Project background

- European Roma
- Roma children and school in Glasgow
- Staff concerns over poor parental participation and community cohesion.

The project partners were parents from the European Roma communities, Glasgow City Council, STEP, Scottish Government.
The nature of exclusion

Low literacy

Exclusion

Poverty

“Low literacy is a contributing factor to social exclusion and, ultimately, to the women’s poverty.”

School staff member
How did ‘exclusion’ play out?

- Within family?
- With children’s school?
- Within Roma community?
- Out with community?

Children become ‘cultural brokers’ for families (Schaeffer, 2013)
Could digital agency impact on women’s lives?

- Learning language
- Supporting children
- Accessing school information
- Communicating with women home and abroad
- Accessing information and services
Creating a dialogic space—real and virtual

The workshop
The workshop had to be a place where various social languages could come together. (Bakhtin 86)

The app
We would use technology to “open, widen, deepen and resource the ‘dialogic space’” (Wegerif & Mansour 2009:1).

The medium
The app and its mobile technology “dismantles the established hierarchy of literary language” (Lachmann 2004:53).
A dialogic approach guided the design

- Roma women led the design of an innovative multilingual language learning app for mobile devices
- Existing digital resources and app unsuitable
- Relevance of digital content
- Affordance of digital technology
- Using and building on existing digital literacy and skills
The Ro/M/App pilot project

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The current position

- The App
- Our research
Thank you

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