

# British Immigration Issue:

Analysing from the Relationship between Brexit and the Premier League

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## Introduction

The Brexit referendum was conducted on the 24th of June, 2016 in the UK and consequently it resulted in the UK leaving the EU. No other EU countries have left the organization since it launched, thus the world was covered by a large anxiety about what would happen to them and the shock could see in the decline of British pounds and world currencies respectively. The former British Prime minister, David Cameron's aim to hold the voting was to utilise it as a strong manifest to win the 2016 election, to distract from issues the EU is facing such as terrorism caused by ISIS, Syria's civil war and the refugees, Southern Europe's economic crisis and immigration issues.

In order to clarify what opinion British people held before and after the poll, I took interviews all over the UK. A large number of people, especially young generations replied that they did not know much about Brexit and voted for Leave because they were influenced by gossip news and other peoples' negative rumours about immigration. After the voting date, most of them knew throughout various media that exposed what the leaders of the Leave party stated contained wrong information. After that, they started considering that they did not wish to leave the EU. Brexit would influence their lives definitely but they did not much care and think about how it would affect them, even they take it as if it is someone else's business. I wondered that it is a big issue. Therefore, in this paper, I would like to clarify people's misinterpretation about immigration and how Brexit will provide impacts on their daily lives or hobbies such as foods, traveling and sports in terms of immigration.

In this paper, football is taken as an example of a medium that would transform over Brexit since it is really popular in the UK and absorbs many British people. Football is one of few vehicles for the expression of Englishness and one of the national sports in England. During the Premier League season, pubs are filled with football fans and TV broadcasts football news considerably. In order to keep this football enthusiasm, there is a football league called "the Premier League." The Premier League is an English professional football league aiming at being the most exciting and popular league in the world. Generally, the Premier League is regarded as the best league in the

world.

According to Jones, Bridge, Green, Barnard, Dwyer, Wilson and Winn (2018) who are the investigators of Deloitte, the total income of the Premier League was the top in 2017 compared to other popular leagues such as the German Bundesliga, Spanish La Liga and Italian Serie A. In addition, looking at the average TV audience per match, the Premier League has the largest number, 12.3 million viewers all over the world, the second best is Serie A, 4.5 million fans. Since this league has become the most profitable and popular league in the world, football definitely has been one of the English peculiar cultures.

One of the reasons why there is such popularity in the Premier League is that there is a lot of foreign star players. The league used to have much less foreign players in the early 1990s. However the Bosman Ruling issued in 1995 changed the face of English and European football transferring systems dramatically. It eliminated transfer fees for players from EU countries out of contact with their team who wished to change clubs within and between EU countries. It enabled star players such as Cristiano Ronaldo from Portugal, Michael Ballack from Germany to move easier into the Premier League. Before the Bosman Ruling, the number of players from outside England during the 1994/95 season was 28.9% and this figure became 69.2% in 2017 (Sky Sports, 2017). Naturally enough, foreign players have been carrying an important role and delighting English football culture these days.

I hypothesize that there is a strong relationship between British immigration and the Premier League. The league holds a large number of foreign players and those players are producing profits for the UK. However, will it be able to receive a favour of retaining foreign players after Brexit? After the UK's leave is enforced, the UK definitely will be regarded as non-EU country and it may become much more difficult for the Premier League to gain star players. Also, it should be difficult to state that they want to change rules to get foreign players because one of the reasons why they exit the EU is related to restrict immigration. When Brexit happens, will foreign players be regarded as special imports or normal workers from overseas? The theme of this paper is to analyse British immigration issues through Brexit and the Premier League, and to clarify how immigrants should be regarded by providing people with one of the ways of considering immigration issues through their hobbies.

In this thesis, Chapter One explores how Brexit happened and particularly focuses on the government's intention to regulate immigrants. Restricting people from overseas is a factor of Brexit. In my interview, some people replied they voted for Leave because they agreed with regulating immigrants. I try to clarify how the government and people

reached the views. Chapter Two examines non-English players' effects in the Premier League. As I previously mentioned, the number of foreign players has been increasing and playing a really important role in the Premier League and it resulted in the Bosman Ruling. Therefore I argue about the influence of retaining foreign players towards English football. Moreover, I clarify foreign players' attributes for the Premier League. Chapter Three explores impacts of Brexit on the Premier League and how the new football transfer rules would become after Brexit. When the rule of acquiring foreign players becomes stricter, the Premier League cannot take the advantages anymore then it is important to point out how things would be changed after Brexit. Furthermore, by analysing the debate of post-Brexit football transfer rules, the relationship between football players and other immigrants will be clarified. Throughout the thesis, I especially argue about how the immigration matters of the UK should be treated through Brexit and the Premier League. In order to clarify the relationship between Brexit and English football, I conjugate recent English articles about Brexit that point out influences towards the Premier League as in signing foreign players. I try to prove that Brexit changes nowadays the Premier League and let people understand the importance to think about immigration matters throughout their hobbies. The Japanese government intends to accept more immigrants who cover the power of labour, thus the immigration issue of the UK would be reflected on Japanese people.

## **Chapter 1: Immigration: One of the Reason Why People wish Brexit**

This chapter mainly explores circumstances of Brexit and the background why people chose to leave the EU. More than half of the British people casted votes to the Leave party in the referendum and it is decided that the UK will leave the EU. In order to understand Brexit and the effects of it towards the UK, journals and my interviews will be analysed in this chapter.

### **1-1. What happened in the UK?**

There was a massive shock through the UK and all over the world in the early morning of 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016, when it became clear that the voters for “Leave the EU” were 51.9%. Looking at the market on that day, the British pound declined rapidly against the US dollar. This indicates how the global market reacted to the result of voting. Even the leaders of the Leave camp seemed surprised by the outcome as they admitted they had no plan for what Brexit would look like. No one predicted what would happen due to Brexit because they did not think the Leave voters surpassed the Remain ones. It must have been confusing not only for people in the world, but also the British people.

In addition, the former British Prime Minister David Cameron did not predict the consequences. He tried to utilise the voting as his strong manifest to win election to choose the next Prime Minister because he had confidence that the Leave camp would not win. Therefore, in 2015, he promised to take a referendum whether the UK should leave the EU or not by the end of 2017 (The Conservative Party, 2015). In order to hold a vote, Cameron gathered 27 other EU countries’ leaders to set the date of the referendum and also raised the issue of the British right to limit EU migrants in-work benefits, even though the latter was withdrawn. Even all the major parties, including the major opposition party, Labour, were also in favour of remaining in the EU. Though one poll showed that the percentage of those supporting the remaining was exceeding slightly against the Leave vote, media’s prediction about the referendum was an absolute win of the Remains (Hobolt, 2016). Generally, the election was considered that it would finish with the Remain camp’s win.

However, the charismatic former mayor of London, Boris Johnson played a crucial role in the Leave camp’s win. In February 2016, he announced his support for the Leave camp because David Cameron’s deal with the EU would not work well for the UK. He stated that by leaving the EU, the UK would be able to regain control of British borders, British law-making and restrict immigration (NHK, 2018). Moreover, he remains a populist and suspects the significance to remain in the EU. One of his most

outstanding issues is that immigrants are taking jobs from British people and their social security costs are considerably high. Consequently, he mainly stated that the UK can reacquire the right to control immigrants by exiting the EU. Also, he criss-crossed the country on the Vote Leave bus, “pulling pints and brandishing cornish pasties in his wake” (BBC news, 2016). After his manifestation of backing the Leave supporters, an aspect of the balance between Leave and Remain started changing. The British people were tired of listening to David Cameron, and the dependable new leader, Boris Johnson emerged. I wonder the bus especially functioned among the people as a “clue” to decide which way they voted, even though what the bus was proclaiming was too radical. Perhaps, this is how the people chose to leave the EU consequently.

I infer there are two factors why the number of Leave supporters increased. One is because of Boris Johnson, as I mentioned. Since he became a “leader” of the Leaving camp in February, his influential existence stirred up public opinion. He expressed in an interview with N. Watt of *the Guardian* on February 2016 that “I will be advocating the Vote Leave because I want a better deal for the people of this country, to save them money and to take control. That is really what this is all about” (para. 4). He had pointed out in all over the UK how disadvantageous remaining in the EU is and it extremely functioned.

The other cause is related to how much people trusted David Cameron and Boris Johnson. According to BBC’s article that was published after the referendum, British people gradually stopped listening to Prime Minister, David Cameron. He negotiated with the EU over the UK gaining more power of self-government but he failed to make it, so the public was disgusted and started to stop following him. Watt (2016) surveyed how the public felt about Brexit options in October 2015. It showed that the percentages of supports from the pro-EU majorities increased from 3 points to 18 points—a 15% bounce—if Johnson and Cameron both campaigned to remain. However, when they were asked in a different question, “How do you vote if Cameron supports remain and Johnson supports leave?” the bounce fell to 8 points. This data clarifies the fact that even people who want to support Remain camp were confused and could not choose David Cameron confidently because Boris Johnson was opposed to them. Also another survey reflects who people trusted. Bennett (2016), who is a writer with *the Telegraph*, quoted the research conducted by the think-tank British Future in his article. In the research, people were asked who they trusted when they had to choose a political matter. The result was that nearly half of people (45%) said they trusted Boris Johnson and 39% were sceptical about him. Meanwhile when it came to David Cameron, 48% of the people trusted him but 41% of them did not. One mayor of London had almost the same

power as the British Prime Minister at the time. Boris Johnson was the second choice for people, even more reliable than the present Prime Minister, Theresa May. Those investigations clarify people progressively stopped relying on David Cameron and even started listening to Boris Johnson. Perhaps this is how Leave supporters increased dramatically after Boris's declaration to support Leave camp and consequently won the vote.

Looking at the number of people who support Brexit since 2011, the number has been raising and falling repeatedly. Janmaat (2018), a social science investigator, stated that 53.8% of the British public wanted the UK to leave the EU in 2011; this number declined to 37% in 2015 and it rose again to more than 50% in 2016. It is clear that some voters changed his/her mind but we do not know who. In order to understand peoples' transition of voting, Janmaat surveyed 40,000 households from 2016 to 2017 and divided the interviewees into four groups depending on how they trust the government; voters who trust the government (20.5%), voters who are basically satisfied with the government (30.3%), voters who are dissatisfied with the government (24.4%), and voters who are sceptical about the government (21.8%). Surprisingly, the first group changed their minds dramatically compared to the other groups. After the referendum, the Labour and the Conservative quickly embraced the result and prepared for leaving; thus the people in the first group also followed them. It can also be seen in the other groups. Two groups are sceptical about the government; consequently, they changed their minds from Remain to Leave based on other people's opinion. In other words, those who did not trust the government and did not have opinions to political matters must have been flown by external factors such as what radical politicians proclaimed, and having believed what other people rumoured. There must have been some British people's misinterpretation which changed voters' minds.

It has been a few years since the referendum; the public has changed their thoughts about Brexit. Wells (2018), who is a researcher of YouGov, investigated from August 2016 to January 2018 by asking people whether Brexit was right or wrong. During 2016 to early 2017, the Right party was more than the Wrong one but the situation has reversed after that. It was found that 45% of the people thought it is wrong and 42% of them thought it is right. Still 13% remain undecided about Brexit. In order to make a right decision for every person, they should understand Brexit correctly how it would impact their lives.

In this section, I explored that the British people were affected by others because they were reluctant to follow the government due to its failure in the EU conference and how apathetic people are to the political subject even it would affect their lives. In the

next section, I argue about what kind of opinion people had in my interviews and media's interviews. After analysing the interviews, I will choose one of the most remarkable topics, "Immigration" for clarifying the reasons why people mentioned it.

## **1-2. Peoples' reactions through the interviews**

The last section clarified that some British people's indifference and mind transitions towards Brexit was a decisive factor of the Leave camp's win. In this section, I explore what was a crucial factor for British people's choices of Brexit by utilising interviews British articles, my research group and I conducted in the UK after the referendum.

My interviews were conducted twice, in December 2016 and August 2017 in the UK, mainly around England (London, Manchester, Liverpool, Oxford, York, Bath, and Cambridge) and the total amount of participants was 48. Also, a research group in my seminar class helped gather samples in August 2016 and 2017, the group collected 123 people's opinions. All the interviews were surveyed directly in the streets. The reason why we conducted the interviews was to learn what British people had thought when they voted for Leave/Remain and to see if their minds changed after the vote or not. Some key samples are picked up to explain what crucial factors for their choices were. In this section, only the people in England are selected as examples since Chapter Two focuses on England's football league, "the Premier League."

Indifference towards political matters could be seen in the interviews. Some people replied little information about Brexit, or even some of them confide they were not concerned with political issues. Those indifferent people can be divided into two types: indifference because of no interests in governmental matters and indifference because the voting result was unchangeable. They were basically aware something was happening in the UK by Brexit but they were apathetic about it. In other words, they were too passive about it.

It could be seen that the younger generation, such as 20s, tended to state their indifference to political issues. Most of the people in this group voted Leave/Remain depending on their families and other people, or even they did not go to vote. Here is the examples abstracted from my interviews. A young woman from Manchester who was working at a café was against Brexit and she said, "I do not understand Brexit correctly but I voted for Remain because my family is conservative." Another young woman from Manchester replied she did not vote since she was not interested in political matters. An opinion from a young man from Oxford symbolizes this group. He stated that the government kept him disappointed by their actions to the EU and he lost

interests to discuss it, therefore he did not vote. The younger people in this group had no knowledge or interests in Brexit. After I finished interviewing in the UK, I wondered that attention towards Brexit was different from which generation people belonged to. According to the Sky Data (2016) which conducted the investigation on Twitter, only 36% of the people between 18-24 years old went to cast the votes. Looking at another generation, 25-34 years old was 58%, 35-44 years old was 72%, 45-54 years old was 75%, 55-64 years old was 81% and 65+ years old was 83 %. It clarifies that the younger generation did not vote. If they had voted, the result might have been the other way. Those people relied on other people by not showing their interests in the political matter. It can be stated that the people in this group expressed their indifference towards the government and the British society by not voting, and even they just did not care about it. Younger generations are the ones who create the future of the UK and they needed to decide own future by voting, but they did not cast attention to it.

The second group which was interviewed by my research group argued that the political choice was no longer changeable; thus they would follow what the government and other people had decided. A woman I interviewed supported Remain but she stated that she was for Brexit once it was decided. A woman in her 50s from England originally voted for Remain but she insisted that people expected Brexit to change the society positively and dramatically. A retired woman used to be against Brexit but she accepted it because she could not change it anymore and she expected the government to construct a better education support for her grandchild. Most people in this group used to support for Remain but changed their minds to the other way since it was an already decided fact. They expected Brexit to make their lives more meaningful, and they just turned to the government. However, I consider that they should keep own opinions, not being flown by other opinions. I state that people should not just give up, they must not just follow someone's back.

Unlike the indifferent people, some people started realising the importance to consider the political issue. Some people changed their minds from Leave to Remain after the referendum. For example, a woman in her 70s stated she used to be for Brexit, but she turned into a Remain supporter because she noticed what the Leave leaders said was too radical. A 30-40s woman from England used to be sceptical of the government because she trusted the Leave politicians who criticised the activities the government had conducted. However, she became a Remain supporter after she understood what the government actually had conducted for the people. It is obvious that some people started considering political issues by themselves but this tendency can only be seen among the middle-aged or the older generation. The matter is that younger generations

were too apathetic about Brexit.

It is a danger to ignore political issues for the younger generation, because their future would be decided by the results. According to Stone (2016) of *the Independent*, a former Labour leader Ed Miliband inferred, “Today is a call to arms to all young people to register to vote. Let’s be clear about the danger: decisions not to vote is a decision to let someone else decide your future” (para. 4). Being apathetic means letting their future be decided by other people. They must not be apathetic towards political matters if they know those issues influence their lives absolutely. The result of Brexit might have been reversed if the people, especially the younger generation, had regarded Brexit as a crucial issue which would change their hobbies, jobs, and lives.

There was another tendency in the interviews; 48 people argued over “free movement.” Free movement is the right for EU citizens to move freely among EU countries. They were mostly Remain supporters who stated that they did not prefer to leave because they had a connection to the world. A Polish English woman, working at the front of the hotel in Manchester was against Brexit because immigrants have been bringing unique cultures and better technology into the UK. An English woman at the library who voted for Remain emphasized that the UK originally decided to accept immigrants by themselves in the first point; therefore they are in charge of it. An opinion from a female government employee from Manchester was a symbol of what this group stood for. She insisted that immigrants take jobs which are usually hated by British people and the UK is supported by them; thus it is dangerous to change the system. They were all aware of how crucial immigrants were and excluding immigrants indicated a disadvantage for them.

There were 48 people out of 171 samples who argued about free movement in my research group and my interviews. The reasons were: for traveling around the EU countries; for their business; for accepting other interesting cultures; and for accepting various race environments which are good for education and people. Free movement is strongly connected to British people’s lives. In addition, it can be considered that they had positive opinions to free movement because they had been or were acquiring benefits through it.

However, in those who spoke about free movement, there were 3 people who stated that immigrants have been changing true British culture. They voted for Leave to bring back previous British prosperity. An old man from Manchester stated that the UK should leave the EU because it could be seen the fading of British culture. He continued that since people started thinking about Brexit, they also became interested in their own culture, and thus the culture is valuable for them. It might be true that holding

immigrants makes the country lose their traditional culture. However, is the statement truly correct? It also could be stated those immigrants are bringing other cultures which enrich and improve English culture by providing new sensation, new concepts, and new ideas. Are people from overseas making British culture decline? Immigrants definitely affect the British culture, but the effects are not only negative, but also positive.

In this section, by analysing the interviews British articles, my research group and I conducted, I discovered two possible patterns of voting tendencies; the voters who were indifferent to political issues and the people who mentioned immigration. The next section explores what immigration has meant for the UK since they started accepting them and what kind of advantage/disadvantage immigrants have been providing to the UK because football in England, especially the Premier League has a strong connection to immigration.

### **1-3. Immigration for British people**

As the previous section indicates, Brexit will change the current immigration rule of the UK and free movement will be less than the present. Besides, British people's attitudes towards immigration were different depending on which way they voted; Leave or Remain. This section explores how the UK has been treating immigration to understand the reasons why the interviewees mentioned it.

Looking at the statements about immigration, those were completely different and depended on which party they voted; Leave or Remain. The UK public opinion towards immigration was completely divided into these two camps. I hypothesize that the UK's historical transition with immigration is related to the decisive factors that made people negative about immigration. Therefore, the British historical background with regards to immigration is examined and I will reveal fallacies by showing quantitative data and an interview conducted to a professional football player who migrated to the UK.

The large number of immigrants in the UK nowadays is from all over the world. There are two types of immigrants; immigrants from other EU countries and immigrants from non-EU countries. In 2015, the number of immigrants from EU countries was 172,000, only just below the figure of 191,000 for non-EU immigrants (Wadsworth, Dhingra, Ottaviano and Reenen, 2016). The aspect of accepting immigrants significantly changed after WW2. Firstly, Ireland and the countries of the UK (England, Scotland, and Wales) enjoy free movement and settlement rights since 1948. Similarly, the Commonwealth countries such as India, South Africa, Pakistan, Ghana, Nigeria, the Caribbean, and Hong Kong were also guaranteed the rights of entry. According to Somerville, Sriskandarajah and Latorre (2009), it was the British Nationality Act of

1948 that tried to insist the UK's role as a leader of the Commonwealth and the right of Commonwealth citizens to settle in the UK. In addition, this law did not function properly as envisioned due to the end of the British Empire. Therefore, a new immigration policy was enacted: limitation and integration. Since the UK enlarged their power in the world, even outside Europe, the relationship between the UK and the world, as in immigration, must be strong since they are still responsible for the Commonwealth.

At first, immigrants from non-EU countries are analysed. According to Somerville et al., after 1948, the number of immigrants increased dramatically. Moreover, in the moment, the government was afraid of losing control of them and re-enacted new relevant laws in 1962, 1968, and 1971. In addition, the UK executives put the goal of "zero net immigration." The aim was set to integrate immigrants successfully by restricting them more than before. Since the UK started accepting many immigrants, they have been trying to enact greater control over them.

During the era from 1979 to 1997, the Conservative party had been holding the most political power compared to other political parties, and it was one of the time to be stricter to immigration. Somerville et al. continue that the policy of the Conservative government was strict in limiting and restricting immigrants from outside the EU in the first point. However, they changed it due to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the breakup of the Soviet Union—together with conflicts in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s—led to increased humanitarian flows to the UK. As a result, the government issued the 1993 Asylum and Immigration Act and it allowed asylum seekers to settle in the UK until they could find a peaceful place to live. The government became more open to accepting asylum seekers with the world situations. British peoples' attitudes towards immigration must have been transformed every time the situation changed.

The Labour party held the most political power, especially from 1997 to 2001, the immigration policy became furthermore open. However, it shifted after the September 11, 2001, attacks in the US. In order to prevent terrorists from coming into the UK, the government introduced visas for highly skilled economic immigrants such as university graduates, doctors and athletes from non-EU countries, to come to the UK and this system still has been enforced in the UK (Somerville et al., 2009). The 9.11 incidents were definitely shocking for people in the world and they made people scared of Arabic people. This is surely one of the reasons why the Leave supporters voted to leave the EU. Immigration policies for people outside the EU are influenced by how the British government regards social issues. However, when it comes to the policies for people

from the EU, it is different from the ones for non-EU countries' immigrants.

Next, the immigration relationship between the UK and the EU is explored. Since the UK is a part of the EU, the immigration policy for EU citizens is different from that for people from outside the EU. EU citizens are applied "the free movement rule," and thus they need not follow those previous rules. The significant increase of immigrants is seen after the 'A8' East European countries, such as Estonia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, joined the EU in 2004. According to Wadsworth et al. (2016), the number of immigrants from other EU countries living in the UK tripled from 0.9 million to 3.3 million between 1995 to 2015 and were 6.3% of the total population. The more immigrants stay in the UK, the more importance would be forecasted in the viewpoint of the economy and culture. Though the importance of immigrants from other EU countries has been rising, why do Leave supporters regard them as harmful?

Besides the terrorism and crime caused by immigrants, there are two main fallacies that British people hold in thinking the UK would be superior without immigrants: "immigrants steal jobs from British people," and "immigrants weaken British culture." This section argues the first misunderstanding, and the second one is analysed later in the third chapter since important British culture, football will be analysed in the second chapter, and the relationship between Brexit and football will be discussed in the third chapter.

The number of immigrants is interrelated to the British economy, but the correlation cannot be seen between immigrants and British people's unemployment rates. According to Wadsworth et al., and Van Reenen, immigrants work in the UK and also consume local services and goods, thus they increase the chance of the improvement of British economy. Over the last 100 years, the UK population has grown by around 50% but the unemployment rate has never inexorably trended upwards. In other words, after Brexit, the UK would have fewer immigrants and not consume goods as much, and thus jobs could be less than now due to the lack of consumption.

There is evidence that the employment rate of UK-born workers rises and falls with the economic cycle. Wadsworth et al. utilised the investigation which was conducted by CEP (Centre for Economic Performance) analysis to explain the relationship between EU immigrants and UK-born unemployment rate. Wadsworth et al. continued that from 1975 to 2004 EU nationals in working age population had been consistently around 2% and UK-born unemployment rate rose 10% in 1983 and 1992. However, the number of immigrants from A8 East European countries increased dramatically after 2004 and the UK-born unemployment rate rose quickly because the

world suffered from the recession due to the Bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in 2008 at the same time. Therefore, British people thought the declining of the employment rate was because of increasing EU immigration. People must have been subject to “hallucinations” that immigrants stole jobs from British people even though there was no connection between EU immigrants and the unemployment rate.

Some of the British publics are not in favour of immigration because they have believed immigrants are poisonous for the UK. As I wrote in the first section of this chapter, most of people in the Leave camp trusted what politicians stated. Chakraborty (2018), a journalist of *the Guardian*, stated that the Leave supporters such as Boris Johnson, Liam Fox, Chris Grayling and Michael Gove happily stated that “migrants were often characterised as job stealers or benefit tourists” (para. 6). They proclaimed it around London where more immigrants have existed compared to other regions; therefore, the people in London were misled. As no relationship between immigrants and the unemployment rate of the UK proves, what those politicians claimed was wrong. The facts people believed were not true at all.

Immigrants even take jobs that are often disliked by British people. For example, Raheem Sterling, who is an English football player, is originally coming from Jamaica which used to be a member of the Commonwealth. His family came to the UK to look for better wages and his mother consequently started working as a cleaner at some hotels in London. Sterling stated in an interview with the *Players’ Tribune* (2018) that, “my mum was hustling in her own way, trying to make a better life for us. I’ll never forget waking up at five in the morning before school and helping her clean the toilets at the hotel in Stonebridge” (para. 11). This clarifies the job his mother had might have been the only way for the family to survive in the UK. A numerous number of immigrants must still be doing such nonpreferred jobs in the UK and they are supporting the British society without British people’s awareness. British people must not overlook this fact.

The number of immigrants from EU countries might decline in the future. If EU immigration is cut by following Brexit, the same rule which is adopted for non-EU immigrants at the present would be applied to immigration from other EU countries according to Wadsworth, et al. (2016). This situation indicates that the people would have to show more skills and values that would illuminate the British society. When the UK is in the EU, EU-immigrants would be regarded as “insider.” However, it would be more difficult for immigrants, such as working-class ones, to migrate the UK as long as they will become an “outsider” after Brexit. I state that immigrants should not be regarded as outsider since they have been contributing to the British society by

consuming services and goods, and undertaking jobs that are usually avoided by British people. In addition, I hypothesize that British people will notice how important immigrants were and what they were doing for British people after losing immigrants.

When it comes to football players, the current rule to play in the Premier League is that players from non-EU countries have to play matches in a national team depending on what rank their countries are in the world to show their values. In other words, even though EU countries' players have prospects that they would thrive more in the future, they cannot come into the Premier League because the free movement rule would not be adapted anymore. Is it really good for English football?

This chapter clarifies the structure of Brexit, people's opinions towards Brexit, and the reason why immigration is regarded as harmful for the UK. Especially, this section highlights the decisive factors that people chose Brexit were an accidental correlation between the increased number of immigrants and the unemployment rate, and the Leave leaders' radical statements. Immigrants will be rejected by the British peoples' misunderstandings that immigrants take jobs from British people, and they are disadvantageous for the British economy. One fact British people must not overlook is that people who is making and enriching the society are not only British people, but also immigrants.

The next chapter analyses the Premier League to explore the relationship between immigration and one of the British precious culture, football. The league is the top British football league and has a large number of players from other EU countries and non-EU countries. Therefore, analysing the Premier League would be an effective way to understand how foreign football players as immigrants have been contributing to the prosperities of the British society.

## **Chapter 2: Success of the Premier League with Foreign Players**

This chapter focuses on football in England, especially the top English league, “the Premier League.” The last chapter clarified some British people’s misinterpretation about immigrants. In this chapter, I clarify the relationship between the Premier League and immigration, and discusses the effects of retaining foreign players for the Premier League in order to understand how foreign footballers as immigrants are regarded.

### **2-1. The Premier League**

“It’s coming, it’s coming home, football’s coming home!” This is a chant sung by England national team supporters to express football is their belongings. As is well known, football originally came from England. The FIFA which is governing the world football states the present football was first established in 1863 in London (FIFA, 2018). It has become the most popular and global sport. It can be defined that football is one of the most successful parts of English culture and it is British people’s identity. According to Young (2017), a writer of CNN, as the pioneer of football, England has a professional football league called “the Premier League” which is generally called the best football league in the world. This section explores how the Premier League has become the best in the world by looking at the history and points out crucial elements of people’s enthusiasm for the league.

Since the Premier League launched on 20 February 1992, it has been attracting a large number of people all over the world. It is generally regarded as the best football league in the world in terms of the popularity and the profitability. Jones, Bridge, Green, Barnard, Dwyer, Wilson, and Winn (2018), who are the researchers of Deloitte, investigated the financial income of the league in the 2016/17 season. It clarified that the income of the Premier League was the most in the world and it was almost two times more than Spanish La Liga which was the second best. The large income includes matchday tickets, broadcasting, and sponsorship and so on. Those income sources would not have been prospected, if the Premier League had been boring for people. In addition, when it comes to the popularity, Deloitte indicates it by the stadium utilization. The 20 stadiums had 96% attendances through the season, even though the second best, Germany Bundesliga, was 91%, and the third best, La Liga, was only 71%. The Premier League is always busy for their business to welcome a large number of supporters. Additionally, a numerous number of people watch matches of the Premier League on TV. Statista (2018), which is an online statistics, market research and business intelligence portal, clarifies that the broadcasting rights for the Premier League in the 2016/17 season were the best at €3.2bn. Meanwhile, those for the second best, Spanish

La Liga were €1.4bn. Broadcasting rights display values of a league and viewers' demands on it. From that information, it can be stated that its popularity is the reason why the Premier League is the best in the world. If this is correct, how has it become extremely popular? Exploring the history is an effective way to learn the reasons of the popularity.

The history of the Premier League can be divided into three decades: the dark era in 1980s, before it was established; reformations in the early 1990s, while establishing it; and the internationalization of the Premier League since the middle of 1990s. In this section, those decades are focused on separately. While explaining the historical facts, crucial elements will be analysed to state how the Premier League has become the best in the world.

The 1980s football in England is generally regarded as “the dark age” because there were many hooligans and disasters. Football hooligans are noisy and violent people who cause troubles by fighting in and outside stadiums. For example, in 1985, there was a domestic cup match between Luton Town and Millwall at Kenilworth Road. In the end of the first half, hundreds of Millwall fans scaled fence and Luton fans also started to rush down to the pitch. Consequently, 81 spectators and 31 policemen were injured. According to *The Sunday Post* (2013), then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher responded to this by setting up a “War Cabinet” to deal with football hooligans. However, it would not help solve the issue. *The Sunday Post* continued that only two months later, at the European Cup Final in Brussels between Liverpool and Juventus, 39 fans died as a consequence that Liverpool fans tried to climb the fence and it collapsed. The disaster led to all the English clubs being banned from playing in Europe for five years. Additionally, the Hillsborough disaster occurred in 1989 where 96 Liverpool fans died. Football hooliganism was a socially serious issue and radical restrictions were needed for English football to develop and flourish. As stated before, football have/had been one of the greatest English culture for English people but it had several grave issues.

The 1990s were the time of change for English football. The disasters made the FA, a governing organization of English football, realise that the English football had to be reformed completely. They crafted the Taylor Report which compelled all the stadiums in England to reconstruct their stadiums safely and become more functional in securing fans traveling to the stadiums. Football network (n.d.) stated that “All-seater stadiums have resulted in cases of football hooliganism decreasing significantly, meaning that incidents of violence inside football grounds have become almost non-existent” (para. 5). Also, after the 5 year ban, Manchester United won the Europe

title and the people in England celebrated the new age of English football. The most significant event was the establishment of the Premier League. It was established aiming at commercial independence from the FA to organize its own broadcast and sponsorship agreement (The Official site of the Premier League, 2011). Additionally, those reformations enabled the Premier League clubs to gain more revenues, and to compete on a global scale in terms of players' wages and fees for gaining high quality players.

As a result of the reformations, foreign players in the Premier League dramatically increased. In 1992, there were only 11 non-British or Irish football players in the Premier League, there were no players from South America, Asia, Italy or Portugal (Young, 2017). In addition, all the managers of each club were from the UK. However, the Premier League gained more power to find players globally by sponsorship and broadcasting income. As result, the number of foreign players in the league had increased to over 250 by 2007 and it became 341 in 2017 (Young, 2017). With the internationalization of the Premier League, the popularity of the Premier League has increased. People all over the world enjoy watching matches which have their countries' players and with national sponsor companies, such as Yokohama Tire which is a Japanese company supporting Chelsea FC, or the King Power which is a Thai company supporting Leicester City. The internationalization is a key point for the success of the Premier League. The internationalization must be attracting fans not only British ones, but also ones all over the world.

In this section, I argued that the internationalization of the Premier League is one crucial factor of English football culture's development. By exploring the history of the Premier League, I clarified that English football was suffering from hooliganism and disasters and the Premier League was established to deal with them. Moreover, it has become popular in the world due to the internationalization. The next section focuses on the Bosman Ruling which changed the Premier League more globally and popularly.

## **2-2. The Bosman Ruling**

As the last section indicates, internationalization is crucial for the success of the Premier League. With globalization, "the value" of English football has increased. The Bosman Ruling was the start of the globalization of European football, therefore the details of the Bosman Ruling are analysed in this section.

The Bosman Ruling was one of the hugest incidents for the Premier League. The Bosman Ruling was enacted on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1995. It provided a huge impact on the Premier League by providing a rule to gain players from EU countries without transfer

fees. Frick (2009) wrote that it enabled the Premier League to sign foreign players without transfer fees, just like immigrants from EU countries do not have to pay to entry to EU countries. Just before the Bosman Ruling, in the 1994/95 season, there were 28.9% non-British players but this figure rose to 45.8% during the 1998/99 and 57.6% in 2003/04 (Binder and Findlay, 2012). Furthermore, the percentages of non-British players consequently became 69.2% according to Sky Sports (2017). From this information, the Bosman Ruling was the turning point of the internationalization of the Premier League, and the origin of its popularity.

The Bosman Ruling occurred in 1995 due to an average player whose name is Jean-Marc Bosman. He played for Standard de liege and RFC Liege (both Belgian clubs), and also played 20 matches as a national Belgian player. This ordinary football player changed the structure of the European transfer system, and the ruling still exists for teams in EU countries.

Jean-Marc Bosman challenged the traditional transfer systems as one of EU citizens. In the court, he raised an issue towards Europe whether football players from EU countries should have adopted the EU free movement rules or not. In other words, whether footballers were regarded as immigrants or not. According to Frick, Bosman belonged to RFC Liege—a Belgian first division club—which wished him to keep playing for the team by providing a new contract. However, he refused to sign it because he was eager to join another team, US Dunkerque, a French second division club. Then RFC Liege did not permit him to transfer thus he needed to stay. He sued RFC Liege at the European Court of Justice in December 1995. The court ruled that if players from EU countries want to transfer and both the club within EU that he/she belongs and the club he/she wants to move reach an agreement, they will adopt the rule of free movement and they can transfer (officially issued in the Article 39). This decision enabled Bosman and other players from EU countries to transfer freely.

Moreover, a new rule of restricting a number of foreign players for each team was enacted, when they played in a European competition. Until the Bosman Ruling was enacted, the number was limited to 3 players. The Article 48 of the Bosman Ruling enabled EU countries-clubs to have unlimited number of EU players in European competitions. According to Forrest and Simmons (2002), the court enacted the Article 48 in the Bosman Ruling that allowed players from EU countries to exercise rights to “work in another country” among the EU. Finally, football players were regarded as immigrants from other EU countries. Football players can be defined as workers. If they want to play for a team outside their countries, they have to migrate to the country. This is the right EU citizens have since the EU launched, but this had been ignored when it

came to football. Therefore, it was understandable why the court listened to what the ordinary player stated because the previous rule was completely against the EU regulation. From this incident, European football started to become international with the new rule which enabled EU players to move more freely.

It must be quite difficult for players to become famous in football, as long as they are not high-quality players or they do not have highly visible off-pitch reasons. The case of Bosman would be categorized as the latter. In order to know the situation before football became more international, the time before the Bosman Ruling should be analysed.

Before the Bosman Ruling was introduced, “free movement” for football players hardly existed, even though they were EU citizens. Thus, football players were not regarded as immigrants from other EU countries. This situation infers football transfer systems in Europe before the Bosman Ruling were significantly exclusive because it excluded foreign players to come into another country. According to the Law Teacher (2013), which is a company provides information about laws, before the Bosman Ruling, the transfer rule was as below:

1. If a player wanted to transfer, they had to submit a request to the club they were belonging.
2. If the club refused the request, the player had to stay until the previous contract expired.

This signifies if the club did not need the player but they did not want him/her to go to another team, they could just hold them, even if the player wished to play for another team. The reason why the system was exclusive was because it prevented richer clubs from paying enormous money to retain super stars. If there were no rules to restrict foreign players and their number, super stars such as Beckenbauer (the German “Kaiser”), or Rossi (an Italian fast attacker) might have moved to a strong foreign club in the English football league or Spanish La Liga. The reason why such famous players did not have many opportunities to play for another country’s club was to keep competency in each country’s league and to make it fair for each country. Rights of EU free movement for football players had been ignored because leagues had priority over players until Bosman’s statement in the court in 1995. From the point of the time, players were considered as immigrants, not clubs’ belongings.

After the Bosman Ruling, the situation in European football changed dramatically. The significant changes are reflected in the number of foreign players and the broadcasting rights. When looking at the number of non-British and non-Irish players in 1992, it was only 13 (Ogden and Ley, 2009). Also, the broadcasting rights in all of the

1991/92 season matches were only £15m according to Cox (2017), a journalist of ESPN. Comparatively, the number of foreign players became 341 in the 2016/17 season, and the broadcasting fee for the season became £380m (Cox, 2017). This data implies the Premier League has become considerably famous in the world and then the broadcasting rights rose after the Premier League internationalized through the Bosman Ruling. If the value of the league rose because of the increase of foreign players, there would be an interrelationship between the increasing number of foreign players and the significant success of the Premier League. Indeed, Young (2017), who is a writer of CNN, stated the Premier League has become “the world’s Premier League” because of the increasing number of foreign players. However, the reason must not only be the globalization, though it would be one of the significant elements for the prosperity of the Premier League.

The Bosman Ruling enabled every EU state to retain numerous foreign players, which signifies that every European league has had a chance to become the world best. For example, the German league, Bundesliga had 70% their national players in 1995 but this number declined to 50% in 5 years and became more international, though the number of foreign players was less than those for the Premier League (Frick, 2009). Therefore, besides the globalization of European football, there must be other crucial and peculiar factors which only the Premier League has possessed and made it best in the world.

In this section, I explored the Bosman Ruling since it is concerned with the internationalization of the Premier League which allowed it to be the top league in the world. Due to the Bosman Ruling, EU players started to be regarded as immigrants who wish to work in overseas, not as club’s belongings. The Bosman Ruling was definitely the opportunity for the Premier League to be more international by accepting a large number of “EU immigrant players”, but it is the same as other leagues in the EU. Consequently, I hypothesize that there is another element in the Premier League that has been attracting people’s and players’ popularity: competitiveness, which is discussed in the next section.

### **2-3. High Competitiveness of the Premier League**

In the last section, I clarified that the Bosman Ruling was a great opportunity not only for the Premier League, but also for other EU leagues. Then, I hypothesized that the high competitiveness of the Premier League is one of the reason of the popularity. This section argues the high competitiveness of the Premier League. The league is often regarded as the most difficult league to win and retain the title. This indicates that there

is a high competitiveness in this league. Therefore, high competitiveness can be a potential reason of the enormous popularity of the Premier League.

When people generally discuss the reason of the popularity in the Premier League, there are three main factors they focus on; the language, English; the broadcasting rights which were firstly formulated in England; and the competitiveness. These three topics are discussed below.

The English speaking environment helps the league become more popular for fans and players. As is well known, English is the world-wide spoken language. Yueh (2014), a writer of BBC stated “the English language is of course a natural advantage. Bayern Munich may be the current European Champion, but the appeal of the Bundesliga overseas is hampered by limited understanding of German” (para. 17). Even though the title of the European-top championship, the Champions League, was won by non-English team, four times by the Spanish Real Madrid (2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018) and Barcelona (2015), or the German Bayern Munich (2013) in the past five years, peoples’ enthusiasm still exists in the Premier League, when looking at the number of foreign players who wish to play in the league, and the broadcasting rights which clarifies peoples’ demand to watch the league matches. However, recently, matches of the European “Big 5 leagues,” including the English Premier League, the German Bundesliga, the Italian Serie A, the Spanish La Liga, and the French Ligue 1, are often broadcasted in English for people who do not understand those countries’ languages. In addition, when looking at which language players speak in a team, the language is not only English, but also others. For example, James Milner, who is an English player, studied Spanish to communicate with players from Spanish countries (Gradwell, 2014). Therefore, the English speaking environment is not a peculiar factor of the popularity of the league for fans and players. This situation signifies that foreign players in the Premier League might be able to communicate with other players in their native language. The English language may be one of the reasons, but it is less crucial than other factors.

The fact that the Premier League is the pioneer of broadcasting rights could be regarded as a significant factor. Yueh (2014) explained that the English football league, which is the predecessor of the Premier League, was the first football league to broadcast in many countries, even before the Premier League was formed over 20 years ago. The advantage of the Premier League is that they have formed strong connections with other countries which has led to the popularity. However, as I signified before, the broadcasting rights for the 1991/92 season was considerably less than ones for each match in the 2016/17 season. Even though the Premier League launched the

broadcasting rights system faster than any other leagues, their broadcasting rights were not successful in the early of 1990s. Therefore, it is difficult to state that the first mover retained the advantage to flourish in the world.

Competitiveness could be one significant factor. Looking at the number of winners in European Big 5 leagues, the competitiveness in the Premier League is higher than the others. In the past 5 years, from 2013 to 2018, the teams which won the Premier League title were 4 teams. Meanwhile, in other leagues, there was 1 team in German Bundesliga, 1 team in Italian Serie A, 3 teams in Spanish La Liga, and 2 teams in French Ligue 1, which won their respective leagues. It is difficult to keep winning matches in the Premier League. I built up a hypothesis that is why the winner of the league tends to change. Moreover, the high competitiveness to win the title indicates that there always are more than 4 teams which compete the title of the league. This fact clarifies how difficult winning the title of the Premier League is. Also when it comes to a difference of shares of broadcasting rights for each team in a league, the Premier League's difference is the smallest. According to Yueh (2014), the champion team in the 2013-14 season, Manchester City retained around £100m as their share of broadcasting rights and the Bottom club, Cardiff City gained about £60m. Meanwhile, the famous club in La Liga, Barcelona and Real Madrid acquired €150m each and this was more than ten times what half the teams in the league received (Yueh, 2014). Clubs receive broadcasting incomes depending on how many people watched those clubs' matches. The small gap in the Premier League infers that there is a competition among English teams in retaining fans' interests. The information suggests that the high competitiveness in teams is a crucial factor of the success of the Premier League.

Competitiveness in football can mainly be seen in these two elements; broadcasting rights and results of a league. As mentioned before, a share of broadcasting rights vary depending on how much fans have provided their interests in a team. If a team retains many ranking points or famous players who play brilliantly and succeeds in a league, they attract more fans. Consequently, broadcast income is linked to how much a team has succeeded, because broadcasting rights reflects the value of a team. Therefore, broadcasting income for a club is dependent on how well a team plays in a league. In other words, competitiveness seen in broadcasting rights is derived from results of a league. Since results of a league could be a core factor of competitiveness, it is worth analysing them.

The teams in the Premier League are quite competitive with each other. When watching the matches on TV, the Big 6 clubs (Manchester City, Manchester United, Liverpool FC, Tottenham Hotspurs, Arsenal FC, and Chelsea FC) are often defeated by

lower ranked teams. Shetty (2018), who is a journalist of Sportskeeda, explained that “the league is exciting down to its unpredictable nature, however without that, the league could be considered second rate” (para. 3). People are attracted by the league because it is difficult to predict which team will win in a match. Every team’s fans are excited because they have many chances to retain wins even from the Big 6 teams, or even might be able to win the title.

The competitiveness of the Premier League has been rising, especially recently. An ordinary team, Leicester City won the title in the 2015/16 season. From 1995 to 2016, the winners of the league were only from the Big 6 teams. No fans expected Leicester City’s achievement. One year before Leicester won the title, Leicester finished in the 14<sup>th</sup> out of 20 teams and Chelsea FC won the title. J.T. (2015), an analyst of *the Economist*, explained that before the 2015/16 season, the 1500-to-one odds were set for Leicester’s victory of the league, meanwhile 250-to-one odds were set for Chelsea’s position in the bottom half (teams from 11<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>). The reason why the odds became such high rates was that nobody expected Leicester’s achievement and Chelsea’s failure. Consequently, Leicester won the title and Chelsea were in 18<sup>th</sup> place after the first half of the season had finished. People’s expectations that one of the Big 6 teams would win the league were betrayed by the results, therefore their interests must have been strongly increased by Leicester’s matches and the matches of the possible rivals, the Big 6 clubs.

This situation of the Big 6 clubs plus one team competing for the title hardly happens in other Big 5 leagues. The title of Spanish La Liga is mostly competed by the 3 mega clubs, Real Madrid, Barcelona, and Atletico Madrid. There is even one team in the German Bundesliga and Italian Serie A, Bayern Munich and Juventus, respectively, which compete for their domestic league’s title. The winner of the Premier League is difficult to predict, thus the league keeps attracting peoples’ interests.

Is it boring for fans who support the underdogs of the league? No, in the Premier League, the underdogs often beat the Big 6 teams. According to J.T. (2015), in the 2015/16 season, 42 of 160 games were won by other than the top 6. Meanwhile, the numbers which show how many matches were won by other than top 6 of the Big 5 leagues in the same year were 26 for Spanish La Liga, 29 for German Bundesliga, 22 for Italian Serie A, and 37 for French Ligue 1. The number for the Premier league was the best in the year. This clarifies that the difficulty of winning a match in the Premier League and fans of underdogs also can keep their interests by wishing their wins against the big clubs because of the competitiveness.

In contrast, there is an opposite view that the Premier League is losing its competitiveness. Shetty (2018) stated that the gap between the Big 6 and others is

widening. Looking at the table 1, the gap between the Big 6 clubs and other teams clearly be confirmed. The Big 6 teams won 19 to 32 times but other teams won 6 to 14 times. The gap shows that the Big 6 teams continues increasing their strength, and it is quite difficult for other teams to catch up with the Big 6 teams. However, as long as the Big 6 competes with each other and others also compete with each other, it could be stated there is still competitiveness in the Premier League. Additionally, as mentioned, the Big 6 teams lose against others often in the league, therefore, the league is not losing much its competitiveness.

Table 1

*The Result of the 2017/18 Season of the Premier League*

Position	Club	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	GF	GA	GD	Points
1 ●	 Manchester City	38	32	4	2	106	27	+79	<b>100</b>
2 ●	 Manchester United	38	25	6	7	68	28	+40	<b>81</b>
3 ●	 Tottenham Hotspur	38	23	8	7	74	36	+38	<b>77</b>
4 ●	 Liverpool	38	21	12	5	84	38	+46	<b>75</b>
5 ●	 Chelsea	38	21	7	10	62	38	+24	<b>70</b>
6 ●	 Arsenal	38	19	6	13	74	51	+23	<b>63</b>
7 ●	 Burnley	38	14	12	12	36	39	-3	<b>54</b>
8 ●	 Everton	38	13	10	15	44	58	-14	<b>49</b>
9 ●	 Leicester City	38	12	11	15	56	60	-4	<b>47</b>
10 ●	 Newcastle United	38	12	8	18	39	47	-8	<b>44</b>
11 ●	 Crystal Palace	38	11	11	16	45	55	-10	<b>44</b>
12 ●	 Bournemouth	38	11	11	16	45	61	-16	<b>44</b>
13 ▲	 West Ham United	38	10	12	16	48	68	-20	<b>42</b>
14 ▼	 Watford	38	11	8	19	44	64	-20	<b>41</b>
15 ▼	 Brighton and Hove Albion	38	9	13	16	34	54	-20	<b>40</b>
16 ●	 Huddersfield Town	38	9	10	19	28	58	-30	<b>37</b>
17 ●	 Southampton	38	7	15	16	37	56	-19	<b>36</b>
18 ●	 Swansea City	38	8	9	21	28	56	-28	<b>33</b>
19 ▲	 Stoke City	38	7	12	19	35	68	-33	<b>33</b>
20 ▼	 West Bromwich Albion	38	6	13	19	31	56	-25	<b>31</b>

(Upal, 2018)

Also, the competitiveness must be reflected in the result of the Champions

League which is the top European league composed with 32 strong European football clubs. From 2004 to 2012, there was always at least one English team in the final of the championship, but after that only one team, Liverpool FC in 2018 succeeded to get through to the final. This infers that the difficulty of winning the Premier League matches has been increasing, therefore English clubs, which play in the Champions League, have to put a lot more efforts for Premier League matches. Therefore English clubs cannot play well in the Champions League because of fatigues by Premier League matches.

I hypothesize that the people who are producing the competitiveness are foreign players. For example, the Leicester's achievement could have not been completed without foreign players. N'golo Kante, who now is a French national team player, joined Leicester in 2015 before he became a world-wide player. An Algerian player, Riyad Mahrez who joined the team in 2014 and received the prize of the MVP (Most Valuable Player) of the 2015/16 season. Also, a Japanese attacker, Shinji Okazaki joined the team in 2015 and he worked really hard for the team to win the title. Those foreign players changed the quality of the team and beat the Big 6 clubs. The importance of foreign players for the Premier League to keep the competitive balance is confirmed from this information. Without foreign players, the popularity of the Premier League, which is produced from unpredictable situations, would decrease.

This section clarified that the competitive balance is the reason of the popularity of the Premier League. Especially, the strength gap between teams are considerably low compared to other big leagues, thus it motivates fans to watch the league's matches, and also motivates players' desire to play in the exciting league. I hypothesized that foreign players are the ones who produce the competitiveness of the Premier League. In the next section, I clarify how and what foreign players provide the competitiveness for the league.

#### **2-4. Foreign Players' Attributes for the Premier League**

This section explores the effects of retaining foreign players for the Premier League. As the previous section clarified, the high competitiveness produces excitement in the Premier League which can be seen in the value of the broadcasting rights, and it is strongly related to foreign players. Therefore, it is significant to understand what foreign players actually bring to the Premier League to make it flourish.

For the Premier League, retaining foreign players is very crucial. A scholar of sports sciences, Richardson (2012) stated that "a range of technological, structural, and economic developments within soccer has been facilitated by the globalization of the

sport” (1606). Through globalization, football changes in every respect. There are two main elements that foreign players change situations of the Premier League. One is an economical point and the other is a technical point. Football and globalisation have a strong connection with each other.

Firstly, let me discuss the economical point. Thanks to foreign players, many fans from the foreign player’s countries come to England to watch their national players’ games and also consume goods and services. However, players actually do not change the economy directly by themselves. They do not ask fans to come and attend matches. The point is rather related to fans’ personal and economic situations which signify how far their home is from England and how much they can spend for football. Football players positively changed the Premier League in an economical point but this must have happened as the result of foreign players’ high performance in a pitch. Therefore, I consider that the technical factor is more important than the economical one.

Secondly, let me discuss the technical element. Foreign players are different from English players in terms of their playing styles, physical characteristics, and tactics. Different and exotic techniques, which do not exist in the Premier League, are brought by foreign players directly, therefore, those players change the football philosophy in the Premier League. Those new techniques make the league more exciting and competitive. Since the technical element can be a core factor which changes the Premier League, it is worth analysing.

Football has the same rules throughout the world, but playing styles differ in every country. Each country has its own symbol strategy in football. Cox (2017) explained the characteristics of the Big 5 league; Spanish La Liga is superior in technique, French Ligue 1 is famous for physical contact, the German Bundesliga is strong in psychological tactics, and Italian Serie A has defensive tradition. England’s character is a mixture of those characteristics. England has benefited from numerous foreign players who provide those different football styles. The diverse environment mixes different football styles and it is making English football more exciting. Therefore, the playing style of the Premier League is regarded as “multicultural.”

The diverse environment also benefits players a skill improvement. Players learn different football styles from other national players. Mark Hendrick (2014), who is a Labour and Cooperative member of Parliament, stated in his article published by Huffpost that James Milner and Frank Lampard, famous English football players, regard foreign players as a positive factor for the Premier League because playing alongside world class footballers makes them better, by having to constantly fight for a place in the team. In every match, players have opportunities to play against foreign players to

test their skills. When they are chosen for their national team, they have had plenty of experiences in their clubs to play against foreign players, thus they would be confident to play for their national teams. The Premier League has the highest percentage of foreign players; therefore the players in the Premier League are the ones who easily retain opportunities to challenge different football styles.

Styles are constructed by not only players, but also coaches. When the Premier League launched in 1992, all of the teams were led by British coaches. In the 2018/19 season, however, 12 coaches are from EU countries, 3 coaches from non-EU countries, and only 5 coaches are from the UK (Young, 2017). A team's tactics are strongly related to a coach. Coaches have also globalized, therefore, the playing styles also vary. According to Cox (2017), the influx of foreign managers has made the Premier League undergo an impressive tactical improvement. By hiring a foreign manager, the team and players create a new football norm. Retaining foreign managers are also significant for the Premier League to improve and keep the best environment.

There is also an opposite argument that the diverse situation contains negative effects. By retaining many foreign players, English players cannot play constantly in the league. Even if an English player wishes to play for the Big 6 clubs, it is difficult because there are always high-quality players imported from overseas and they take opportunities from potential English players. Hunter (2018), a journalist of *the Guardian*, utilized what the English national team coach Southgate stated grieving that "our pool is getting smaller and smaller" (para. 2). The fact actually has been happening in the Premier League, therefore it might be correct that foreign players harm English players. However, positive effects surpass negative ones. Lack of opportunities is not so bad for England.

England has improved throughout the global environment. England actually succeeded in the Russia World Cup in 2018, by proceeding into the semi-finals. England could complete their mission thanks to the globalized environment. Law (2018), who is a senior writer of the Givemesport, explained that England has been improving under the global environment. He stated that 20 Premier League clubs have 11 starting players in every match. Then, 70 English players are constantly playing in the Premier League out of the 220 players, and they have chances to test their skill every weekend. There are 70 players; six candidate players for each position in England's national team's starting 11. In the 32 nations of the 2018 World Cup, only Germany, Spain, and France had more than 70 constantly playing players. Germany lost in the group league, Spain was defeated by Russia in the round 16, and France won the title. From this information, the number of options is not related to the strength of the country. It is correct that

English players do not have much opportunities due to foreign players, but they have opportunities to play and practise with foreign players. This is why the positive effects of retaining foreign players are superior to negative ones.

This section explored what foreign players have brought to the Premier League. It clarified that they bring diverse football tactics and those are mixed by coaches. There is also a negative effect of retaining foreign players, such as taking opportunities away from English players, but this was partly denied by the information that signifies England's success in the Russia World Cup and it resulted from the diverse situation of the Premier League.

This chapter focused on the Premier League. By exploring the history, it is clarified that English football had bad times in the past, and they overcame by establishing the Premier League. The huge watershed moment was the Bosman Ruling which was issued in 1995 and produced many chances to receive more foreign players within Europe. The high competitiveness is a core factor of the Premier League's success and foreign players are the ones who generate the competitiveness. Retaining foreign players also contains negative effects but it is not wholly negative, when looking at England's success in the World Cup in Russia and the present situation.

The next chapter explores how the Premier League would change through Brexit in terms of immigration. This chapter clarified that foreign players are crucial for success of the Premier League. However, when the UK's immigration rules change due to Brexit, it might affect the football transfer systems. After this change has happened, will foreign footballers be regarded as the same as other immigrants? Or will they be regarded as significant imports and be prioritised? By discussing the relationship between foreign footballers and immigrants, I will clarify how people should consider immigration issues.

### **Chapter 3 The Impact of Brexit on the Premier League**

This chapter explores the effects of Brexit on the Premier League. The first chapter clarified that immigration was one of the crucial reasons for British people's votes in the Brexit referendum. The second chapter explored the importance of foreign players for the Premier League. Brexit would diminish the number of European players in the Premier League, therefore the situation of the Premier League after the UK leaves the EU will be different from the present. Firstly, the effects on the Premier League are explored. Secondly, post-Brexit transfer system is discussed.

#### **3-1. Impact on the Premier League**

This section explores a situation of the Premier League when they own less foreign players compared to the present. As a result of the declaration of Brexit, the Premier League now includes a potential crisis that they may no longer retain the competitiveness, popularity, and profitability with less foreign players. By analysing the effects of Brexit on the Premier League, I would like to anticipate the future of the Premier League in terms of immigration.

I state that Brexit will affect the Premier League massively, even though some people consider that the effects might not last longer. We would confirm a change in the short term, especially in the composition of nationalities. Moreover, the number of foreign players will decline due to the restriction of immigration and the change will decrease the value of the league. However, some people wonder that the case is rather a chance for England to make their national talents flourish. Slater (2016), a journalist of BBC Sport, quoted what Anderson, who is a football agent, mentioned the future Premier League in his article that "the short-term impact would be huge but you could argue that it will help in the long term as it could force clubs to concentrate on home-grown talent" (para.5). It is correct that decreasing foreign stars means an increase of their national talents and an opportunity to play in many matches will also increase. However, I consider that it will not be advantageous for the Premier League and English players both in the long and short term.

The high competitiveness will be threatened due to the lack of foreign talents. The Big 6 clubs will not be affected much compared to others because they have large budgets to attract star players. Cohen and Couse (2017), sport lawyers of Mills & Reeve, a law firm, analysed the post-Brexit Premier League. They stated that the league will still have "truly world class players." Those high-quality players are valuable in the market, therefore the Big 6 clubs are eager to obtain them. Even after Brexit, top players will sign with those clubs because of higher wages and a developed environment.

Meanwhile, at the present, other clubs try to catch up with the Big 6 by finding potential players. As explained before, Leicester's victory resulted in players such as Kante and Mahrez who were not considerably famous before moving into the team. If the current rules for non-EU players had been adopted to them, they could not have moved into the Premier League and the victory would not have happened. The competitive balance will collapse if the Big 6 clubs only keep attracting top-talents and others clubs cannot compete with the Big 6 clubs without potential star players.

Furthermore, the situation of less foreign players is disadvantageous for English players. Foreign players are the ones who develop English players by playing and practising with them. Campos (2016), a professor of Economics and Finance, explained the importance of retaining foreign players for the league. He stated that football rules are the same all over the world but their interpretation and playing styles are slightly different in each country, therefore he emphasised the importance of retaining foreign footballers. In the globalised football environment, players can learn different football styles from other countries' players. From this analysis, it is also considered that under the current situation, English players have more opportunities to win in international matches since they have had plenty of experiences to learn and understand other football cultures. However, when the league loses the global environment, English players also lose an environment to learn other football norms. The opportunities to play in matches for English players will increase but chances to learn and brush up their skills will decrease.

There are not only negative outcomes, but also positive ones. The Premier League can concentrate more on non-EU players after Brexit. A writer with *the Telegraph*, Criddle (2016) explained the advantage of restricting EU players by quoting what Monteith, who is a political member of the Leave party argued. Monteith stated that "once we leave the EU, the UK will be free to treat footballers from all countries equally, which will broaden the pool of talent for our teams, not reduce it" (para.17). His statement clarifies that the current Premier League is heavily focusing on European players because the free movement rule enables the league to obtain European players easily. However, after Brexit, they will be forced to look at other potential pools, and it will provide a possibility to find future star players. The number of foreign players might decrease, but the number of nationalities could increase and the diversity leads players to the more studiable environment.

Furthermore, the opportunities to win the title of the Champions League would increase. When the competitiveness has collapsed and the Big 6 teams keep strengthening their power and others suffer from finding potential players, it will be

quite easy for the Big 6 clubs to keep winning in the league. In the 2000s, Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea were called “the Big 4” and top two teams of the Premier League were always from the Big 4. Meanwhile, the Big 4 proceeded in the final of the Champions League 6 times in the ten years. After Manchester City and Tottenham became owned by rich investors and “the Big 6” started in 2010s, top two teams are always dominant by the Big 6, except for Leicester’s victory in the 2015/16 season. Compared to the competitive Premier League, top two teams of Spanish La Liga are always dominant by 3 teams (Barcelona, Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid). Therefore, it is not much difficult for these Spanish clubs to keep winning in the league, and it reflects on the recent results of the Champions League. In the 8 years from 2010 to 2018, there were 16 teams proceeded into the final, and the Spanish clubs played in the final for 8 times and the English clubs played for 3 times. In contrast, in the 8 years from 2001 to 2009, before the Big 6 started, there were 2 Spanish teams and 6 English clubs in the finals. Before the Premier League gained the more competitiveness, the English clubs had been successful in the Champions League. When the difficulty of winning the title of the Premier League decrease after Brexit due to the widening gap between the Big 6 clubs and others, there would be less competitiveness in the Premier League and the English clubs might be able to succeed in the Champions League.

As clarified before, the importance of foreign players for the Premier League is seen in its popularity derived from the competitiveness. From this perspective, foreign footballers can be regarded as crucial imported goods for the UK. Meanwhile, foreign footballers can be treated as workers from overseas as the example of the Bosman Ruling. Some state the transferring rule for EU players will be the same as the one for non-EU players after Brexit, and others argue the transferring rule for EU players will not change. From the point of view of immigration, how can we regard foreign footballers?

This section explored potential impact on the Premier League after Brexit. Brexit forces the Premier League to be domestic and it will help English players obtain more opportunities to challenge. However, it is advantageous for them because they will have less experience to work with foreign players who practise different football cultures. Brexit will bring not only negative impacts, but also positive ones. The Premier League has a chance to find potential football players not only from EU countries, but also from all over the world equally. Furthermore, Brexit will carry more opportunities for clubs in the Premier League, especially the Big 6 to win the Champions League title. In the next section, the post-Brexit football transferring rules are discussed in order to

understand how foreign footballers will be regarded.

### **3-2. Debate of post-Brexit transfer system**

In the end of the last section, I raised the question, “how will foreign footballers be regarded after Brexit?” There is a debate in the media about football transfer rules for the Premier League; whether the Premier League is still able to attain a large number of European players or not. This section explores both sides of the opinion about post-Brexit football transfer system for the Premier League.

The current transfer rule has increased the number of foreign players who lead to the popularity of the league. According to Lyons, Arnett, Fardel, Zapponi and Nardelli (2015), who are journalists of *the Guardian*, in the current rule players who own EU citizenship can enter to the Premier League freely. Meanwhile, players from outside EU countries are required for work visas (Lyons et al., 2015). Those present rules are producing the situation of the Premier League which retains many foreign players. However, the UK will be outside the EU after Brexit, and the current rule will possibly be amended. In general it is thought it will become difficult for European players to join Premier League clubs because of no more free movement which is for EU citizens, and the other side of argument contradicts it, stating that the Premier League will still be able to sign with many European players because they are important for the UK. Interpretation differs depending on how people regard EU players. Which situation will possibly occur in the future?

Before discussing the two views, the current transfer rules are elucidated. Of course, players from EU countries are not restricted due to the Bosman Ruling. BBC News (2018) explained that EU citizens have rights to work within the EU territory, thus football players who hold EU citizenship are not banned from playing in the Premier League. However, according to BBC News, the rules for non-EU players are different. In order to get a work permit, a player needs a Governing Body Endorsement (GBE) from the Football Association. In addition, the GBE is granted when a player has passed the rule that how many matches he/she has played for their national team within two years. The details are below:

- 1 to 10 on FIFA rankings - at least 30%
- 11 to 20 on FIFA rankings - at least 45%
- 21 to 30 on FIFA ranking – at least 60%
- 31 to 50 on FIFA rankings – at least 75%

It enables people to understand who can play in the Premier League. However, if a player does not fulfil the rule, their prospective clubs can apply to the Exceptions Panel, stating that the player’s value is enough to play in the Premier League by showing

his/her experiences, for example, one in the Champions League (BBC News, 2018). When looking at the current rules, they do not make it difficult for EU players to join a Premier League club, but there are surely several obstructions for non-EU players.

Firstly, the view that Brexit will restrict European players is explored. The UK leaves the EU through Brexit thus it is obvious that a large number of immigrants from EU countries will be diminished. Once they have decided to leave the EU, it is difficult to change the result or re-conduct the referendum. Even though football is one of the symbols of British identity and the Premier League is quite significant for the British society and economy, the government would not treat the Premier League as special. Lyons et al. (2015) stated that it could become difficult to justify one rule for football clubs and a different rule for other industries. They also argued that it would be discriminatory to set one special rule for Europeans and another for football players from the rest of the world. When the UK is in the EU, they are a part of the EU thus people from the EU have rights to be treated as a part of the UK. However, after they leave the EU, EU citizens are not a part of the UK, therefore they should not be treated specially.

It is also discriminatory to regard football players as special compared to other immigrants, after the UK leaves the EU. Football players provide a huge impact on the British society, but they are the same as other immigrants who come to the UK to work. Slater (2016) stated that footballers are considered workers under the law, thus they cannot be treated as a special category. As mentioned before, there are many people who migrate to the UK by seeking better wages and even some of them deal with a job which is disliked by British people. They are also providing a big impact on the British society without British people's awareness. *The Guardian* (2004) noted what Tony Blair, a former British Prime Minister, stated to the public in 2004. Blair argued that "population mobility and migration has been crucial to our economic success, migration levels in the UK are in line with comparable countries, we are already selective about who comes into Britain and many that do are essential to our public services" (para.54). As Blair pointed out the importance of immigrants and the fact that British people were selective about which immigrants can enter to the UK, there must be a tendency that British people distinguish which immigrants are important for them. I state that immigrants should be treated equally as long as both high-skill immigrants and low-skill immigrants contribute the society. British people must not overlook how hard immigrants support their society without British people's awareness.

Secondly, the view that the current rule would last even after Brexit is explored. Football is definitely a key industry for British society. McMahon (2015), a writer of

*Forbes*, explained that the Premier League contributed \$9.4B to the UK in the 2013/14 season and attracted 800,000 foreign visitors to the UK to attend matches. It is extremely crucial for the British economy and also significant to show football as a symbol of a British culture to the world. According to BBC Sport (2018), a Premier League spokesperson stated that “We have held positive discussions with Government about the importance of access to European players for our clubs, and the many cultural and economic benefits a globally popular Premier League brings to the UK” (para.11). This statement is also true because the Premier League has been attracting fans’ interests and producing a large number of money. McLaughlin (2018), a journalist of BBC Scotland also followed what the Premier League Spokesperson stated by explaining that “the UK government should look favourably upon football because of its place in British society” (para.11). If British people who wish the league to remain exciting voted for Leave, it could be stated that they voted for the wrong side because Brexit has a possibility of taking the popularity of the Premier League away. As Dr Miller, who is a scholar of the MBA (football industries) programme stated in an interview with the writers of *the Guardian*, Lyons et al. (2015) that the Premier League is a hugely important export, it is worth protecting from a coming crisis. The advocates of this view prioritise the prosperity of the Premier League because it is significant for the UK. It has been clarified that the side which wishes to keep the prosperity of the Premier League mainly states that football is one of the cultural exports for the UK, therefore, it will be a huge loss for them.

Footballers could be regarded as people who have special ability. They are not amateur players. From this view-point, they are different from immigrants who come to the UK to do every job which generates money. Miller described footballers as “highly talented individuals.” Footballers make the British society flourish by providing their skills and attracting many fans from the world. Considering the present situation, it might be possible to divide footballers from immigrants. However, I state that it is selfish to regard footballers as more valuable.

The same as footballers, other immigrants are also valuable for the British society. Cohen and Couse (2017), who are journalists of *the Independent*, utilised what the Prime Minister May declared. She stated that the UK will decrease immigrants by making the current immigration rules stricter. However, according to Wigmore (2018), a writer of *the Telegraph*, the British Home Office which is responsible for immigration, security, law and order, explained to British citizens that “welcomes the brightest and best who want to work hard and contribute” (para.5). Even though the UK will become stricter to immigrants, the UK is willing to accept people who “work hard and

contribute” to the British society. Should foreign footballers be prioritised because their achievements are impactful? If so, are other immigrants not contributing to the British society even though they support the British society without British people’s awareness?

In football, foreign players are providing a huge and positive impact, therefore they are often prioritised. I state that there is a misunderstanding that footballers are different from other workers. As Blair clarified, the positive effects of retaining immigrants and immigrants’ contributions to the society are considerably huge. People must not be misled that football immigrants and others are different. Both of them are the people who “work hard and contribute” to the society. As negative incidents caused by immigrants were the reasons of people’s misunderstandings about immigrations, people only complain and focus on negative factors. However, football is a quite positive topic and it hardly connects to negative topics about immigration, therefore people regard them as different from other immigrants. People must not only look at positive topics, also should explore negative ones.

In order not to be misled about immigration, people must not just listen and believe what politicians and other people state, and they must consider immigration by themselves from every direction. After receiving information about immigration, people should suspect and confirm whether the information is true or not. In people’s discussion about Brexit, some people were misled by other people’s wrong information about immigration and voted for Leave. If those people had reconsider the issue by analysing the positive factors of immigration, and they would have discovered other opinions, the result of the referendum might have been different. The significance of this thesis is that I clarified many British people’s misinterpretation about immigration through Brexit and the Premier League, and showed the importance of discussing immigration issues not only from one direction, but also from the other direction.

In this section, the question, “Whether EU footballers should be regarded as special or not” is analysed with two views. One side states that the current free transfer rule would be changed and there is no option to give favourable treatments to European people and footballers. The other side argues that the current rule would last because they are special for the British society. I found a misinterpretation in that footballers are regarded as special and other workers are not. In the end, I stated the importance of discussing immigration issues from every direction.

## **Conclusion**

Overall this thesis explored British immigration through Brexit and the Premier League by illuminating British people notice potential transitions of their cultures through Brexit. In this conclusion part, I will sum up the ideas I analysed in the previous chapters and provide an idea; how to examine immigration without misinterpretation.

Chapter One analysed the circumstances of Brexit. British people became sceptical towards the government which betrayed people's expectations over time, and also some of them were apathetic towards Brexit. Leave supporters, such as Boris Johnson, were considerably radical, but apathetic people started to depend on them and consequently, the Leave party won the election. I utilised my research group and my interviews and journalists' interviews of British people to learn decisive factors which led people to vote for Leave/Remain. Those interviews revealed immigration was a significant element in British people's choice because once the UK leaves the EU, British people will not be able to access Europe freely, and the UK will not accept many immigrants by creating stricter immigration rules. Moreover, I discovered that British people were misled immigrants. Even though people who are constructing and enriching the society are not only British people, but also immigrants, many of British people are not aware of it.

In Chapter Two, I analysed the Premier League, in order to understand the relationship between immigration and the British precious culture, football. I clarified that the league has become more popular due to internationalization. The Bosman Ruling enabled all the leagues in the EU countries, including the Premier League, to gain more EU players without working visas because the court decided that players are also immigrants who wish to work overseas. Those foreign players have been generating the high-competitiveness of the Premier League which is a core factor of the popularity. By retaining many foreign players and managers, the Premier League acquires diverse football tactics which make a better environment for players. In general, some people believe foreign players steal opportunities from British players, but British players are actually blessed with playing alongside foreign skilful players.

Chapter Three revealed how the future of the Premier League will become through Brexit in terms of an immigration transition. I clarified the impact of Brexit on the Premier League which would decrease the number of foreign players and will lead to a disadvantage of the UK. However, there also are positive factors for the Premier League, such as young British talents gaining more opportunities, or carrying more possibilities for the Big 6 clubs to win the Champions League title. I explored the debate, whether EU players and footballers are regarded as special workers or not. After

analysing it, I discovered that British people distinguish foreign footballers from other immigrants by prioritising foreign footballers as valuable imports. In the end, I stated that it is important for people to regard foreign footballers and other immigrants as equal because both of them are contributing to the society.

It is a problem that people are misled by being apathetic about political issues and believing other people's opinion. The same as foreign footballers, even law-skill immigrant workers are also supporting the British society without British people's awareness. Therefore, it is wrong to regard footballers as valuable imports, and other immigrant workers as harmful nuisances. Understanding the importance of foreign footballers is not much difficult because football is one of the most famous cultures in the UK and people wish to keep the Premier League best. However, understanding the significance of immigrant workers is quite difficult because people generally do not care about how much those immigrants are providing impacts on the British society and even only focus on immigrants' negative aspects. Therefore people prioritise foreign footballers as profits and ignore other immigrants as useless. I would like to state that people should regard foreign footballers and other immigrants equally because both of them are important for managing the society. In order not to misinterpret, people should not just listen to what politicians and other people state. After receiving information from other people, people should consider the issue by themselves and suspect whether the information is true or not from every respect. The significance of this thesis is that I clarified many British people's misinterpretation about immigration through Brexit and the Premier League, and showed that the importance of recognising every immigrant equally as an important contributor for the British society.

I hypothesize that the immigration issue of the UK is reflected on Japan. The Japanese government will issue a new immigrant law to accept more foreign workers who cover the shortage of Japanese labour power. When Japan has gained many of immigrants, some Japanese people may consider those people are harmful for Japan. In order not to misinterpret about immigrants in the future, Japanese people can learn how immigrants contribute to a society through the case of the UK. Brexit happens because people were apathetic and had misled information. Political decisions would affect their lives and incur numerous changes thus people must not be apathetic towards political matters and must understand them correctly without misinterpretations.

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