **Patricia**: ese cómo estás?/ cómo te sientes?/ cómo
40 te puedo ayudar? / ya me hace sentir
41 mejor
42 **Néstor y Vanessa**: claro
43 **Audience on FB**:
44

11 *a bit down*// immediately we vent our problems/
12 OK?/ while in the UK/ they don't/ that's why-
13 **Vanessa**: more reserved
14 **Patricia**: more reserved / we don't talk about it//
15 now the United Kingdom is one of the countries
16 with- the highest level of suicide worldwide
17 [in Europe][8]
18 **Néstor**: [rate of suicide?]
19 **Patricia**: (…) many benefits are taken away-/ for
20 example/ a lot of money / they are creating more
21 obstacles to society / this has an effect and on top
22 of that we don't have a society in which we talk
23 openly // I: I for example/ (…)/ I go jogging / right?/
24 and (…) I was jogging close to my place/ by the
25 canal / I fell down and a girl went by/ British/ I
26 imagine/ she looks at me and she says / *are you*
27 *OK?/*right / I said / *yes*/ OK/ [indicates with her
28 hand]/ ok she said! *You're not bleeding / you're*
29 *OK/*
30 **Vanessa**: ah OK/ she checked @/ and saw you
31 weren't dying@
32 **Patricia**: how would you react if you saw me fall
33 and and
34 **Vanessa**: probably [we would help you up/ right]
35 **Néstor**:   [well I'd help you up and:]
36 **Patricia**:   [but]
37 **Néstor**: are you OK?/ how are you feeling and how
38 can I help you.
39 **Patricia**: right how are you?/ how are you
40 feeling?/and how can I help you?/that makes me
41 feel better
42 **Néstor y Vanessa**: exactly
43 **Audience on FB**:
44

47:31 Eso es un detalle de los latinos, más serviciales 😂😂
Me gusta · 2 d   1

This is a detail of the Latinos, more helpful 😂😂

45
46
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Vanesssa: ya te cura
Patricia: exacto! / ya me cura @// ya nos estamos
curando aquí solos los tres @@
Néstor: o sea que la chica simplemente hizo lo del
GP/[*estás bien/ no estás sangrando y ya*]
Vanessa: claro![estaba haciendo la consulta del
GP@]
Néstor: [consulta del GP@]
Patricia: por qué?/ para mi es una pregunta muy
importante/ porque yo no soy prioridad en la vida de
esa persona/ porque estamos en un país hablando
sobre producción
Vanessa: claro
Patricia: pararse/ tomarse dos minutos de su tiempo
no le va a producir nada a ella/ ni financieramente/ ni
XXXX / según sus prioridades

Vanesssa: it makes you better straight away
Patricia: exactly! / it makes me better straight away
@// we're making ourselves feel better /the three of
us @@
Néstor: so the girl just did what the GP
does/[*you're OK/you're not bleeding and that's it*]
Vanessa: that's right! [she was doing a GP
consultaion@]
Néstor: [GP consultation @]
Patricia: why?/ this is an important question for
me / because I'm not a priority in that person's life
/ because we're in a country talking about
production
Vanessa: of course
Patricia: stopping/ taking two minutes of her time
is not going to benefit her / not financially / XXXX/
depending on her priorities

Collective and individual identities are constructed in this excerpt regarding "the community and its values". In her first turn, Vanessa constructs the "community" by drawing on the plural possessive pronoun 'our' (l. 3), when contrasting the relevance of mental health in the UK and in LA countries. Vanessa establishes the frame of the interaction based on the construction of a collective persona *us* v. *them*, located in a spatial dimension *here* and *there,* with particular attributes. Patricia aligns herself with this *us-them* positioning but rejects Vanessa's frame, creating the implicit idea that mental health in Latin America is not a problem. From l. 12, Patricia initiates a set of moves aiming to co-construct this argument, at different scales, with Vanessa, Néstor, and the audience. Thus, she initiates moves in which the participants:

1. contrast interpersonal relations "here" and "there" such as in ll. 5-14 where Patricia with the support of Vanessa advances the idea that 'there', "we vent our problems", while in the UK "people are more reserved".

2. polarise the *us* v. *them* situation in terms of mental health. In ll. 15-18, Patricia resorts to some home-made statistics, claiming that the UK has one of the highest incidences of suicide worldwide and in Europe. In fact, according to the World Health Organisation data for 2016, rates of suicide in the UK places it at number 109 in the world and number 32 in Europe. There are, according to these figures, 9 LA countries with higher suicide rates than the UK.

3. denounce the consequences of the economic cuts to social services in the UK. Thus, in ll. 24-29, Patricia draws on a story that will illustrate her view. She constructs herself as an authority on the differences between British and LA social relations, based on her personal experience. She looks to co-construct the end of the story by addressing her immediate interlocutors in the studio to ask them how they would react towards the situation she has recounted. Néstor and Vanessa construct themselves as representative of the LA system of values by agreeing that they would be genuinely interested in Patricia's wellbeing. While Vanessa depicts herself, in the imaginary story proposed by Patricia, as a person who would help her up, whilst Néstor affirms that he would ask: "Are you OK?". Interestingly, in l. 43, a listener endorses Néstor and Vanessa's response by confirming the accuracy of the assigned LA attitude when faced with somebody in need of assistance. Patricia endorses Néstor's answer and in l. 44 concludes her story by explaining how talking can be curative. A final ironic reaction from Néstor and Vanessa shows how critical they are of the UK health system, in which people are not given enough time when consulting their GP.

4. frame the story on a social scale, where capitalism and the importance of production leaves no time or space for the emotional needs of the individual, thereby implying that LA is not a capitalist region. She downplays economic issues in Latin America that have led to social inequality (Krujit 2007) in order to present harmonious relations among Latin Americans "there".

All these aspects allow Patricia to construct the British and the LAs as different. The question she asks her interlocutors from different LA countries: "how would you react if you saw me fall?", positions them as members of the same group: SsLAs who maintain their central values, even in diaspora. Thus, *Unity in Diversity* signifies a common language and particular shared values.

6. Discussion and conclusion

The excerpts analysed have allowed me to illustrate the ways in which the politics of identity amongst a group of Spanish speaking Latin American broadcasters and their audience are constructed and delivered on air. The construction and distribution of a "Latin American" identity seems to be an imperative for groups of migrants in London who feel excluded and marginalised, in order to navigate the administrative constraints and material disadvantages they face in diaspora. Thus, as Berg (2019) explains, the current migratory policies, passed in 2016 by the UK Conservative government, were seen as the onset of a "hostile environment" for "illegal immigration" (Burnett 2016), something that was exacerbated by the economic policies of austerity, and the ongoing 'gentrification' processes in the boroughs of Southwark and Haringey, the areas where most Latin Americans live. This regeneration process has displaced the group, giving rise to further disadvantages for those with a language barrier, or who rely in their social network for employment or socialisation (Román & Retis 2020; Patiño-Santos and Márquez-Reiter 2018). Additionally, their lack of recognition as an "ethnic community", mainly in the boroughs in which they are concentrated, prevents them from accessing certain services, such as public health initiatives, English language courses, or from participating in consultations and decision-making processes regarding housing, health, education, and local planning, that might also facilitate local "funding and engagement" plans for their associations (McIlwaine, et al. 2011). Similarly to in the US, the, at least, 20 national groups that combine under the label "Latin American" find in their cultural commonalities a rationale to "fight together" (LAWRS 2020).

The media produced by the members of migrant groups need to echo the issues that concern the population they aim to serve (Wei & Zhu 2013, Georgiu 2006). Not all the LA media

produced in London accomplish this task, which indicates that this is not a straightforward enterprise. My fieldwork showed that the broadcasters of *Daily News* need to reconcile their efforts to serve the perceived needs of the imagined members of the social group they aim to represent (their audience), and their own struggles to run the station on a tight budget. All the media organisations that I visited were supported by volunteers who worked for them during their spare time, which makes it difficult to dedicate sufficient time, produce content and, in most cases, to maintain a continuity. Thus, for example, in one of the radio stations that I visited outside London, the schedule changed nearly every month. Programmes disappeared or were stopped for weeks. (I tried to produce a programme for one of the media organisations I visited myself, but was unable to continue beyond 2 months). Most of the radio stations broadcast music nearly the whole day to cover for the lack of content.

Off-air, I could observe how *Daily News* managed to maintain a more established schedule due to the financial support from Freddy's other businesses. However, this volunteer-based nature of the business does not preclude hierarchical relations, and the conflicting interests of individuals who occupy dominant positions. Such hierarchies stem from the diverse migratory trajectories of the team members. In recounting their story lines, the four actors engaged differently regarding their life as broadcasters in diaspora. While Freddy and Alberto projected entrepreneurial selves, constructing themselves as hard workers "with the capacity to sacrifice" and the ability to invest, Vanessa and Néstor, foregrounded their roles as journalists who wanted to "work for the community". Being a community journalist entailed different things for each of them, however. Thus, Vanessa is aware of the needs that the SsLA group has in terms of its access to information in diaspora, but as someone, like Alberto, with a family to support, she would not be able to work without a salary. Néstor, on the other hand, as a volunteer, does not make important decisions on the organisation and management of the media. When asked about his reasons for staying in this position for more than ten years unpaid, he recalls his past as a journalist and academic in Colombia. This seems to indicate that working at the radio, even though it positions him at the bottom of the economic ladder, at least gives him the opportunity to engage with his professional past. We can see how he manages to position himself as an experienced interviewer, vested with authority because of his experience, eloquent vocabulary, and analytical skills. He takes extra time to research issues of interest. Sometimes his colleagues rely on him to talk about special commemorations of the day. Néstor always has something to say about current affairs. We observed how he is constructed interactionally as somebody who "knows". On air, he self-selects to reformulate or complete

ideas that the guest is trying to express. The construction of Unity in Diversity by following a principle of harmony masks all these contrasting positionings and circumstances. People's different trajectories and positioning in diaspora, along with ideas of what counts as "the community" are significant factors behind the politics of identity for Latin Americans living in London.

Acknowledgments

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[1] Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the topic, different terms referring to the media produced by migrants to communicate among themselves and with the host society coexist. Each label indexes different epistemologies regarding migration. A detailed discussion can be found in Siapera (2010). Even though I recognise this complexity, in this paper, the labels *minority, migrant media, and diasporic media* to refer to the media produced by Spanish-speaking Latin Americans in London will be used interchangeably. With *minority* and *migrant,* I aim to recognise that the producers of these media define themselves as "ethnic minorities", positioning themselves

as media groups with unequal social access in contrast to the dominant mainstream media. This social group organises and presents itself as a united "community" with shared cultural traits and social interests, even though they are culturally diverse. Meanwhile, with *diasporic (*Brubaker, 2005*)*, I try to highlight that the members of this social group have been displaced from their regions of origin and have dispersed across Europe over the last 20 years. Some of them have arrived directly from Latin America, whilst others, over the last ten years, have arrived in London from other European countries, mainly Spain. The literature defines them as "onward" migrants" (McIllwaine and Bunge, 2016).

[2] Similarly to the so-called Latinx in the US, the Latin Americans in the UK has at its disposal a constellation of categories with which to refer to its members in diaspora; thus, a person might alternate between adopting national and regional identity labels, such as "Colombian" or "Caribbean", for example, and pan-ethnic labels, such as "Latin American", "South American", "Hispanic" or the diasporic term "Latino/Latinx" etc. (Bailey, 2000). The studies on language and ethnicity amongst the people in the US who identify themselves as having a Latin American background, have a lomg history. They have studied, from different perspectives (e.g. linguistic anthropological, language socialisation, variationist, among others), the situated construction and negotiation of this identity and the circumstances in which they orientate themselves towards the general labels "Hispanic", "Latino/a", (Oboler 1995), and more recently "Latinx" (Salinas & Lozano 2019). Thus, for example, the speakers can make relevant their birthplace (Bayley 2014), heritage, gender and/or political orientations (see for example: Leeman 2018 for the debate on what term to adopt in the US Census, but also the works of Mendoza-Denton 2008 on the identity negotiation of young gang-member girls of Latinx background, and Schecter and Bailey 2002, and Zentella 1997 on the complexities of growing up bilingual amongst New York Puerto Rican -_Nuyorican' Youth). The use of one of another language has always been controversial, since labels, as social constructs, are ideologically motivated, and hence are inclusive and exclusive. In this paper, I use the category "Spanish speaking Latin American" and "Latino/a" indistinctly to capture the labels used by the participants in this research. When asking them their reasons for using these terms, birthplace and language were cited as central to their self-identification. Sometimes they use "Hispanic" or the adjective Hispanomerican" to refer to their radio audience ("the Hispanoamerican community") signalling the wish to include all the Spanish speakers, including perhaps those from Spain, which the owner of the radio decribed as "the motherland – *La madre patria*. I endorse Leeman's (2020) reflection that categories operate at different scales, so there is a need to discuss what they mean for the different social actors involved (inlcuding researchers and "community" reps) in order to make an informed decision on what categories to adopt. Two days before finalising this paper, I received an anonymous plea made to the UK government to include "Latinx/Hispanic as an ethnic group in the UK 2021 census. This is the first time I have heard "Latinx" as a community-based label in the UK. I would like to understand where it comes from and the thinking behind adopting this label.

[3] Although Brazilians are the largest group of Latin Americans in London, they do not tend to identify themselves as Latin Americans outside official domains (Martins Junior, 2014).

[4] So far, Latin Americans have been officially recognised as an ethnic group by the London Boroughs of Southwark, Lambeth, Islington, and Hackney.

[5] All names of people and businesses are pseudonyms used to protect their identity.

[6] 'en realidad lo único que quiero es ayudar a la comunidad pero esa ayuda tiene sus problemas/ en qué sentido por ejemplo que si yo veo voy a perder mucho dinero sacando el periódico me toca acabarlo/ toca acabarlo / por qué? /porque es mi patrimonio y siendo mi patrimonio no voy a jugar con el / ahí si no es de que yo sea buena gente o mala gente ni porque piense en la comunidad o no lo piense pero los seres humanos primero tenemos que pensar en nosotros y después el resto/ entonces aquí por ejemplo mm no hay ayuda en realidad'

[7] El Diccionario de la lengua española es el resultado de la colaboración de todas las academias, cuyo propósito es recoger el léxico general utilizado en España y en los países hispánicos.

[8] Interestingly, WHO statistics from 2016 show that nine countries from the Latin American region are placed in the top 100 countries with highest suicide rate (19. Uruguay, 36. El Salvador, 43. Bolivia, 49. Nicaragua, 69. Dominican Republic, 74. Cuba, 79. Chile, 86. Paraguay, and 90. Argentina), while the UK is number 109 worldwide and number 32 in Europe.