Congratulations to Nicola Bermingham (Heriot-Watt University) and Gwennan Higham (Cardiff University) for their success in the BAAL/Cambridge University Press 2015-2016 seminar competition.

The seminar, entitled “New plurilingual pathways for integration: Immigrants and language learning in the 21st Century”, will be held in Heriot-Watt University on 26th and 27th May 2016. The event, which will be funded by the British Association for Applied Linguistics and Cambridge University Press, in collaboration with COST Action IS1306 New Speakers in a Multilingual Europe: Opportunities and Challenges, will also be supported by the Intercultural Research Centre and the Department of Languages and Intercultural Studies at Heriot-Watt University.

While the two-day seminar will encourage interdisciplinary dialogue with a variety of papers from different migration and language contexts and cross-sector round table discussions, the proceedings will be directed by key themes and objectives as follows;

- What are the opportunities and challenges for immigrants who learn new languages?
- To what extent do immigrant speakers challenge current conceptions of integration, cohesion and citizenship?
- Which steps or initiatives could facilitate a more comprehensive view of integration, cohesion and citizenship in national and minority language contexts?

On the first day of the event, Professor Alison Phips, Professor of Languages and Intercultural Studies, and Co-Convener of Glasgow Refugee, Asylum and Migration Network (GRAMNET) at the University of Glasgow will deliver a keynote speech entitled “Language Labour and Language Resistance: On the demands of hosts on their guests”. The second keynote speech, “Migrants, Languages and Community Cohesion”, will be given by Professor Máiréad Nic Craith, Chair in European Culture and Heritage, Director of Research and Director of the Intercultural Centre at Heriot-Watt University.

A round table discussion will also be held, addressing the ways in which immigration in the 21st century has lead us to challenge the way in which we think about minority language learning, integration and the notion of citizenship. Invited speakers from the COST network include Professor Bernadette O’Rourke, who will discuss the research that is being carried out by the COST network, focusing specifically on issues of language, identity and social cohesion, and Dr Cassie Smith-Christmas, University of the Highlands and Islands and Ms Kirandeep Kaur Summan, Tilburg University, who will discuss their work in the COST-affiliated network 'Access to Legitimacy', the aim of which is to facilitate a cross-disciplinary
dialogue on issues of accessing to legitimacy in context of asylum and migration in Europe. Invitations to the round table discussion have been issued to members of local government, with the intention of linking up the important research that is currently being done in Europe by academic institutions and government bodies.

The aim of this two-day seminar will be to bring various groups into dialogue within COST New Speakers working group themes, primarily WG9 and WG10 concerning issues of migration, language learning, language policy and legitimacy. This activity will contribute to WG9 by involving policy and NGO stakeholders in discussions on issues related to migrants and new speakership and how this impacts and informs local and national conceptions of citizenship, cohesion and integration policy. The activity will further extend cross-sector discussions in order to consider distinct challenges to migrant newspeakerness through de-legitimization and power relations within social and linguistic markets, as discussed in WG10. Thus, the activity will consider possible steps or initiatives needed in order to overcome social inequalities experienced by migrant new speakers as well as focus on steps to facilitating a more comprehensive view of integration, cohesion and citizenship in national and minority language contexts.

A call for papers will be issued in the coming weeks. For more information or expressions of interest please contact the organisers, Nicola Bermingham (nb199@hw.ac.uk) and Gwennan Higham (HighamGE@cardiff.ac.uk).