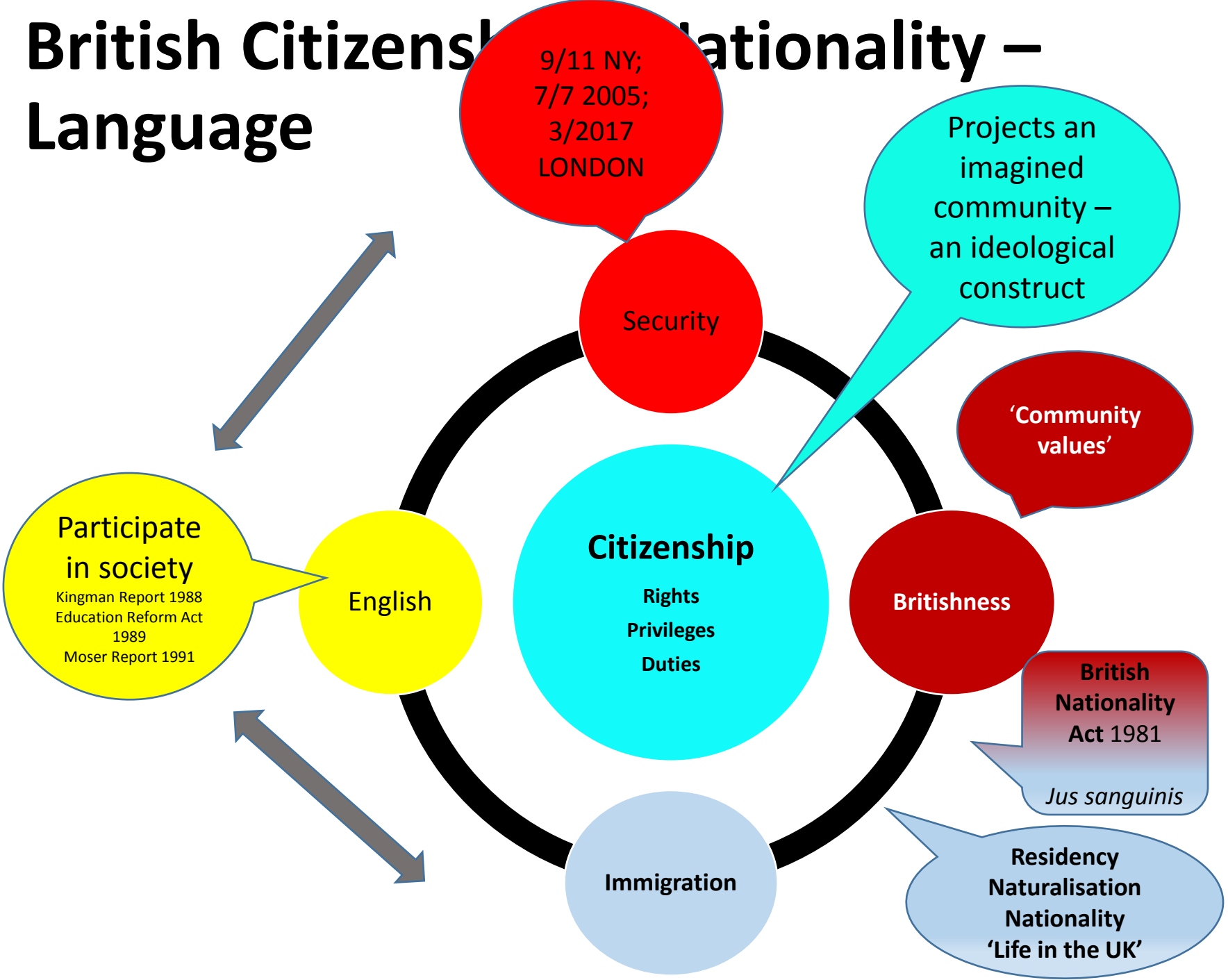


EALTA May 2017

Language and citizenship: Passing the test?

Constant Leung Jo Lewkowicz

British Citizenship Nationality – Language



9/11 NY;
7/7 2005;
3/2017
LONDON

Security

Projects an
imagined
community –
an ideological
construct

'Community
values'

Britishness

British
Nationality
Act 1981
Jus sanguinis

Residency
Naturalisation
Nationality
'Life in the UK'

Citizenship
Rights
Privileges
Duties

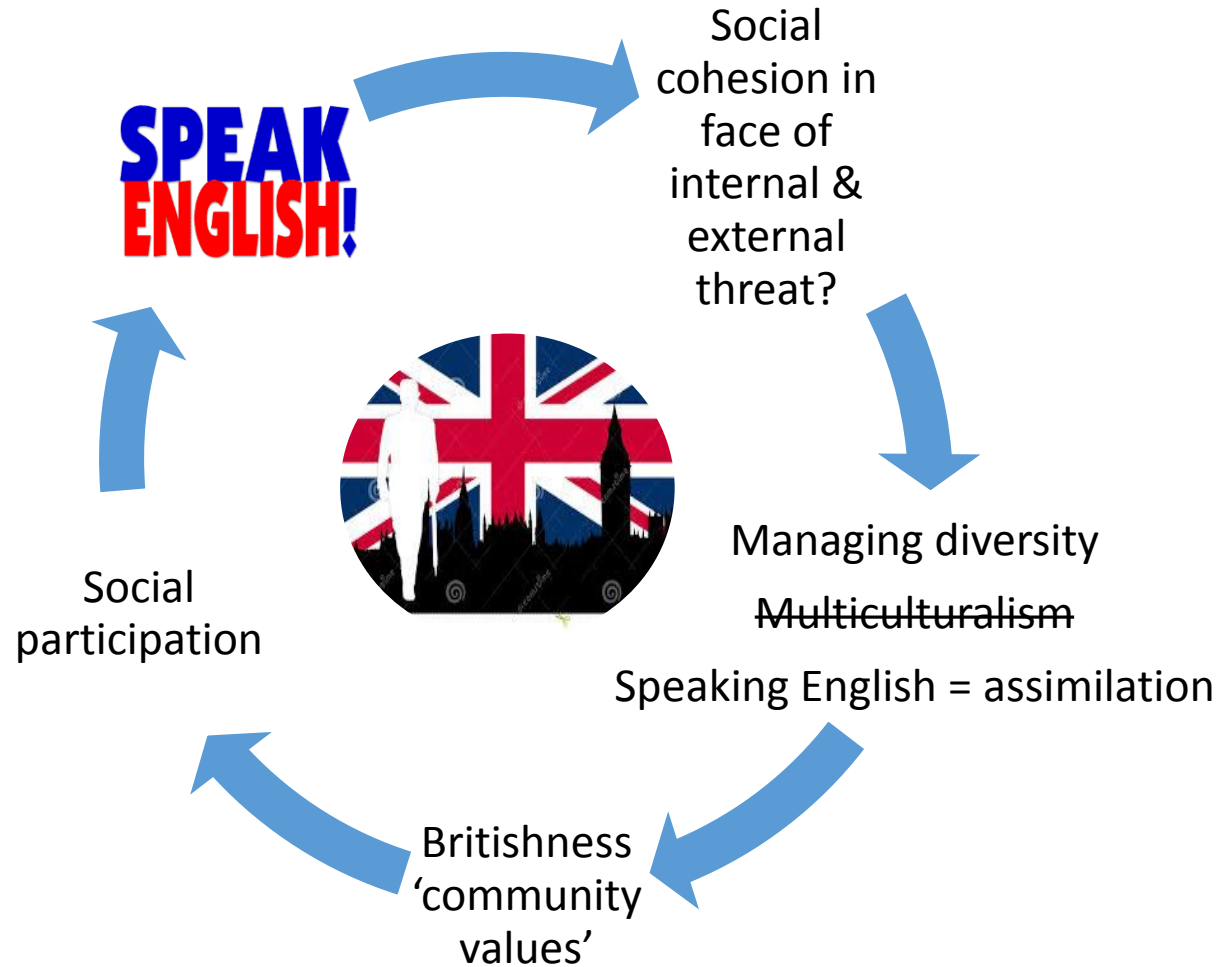
English

Participate
in society
Kingman Report 1988
Education Reform Act
1989
Moser Report 1991

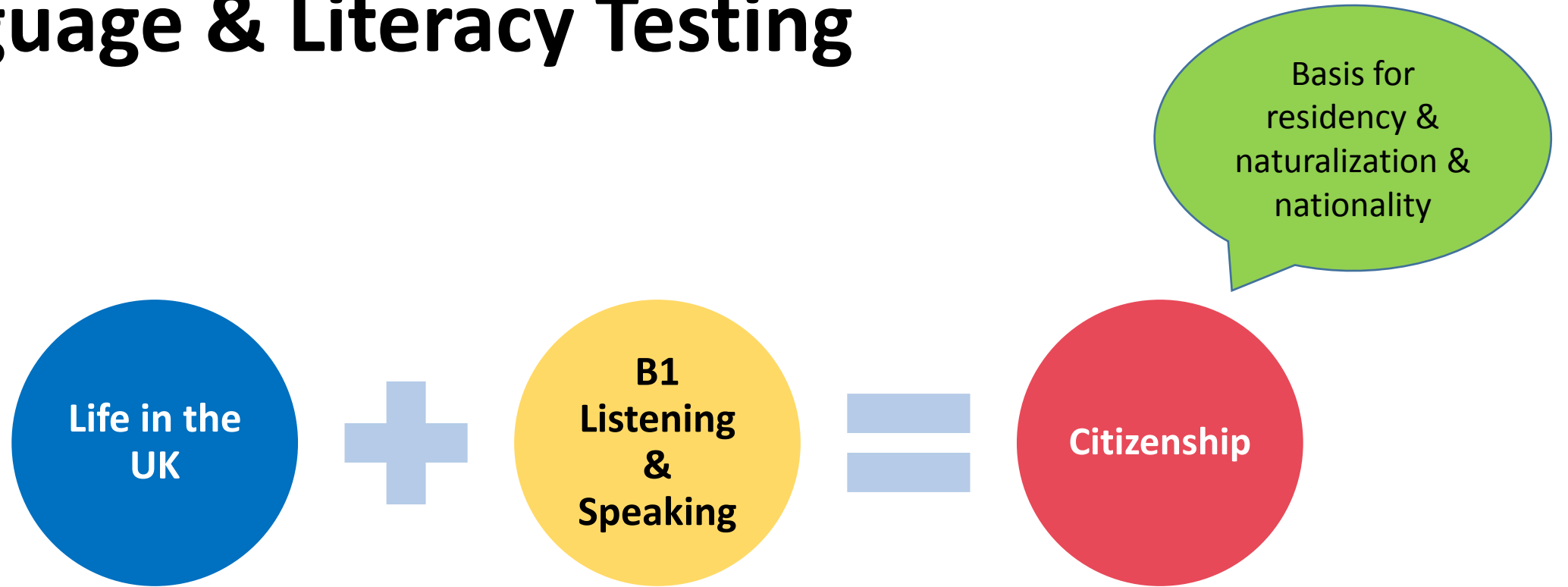
Immigration

English – A hallmark of Britishness?

(Cameron, 2013; Cooke, 2006; Extra et al, 2009; McNamara, et al, 2015; Ros i Sole, 2016; Simpson, 2015)



Language & Literacy Testing



Literacy test *in all but name*



Permanent migrant =
applicant a long-term
outsider

Integrating into society →
following officially
recognised social & cultural
practices



'Passing the Life in the UK test is
part of the process of becoming a citizen. You are

Content/topic issues: e.g. 19th century operetta
by Gilbert & Sullivan

Which of these is a G&S comic opera?

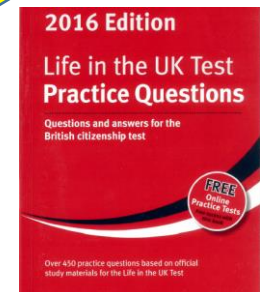
- A. Evita**
- B. Jesus Christ Superstar**
- C. The Mikado**
- D. Cats**

(Test practice booklet, p63)

Linguistic complexity?

e.g. **Emmeline Pankhurst, who was born in
Manchester in 1858, had a role in establishing
which TWO organisation for women's rights?**

(p131)



B1 Listening & Speaking tests

- IELTS Life Skills (22 min, examiner + 2 candidates)
- Trinity GESE Grade 5 (10 min, examiner + candidate)

Carrier content topics: family & friends, buying goods, education, jobs and work ... (similar in both tests)

However, test tasks and participation formats vary across the two tests.

Spoken Language Test - example

The international exam board for the performing arts and English language

Home > Tests for UKVI > B1 SELT - GESE Grade 5 > Prepare for your GESE Grade 5 exam

▶ Tests for UKVI
A1 SELT - GESE Grade 2
A2 SELT - GESE Grade 3
B1 SELT - GESE Grade 5

Prepare for your GESE Grade 5 exam

What is in the exam?
The exam is 10 minutes long. There are two parts:
• **Topic:** You choose a topic to prepare in advance of the test, for discussion with the examiner. You must complete a [Topic Form](#) in advance and bring it with you to the exam.
• **Conversations:** You have a short conversation with the examiner about two subject areas chosen by the examiner.

What is the exam like?
Watch Aslam and other candidates taking the GESE Grade 5 exam:

TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON

Graded Examinations in Spoken English

▶ 00:00 12:30

The international exam board for the performing arts and English language

Music Rock & Pop Drama & Speech Dance DaDA Arts Award English Language Teaching English Tests for UKVI Tests for TEL

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TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON

Then they have a conversation about two subjects.
The exam takes ten minutes.

▶ 00:00 12:30

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It's important to ask the examiner a question about your Topic. You can ask a question at any time while talking to the examiner about your Topic.

▶ 00:00 12:30

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TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON

Now the Conversation phase, which takes up to 5 minutes. The examiner discusses two subjects from a choice of six.

▶ 00:00 12:30

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TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON

The six are: Festivals; Means of Transport; Special Occasions, for example birthday celebrations; Entertainment, for example cinema or television; Music; and Recent Personal Experiences.

▶ 00:00 12:30

The 'Bulge' (Wolfson, 1986; Cook, 2000)

- Transactional communication determines a strategy
- Communicative competence (1)
- Communicative strategy (2)
- TLU (3) determined by Govt (political values)

A constricted
construct of
language &
language use

Language in citizenship: Needs v. Wants

- Whose language needs do the respective groups articulate?
- What does a 'Bulge' based language proficiency tell us about the aspirant citizen and their ability to participate in society?
- Is the opportunity to develop such language ability equally available to all?
- What other agentive language uses might be important for citizenship?
- Is a summative test the most appropriate form of assessment?

Ability to reproduce sanctioned normative practices

Not in face of cuts of teaching provision

New citizens may want to e.g. (re)build career
e.g. engage in aesthetic appreciation & expressions

Beyond the Bulge

Assessment that
captures a fuller
representation of TLUs &
multilingual repertoires
e.g. portfolio;
assessment by significant
others ...



Дякую
Merci
Eυχαριστώ
Gracias
धन्यवाद, shukrān
Grazie
Danke schön
THANK YOU
Dziękuję
Dankie
Terima kasih
Tack så mycket
Спасибо!
唔該
ありがとう
고맙습니다