



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



**Translation and Translanguaging**

Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities

# *Working Papers in Translanguaging and Translation*

## **Paper 35**

### **Intercultural moments in translating the socio-legal systems**

Zhu Hua<sup>1</sup>, Li Wei<sup>2</sup> and Daria Jankowicz-Pytel<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Birkbeck, University of London and <sup>2</sup> UCL Institute of Education

A report on Phase Four of the London case study of AHRC-funded Translating Cultures project, “Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities”. (AH/L007096/1)

***Please reference as:***

Zhu Hua, Li Wei and Jankowicz-Pytel, D. (2018). Intercultural moments in translating the socio-legal systems (WP. 35).

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## 1. Executive Summary

This study investigates intercultural moments in everyday multiculturalism in an institutional setting. It focuses on how cultural and linguistic differences between people become salient, how people live with, experience and negotiate these differences on the ground and what role translanguaging plays in these two processes. It is based on a four-month linguistic ethnographic study between March and June, 2016 in a socio-legal advice centre offering support to Eastern Europeans in the UK (known as East European Advice Centre or EEAC).

Our interviews and conversations during the data collection period created a space for talking about intercultural and multilingual living with our key participant, Renata, a senior advisor in EEAC. Born and grown up in Warsaw, Renata has lived in the UK since 1981. Speaking Polish as a first language and English with high proficiency, she believes that the key to success of learning a second language is to use it. Technical and professional terms in English do not need to be translated in the advice centre, as they have less to do with which languages they appear in, but more to do with one's familiarity with the subject matter.

As an organisation supporting migrants in the UK, EEAC is a product of changing political dynamics between the UK, Poland and Eastern Europe. It was initially set up as a charity to help Polish people who were stranded in Britain during the period of Martial Law in Poland in the 1980s and became an organisation supporting Eastern Europeans in the UK several years later. It is currently repositioning itself as a resource centre, adding educational dimension to its existing main areas of work in advice, advocacy and awareness-raising concerning matters of importance to Eastern Europeans in the UK. Unexpectedly, EEAC has also found itself speaking out for Polish communities in the media and leading campaigns against hate crimes since June 2016, the EU referendum, when Polish communities in the UK became the focus of tensions and incidents of (linguistic) xenophobia escalated.

The nature of the work in EEAC requires a multilingual outlook in the workplace. Language audit by the research team shows an organically developed grass-roots approach to multilingual needs in the workplace. Specifically, Polish is perceived as the desired language of this workplace where and when the staff have choices, and English as the *de facto* working language with external organisations (evidenced by the predominant presence of English on the website and in the social media). There are some attempts to use different languages to reach different communities (e.g. leaflets and social media posting). While translation is perceived and used as a way of meeting language needs, it is also used to calibrate meaning and as a tool to demonstrate the nuanced difference between the socio-legal systems of different countries. Despite many examples of flexible multilingualism observed by the research team, languages are largely seen as discrete entities and there is a monolingual ideology which equates one language with one community/nation.

Renata, as a socio-legal advisor, plays a range of discrepant roles in navigating clients through the system and making institutional discourses accessible to her clients. She translates the system and in contrast with often bureaucratic and dehumanised nature of institutional practices, she “humanises” the system and often becomes a ratified participant in the conversation between her clients and other agencies. Above all, her role is to resemiotise, to work with multiple semiotics, to translate chains of multiple semiotics including clients' narratives, body movements, internet, technology, etc, into writing and paperwork. Seeing the institutional practices as resemiotisation provides an interesting dimension to the notion of translanguaging: particularly, how speakers go beyond conventional divides between languages and modalities and bring together different

modalities. There is an emphasis on writing, records and documents. As evidence of accountability, obligation and responsibility in the system, these boundary objects often become aims and end products of advisory meetings.

To resemiotise, calibration is needed to determine the relevance and accuracy of clients' narratives against the system. Renata uses a variety of practices to calibrate, including disambiguating through recasting and repeating the client's replies using translation equivalents in different languages, rephrasing ambiguous words, and breaking down the questions. Renata also knows when to let it pass, to ignore anomalies and ambiguities and to go with flow. These different practices are brought together in the process of resemiotisation in the institutional setting. They are manifestations of how people live with, experience and negotiate cultural and linguistic difference on the ground.

## 2. Introduction

This study investigates intercultural moments in everyday multiculturalism. Everyday multiculturalism is “*the everyday practice* and lived experience of diversity in specific situations and spaces of encounter” (Wise and Velayutham, 2009, p.3, emphasis original). Departing from the traditional top-down approach to multiculturalism such as multicultural citizenship or education, everyday multiculturalism offers an approach to explore how people live with, experience and negotiate cultural differences on the ground, and how “wider structures and discourse filter through to the realm of everyday practice, exchange and meaning making” (ibid, p.3).

Cultural differences, however, are neither given nor static. They are “brought about” as opposed to simply “brought along” (Li Wei, 1998). Intercultural moments are points in time in encounters “during which cultural and linguistic differences between people become manifest” (Bolden, 2014, p.208). While there have been some works drawing attention to the necessity of focusing on moments in encounters (for example, moment analysis in Li Wei, 2011; positioning theory in Harré & Langenhove, 1998), seeing cultural difference as something emerged from, and jointly constructed through interactions moment by moment has its own additional benefits. It minimises the risk of circularity and reification, problems facing many studies of intercultural communication as pointed out in Scollon, Scollon and Jones (2012, p.4). It also restores speakers’ or participants’ agency to the central role in social interaction. Participants can employ a range of interactional work and discursive practices to bring about cultural differences. Translanguaging practices, as a dynamic meaning-making process whereby multilingual speakers go beyond the conventional divide between languages and modalities to act, to know, and to be (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014), would play an important role in understanding intercultural moments.

While cultural differences are often interpreted through the categories and labels of ethnicity, nationality, geographical area, race, community, gender, or social class, they exist at many different levels, in different scales and for different purposes. In this report, we are interested to explore how institutional and professional cultures play out in an organisation providing socio-legal advice to clients of East European backgrounds in London. Through a focus on intercultural moments in interactions and epistemological stance of seeing culture as emergent and discursive, we explore two questions:

1. How do people go about everyday multiculturalism in an institutional setting which mediates between the socio-legal system and those who need help to navigate the system?
2. How are cultural and linguistic differences manifested and constructed in interactions?
3. How does translanguaging help us to understand intercultural moments in everyday multiculturalism?

### 3. Research Methodology and data

The overall research methodology for the project, TLANG, is linguistic ethnography, a methodology that combines linguistics and ethnography and thereby allows researchers to develop a deep understanding of interactions embedded in observable (cultural) practices and beliefs of people in a specific time and context. What makes linguistic ethnography particularly appealing is that it sees interactions as social actions, shaping the context while at the same time being shaped by the context, congruent to our epistemological stance on culture. In addition, ethnography provides a means to linking “the micro to the macro, the small to the large, the varied to the routine, the individual to the social, the creative to the constraining, and the historical to the present and to the future (Copland & Creese, 2015, p.8). It is, therefore, conducive to not only identifying but also understanding intercultural moments in encounters.

As in the business, heritage and sports phrases of the London-based part of this project (Zhu Hua, Li Wei & Lyons, 2015; Zhu Hua, Li Wei & Lyons, 2016; Zhu Hua, Li Wei & Jankowicz-Pytel, 2017), the data for this socio-legal phase were collected through the means of ethnographic observations (fieldnotes), recordings (audio and video recording and transcriptions), linguistic landscaping (photographs) and interviews (transcription). In addition, social media data were collected through screenshots and archiving. Table 1 offers an overview of the data collected through different means. Additional notes regarding the context and process of different types of data collection and analysis are given below. The profile and information about the Key Participant (KP) will be provided in Sections 4 separately.

Table 1 Overview of data in the London Law case study

Types of data	Number/Length
<b>Fieldnotes</b> (no. & words)	25 56,315
<b>Video/film</b> (no. hrs/mins)	1h:58m:24s
<b>Audio</b> (no. hrs/mins)	35h:36m:31s
<b>Interviews</b>	2:8:39
<b>Social media</b>	Text message: 4 screen shots; Email: 3 sets of exchanges; WhatsApp message:4 EEAC Facebook: 37 pages saved as pdf; EEAC Twitter: 52 pages saved as pdf; EEAC in the media: 24 screenshots;
<b>Photograph</b>	199
<b>Publicity materials</b>	2 adverts/posters

#### 3.1 Fieldnotes

Between March and June 2016 the London TLANG team (ZH, LW and DJP) carried out observations of the socio-legal advice practice provided by East European Advice Centre (EEAC), a charity delivering support and information to people from the 2004 and 2007 EU accession countries including Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The team was given access to four types of activities and practices including:

- Appointment-only advice sessions. Clients can book a session of up to two hours with an adviser in advance. A fee will be charged for consultation, depending on their individual circumstances.
- Drop-in advice sessions. No appointments are needed. Free advice is offered over a slot of 15 minutes on two designated days of weeks.
- Community outreach workshops in which EEAC community outreach adviser gives talks on employment rights or hate crimes in venues outside the centre.
- A team meeting among the staff.

With clients who were booked in advance, their consents were negotiated in two stages. Firstly, clients' provisional permissions were sought by our Key Participant while she was arranging appointments; next, the consents were reconfirmed and signed on clients' arrivals in researchers' and Renata's presence. People turning up for drop-in sessions were individually approached by Renata prior to their advice sessions and consents were negotiated on the spot in presence of the TLANG researchers.

In total, the team produced a set of 25 fieldnotes of 56,315 words. The majority of the fieldnotes were observations of advice sessions between our Key Participant, Renata, and individual clients in EEAC offices.

### **3.2 Audio and video data**

Audio data were collected during observation of advice-giving sessions delivered by Renata in her office in EEAC premises. The length of recorded files varies as it depends on clients' individual circumstances and on the type of a session delivered. Audio recording was agreed with clients prior to the observations as part of written consents. Data was collected using Olympus DM-450 digital voice recorder. During the observations, the recorder was placed either on the desk by which both Renata and a client were sitting or on the side table next to the client's seat. The room, in which data was recorded, was small, fitting approximately four chairs and the desk. Therefore, there were no issues with capturing a good quality sound. For ethical reasons, the recorder was stopped or paused during observations when personal information was revealed and when it was possible to do, for example, when Renata was calling other institutions on behalf of clients and was giving out client's personal details as part of identity verification.

Video recording was carried out during the team meeting to which the team was invited.

A selection of recorded data was transcribed and translated by DJP. These include one complete transcription of an advisory session, a community outreach session and a team meeting and some selected extracts referred to in our fieldnotes.

### **3.3 Interview**

Four semi-structured interviews were conducted in Polish and English with two participants: the Key Participant Renata, a welfare advisor, and the co-participant BD (the Director) in the last one about social media and communication (detailed information about the Key Participant could be found in Section 5). Renata preferred to speak Polish in interviews. There were instances where questions were read out in English and she answered in Polish. With BD, the situation was different. She volunteered to join the interview about social media and communication, probably because she is the one who maintains social media for the organisation. While at first BD used a mixture of Polish and English expressions in the interview, she immediately switched and spoke English until the end of the interview when DJP made a comment that if BD preferred, she could speak English and joked at least she will have less material to translate.

The interviews were held on the premises of the research venue (EEAC) and focused on the following topics:

- a. Migration and Professional Work - Interview with Renata in Polish, date of interview: 13.04.16, length of interview: 01:11:58; referred to as I1M
- b. Language – Interview with Renata in Polish, date of interview: 15.06.16, length of interview: 00:46: 02; referred to as I2M
- c. Social Media and Communication (1<sup>st</sup> part) – Interview with Renata in Polish, date of interview: 13.07.16, length of interview: 00:30:04; referred to as I3M
- d. Social Media and Communication (2nd part) – Interview with BD in Polish and English, date of interview: 13.07.16, length of interview: 00:20:25; referred to as I4B

### **3.4 Social media**

Initially we planned to collect the use of social media by Renata. However, it transpired half way through the observation that Renata only use social media occasionally for personal communication. We then changed the focus to the institutional use of social media, to allow the team to investigate the use of social media in the workplace. Partly because of this change in the focus, we also decided to collect the information about EEAC's media appearances, as we realised that EEAC actively uses social media to publicise their media coverage.

DJP regularly collected social media data and information about EEAC's media appearances from EEAC website, Facebook and Twitter accounts, using the following steps:

- a. Collecting instances of EEAC appearances mentioned on their website in the MS document under the date.
- b. Carrying out online search regularly, using EEAC/EERC and the participants' name as the search keys.
- c. Setting up a Google account daily search using the same keywords to receive an email once the keys are mentioned online
- d. Saving all online instances/webpages as pdf documents under the date and the title of the article.
- e. Saving all the content of the EEAC Facebook page accessible at the end of the period of data collection and saved it as a pdf file.
- f. Saving all the content of the EEAC Twitter page accessible as a pdf file.

### **3.5 Photographs**

Photographs were taken, where appropriate, during observations primarily to document surroundings, space, and the display of signs in the research site. They allow us to capture linguistic landscape, which is defined as "visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region" (Landry and Bourhis, 1997, p.23) and to situate practices and interactions in contexts.

## 4. The organisation: East European Advice Centre

The organisation we observed is the East European Advice Centre (EEAC). It was originally established as the *Polish Refugee Rights Group* in the early 1980s in London to help the Polish people who were stranded in Britain during the period of Martial Law in Poland. In 1987 the group was renamed and registered as EEAC. Since 2005 it became a charitable company limited by guarantee. In July 2016, it changed its name to East European Resource Centre (EERC).

Over the years, the organisation extended the number of communities it works with/for. Currently, it supports immigrants from across/throughout Central and East Europe. Nonetheless, its clients are predominantly Polish, possibly due to the company's location very close to the Polish Social and Cultural Association (Polski Ośrodek Społeczno Kulturalny, or POSK), a well-known Polish Cultural Centre, and in the area of West London historically populated by Polish communities established since WWII.

### 4.1 Main areas of work

The organisation has three main areas of work according to its website. These are:

1. Delivery of information, advice and advocacy for disadvantaged Eastern European migrants in need of help to navigate British systems;
2. Policy work through research, needs analysis and raising awareness of issues affecting integration of Eastern Europeans into the British society;
3. Awareness raising through information, outreach and campaigns on rights of Eastern Europeans in London.

In offering support to Eastern Europeans in the UK as their main areas of work (1st and 3rd bullet points above), their main service and public engagement activities are as follows:

- General advice sessions
- Free Advice Line
- Advice session by appointments (two hours slots),
- Group and individual outreach sessions

With the recent name change from EEAC to EERC, the organisation expands its offering by providing educational resources (e.g. language teaching and IT support). The leaflet (Figures 1 and 2) illustrates the types of advice and range of service offered by EEAC before its name change in July 2016.



*Figure 1 EEAC leaflet in English: front*



*Figure 2 EEAC leaflet in English: back*

In relation to policy work, the organisation is active in raising awareness of discrimination against East European immigrants in the UK through speaking out in the media, campaigning through social media, and lobbying. Their work became very prominent after the EU Referendum in June 2016.

The following screen shot (Figure 3) of news items from their website gives some examples of policy work in which EEAC has been involved.

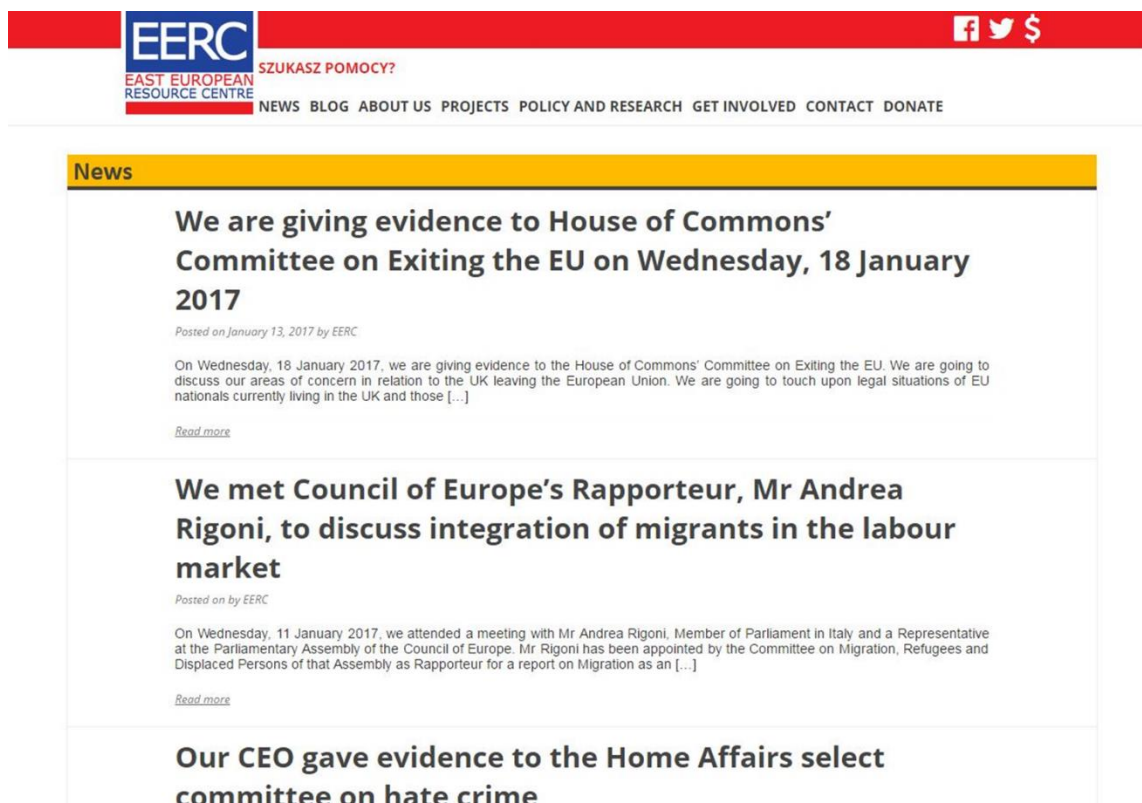


Figure 3 Screen shot of EEAC website news section regarding their policy work

In addition to these public engagement and service activities, the organisation also invests a considerable amount of effort in building relationships with potential funders and promoting its public image and brand. Our fieldnotes provide an account of the challenges EEAC face in funding.

ZH asked about the funding model; Renata explained they need to apply for fundings to different organisations and that this is what B, our second Key Participant (the Director of the Charity) focuses on as one of her work key duties.

When asked about whether the increased number of applicants makes their applications for funds more successful, Renata answered that yes and no because the funds are shrinking in general and that nowadays the Government is looking at their abilities to raise funds themselves. (LonLawFn20160303\_DJP)

When they are gone, LW asks about the charge. Renata explains that on Mondays and Fridays there are free drop in sessions. Weekdays are not always free and they may cost a bit as EEAC institution needs to support itself. They had the funding from other charities like trust for London, they have applied for Polish support but they are still waiting since last year because there was change of Polish government. (LonLawFn20160318\_DJP)

## 4.2 Venue

EEAC is located in Ravenscourt and Hammersmith, West London, an area well known for being a home to Polish communities since the Second World War. Its entry is via the Polish Social and Cultural Association (Polski Ośrodek Społeczno Kulturalny (POSK)) which was established in 1967 and has hosted a number of associations and initiatives promoting Polish culture and

education in the UK. Currently, it is one of the most important Polish institutions in the UK. The building attracted some attention days after the EU referendum when an abusive slogan was found on its front entrance and the press coverage took the line that it was a Brexit-motivated racist attack (although some claims surfaced later, suggesting that the slogan in fact targeted a group within Poland, “not a xenophobic attack”, <http://www.getwestlondon.co.uk/news/west-london-news/polish-centre-graffiti-misunderstood-suggestions-11578663>).

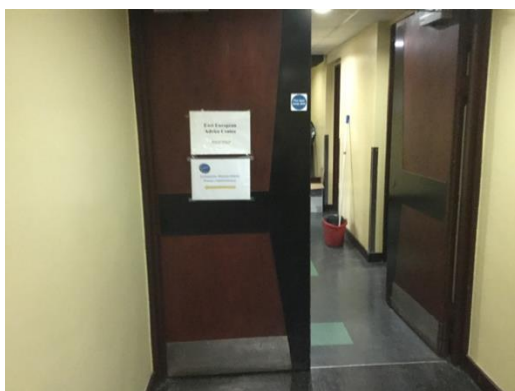


*Figure 4 The building of POSK*



*Figure 5 The entrance to POSK*

EEAC's office is in the pavilion behind the main building of POSK. To reach the office, one needs to go through the narrow corridor of POSK, following the bilingual English/Polish signs.



*Figure 6 The signposted corridor leading to EEAC within POSK*



*Figure 7 The bilingual signage in the main building of POSK*

(Upper bilingual poster:

“East European Advice Centre

Room 18 / Pokój 18

Rear Pavilion/ Tylny Pawilon”

Translation for the lower poster in Polish:

Europejska Wyższa Szkoła Prawa i Administracji

[The European Higher School of the Law and Administration]



*Figure 8 The EEAC pavilion, next to the main building of POSK*

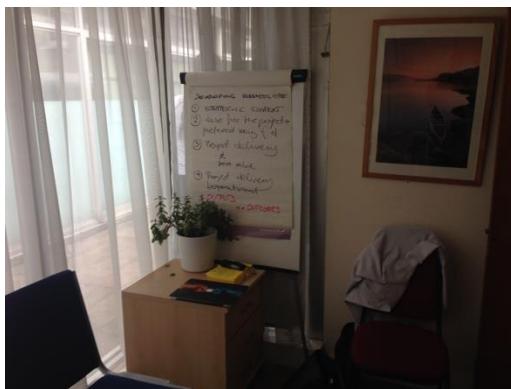
The space inside the EEAC building is limited; it contains a small waiting area leading to a corridor with entrances to four rooms and a toilet. Two of the rooms are used as meeting rooms

with clients; one room stores clients' files and documents and houses a small desk for KZ , an advisor, to work on her employment rights project; the fourth room is DJ's (an advisor) office where she meets her clients regarding immigration matters. The director (BD) seems to work in any of the available space, usually in DJ or KZ's offices, when they are empty.

The observations were usually carried out in the biggest room of the centre (Figure 9). While Renata normally works in the room facing the entrance, she would use the biggest room for her meetings with clients during the observation period when the researchers were on site. The room fits one desk with a laptop, four chairs, a chest of drawers, a fridge and a filing cabinet serving as a side table to prepare hot drinks, suggesting its alternative function of staff common room. The room is professionally decorated and furnished with no signs of personal belongings, no family photos or personal information. The English/Polish bilingual polite notice stating "no abusive behaviours are tolerated" on the wall is strategically located, facing the client's seat and just at eye level.



*Figure 9 Renata's workspace in the bigger consultation room*



*Figure 10 Seats for clients and researchers*



*Figure 11 Renata's seat, fridge and the hot drinks station*



Figure 12 Bilingual polite notice in the room (in English and Polish)

The following fieldnote recalled the moment in the first observation when the researchers positioned themselves.

Renata took her position and sat down next to the desk with a laptop in front of her. The client sat down on a chair next to the desk so that they could see each other. DJP moved her chair out of the way and sat next to the wall, and I sat on a chair next to the door. The recorder was placed on a small table. All seem to be very comfortable and our presence in the room was reduced to minimum, given that this is a small room. (ZH/03.03.16)

As the space in EEAC is tight, the corridor appears to function as a meeting place or a hub:

Renata, DJ and BD are in the office and greet me warmly. Renata says she has just received my email about not needing the bigger room for the observations. DJ and BD join our chat in the corridor, we talk about the morning chores, comfortable shoes, time management, and about struggles with bringing up children; a very gendered talk. (DJP/17.05.16)

I hear Renata and BD in the corridor. They start chatting about a client who has just rung asking for advice. There must have been some misunderstanding before; Renata mentions she was with the client at the solicitors and some advice was given with which Renata has not entirely agrees. (DJP/17.05.16)

Renata speaks in the corridor with her colleague, DJ, about DWP and she suggests planning an outreach session with one of their clients (DJP/01.04.16)

The impact of the small space on interactions is constantly referred to in the fields notes and discussed in the vignette by LW who felt it awkward to sit very close to clients.

The awkwardness was also increased because of the physical space, which was extremely limited. We could hardly fit in two chairs for me and DJP into the office. The first visit I was literally sitting next to the client, and the second time I swapped seats with DJP and sat next to her but my knees could still touch the client's! (law vignette, LW)

I also feel that the interaction seems to be very intimate, as space is small and problems their clients come to see them for are very personal. (LonLaw2016-03-03 ZH)

The booked client, Mrs Z, comes in. She knows we are going to be here observing and writing notes. I wasn't sure what was the purpose of her visit, but I realise she comes here to see Renata to get help in filling her applications forms for PIP. I can imagine guessing the context of this meeting is impossible without knowing Polish but I find briefing LW now and not disturbing Renata and Mrs Z's conversation difficult. The small space and quiet room does not make it any easier. (LonLaw2016-04-21, DJP)

The above fieldnotes recorded some of the challenges related to the space during the data collection, a theme recurring in the ethnographic studies in the previous phases (the similar issue of small space in the Business and Sports phases, and the issue of public vs private space in the Heritage phase). In this current case, small space means that the researchers found it difficult to stay as outsider/observers to interactions in the room, particularly when Renata was engaged in working out or checking something on her own and temporarily paused her conversation with her clients. We learned to manage eye contact and body languages to avoid being seen as detached while at the same time trying not to be drawn into the conversations. We also learned to use the gap in the conversation to have a quick catch up about where the conversation was going between ourselves and to have some small talks with the client and to find out their language learning history.

## 5. Key Participant

Our Key Participant for the law phase is Renata. She is a senior adviser at EEAC and has been working there since 2009. Our interviews and conversations created a space for talking about cultural and linguistic differences and her intercultural and multilingual living.

### 5.1 Life trajectories

Renata was born in Warsaw, Poland, in 1957. Her father was a self-taught speaker of Spanish and Portuguese and a Polish diplomat working for the Portuguese Embassy in Poland. After completing her A levels, she dreamt about training to become an international flight attendant at the Post-Secondary Łazarski's School<sup>1</sup>, a very well-known and highly ranked vocational school in Warsaw. Nevertheless, she was not accepted due to her height being shorter than the requirements. As an alternative, she opted for a two-year steno-typing and stenography course for English and German languages designed for office and administration staff in the same Łazarski's School. As a student in the late 1970s, she worked as a tour guide and interpreter for foreign delegates who attended art events organised by the national Polish Cultural Association in Warsaw.

Soon after finishing Łazarski's School in autumn 1981, Renata visited London to improve her English. She stayed with one of her Polish friends but in December 1981 Martial Law was declared in Poland and Renata could not return home. One year later, she went to visit her brother and parents in a camp run by anti-communist associations in Vienna. Her brother fled to the United States and decided to stay there. Her parents chose to return to Poland, despite the difficult political situation. Her father died there many years later and her mother now lives in Warsaw.

Before Renata left the UK for Vienna, she had been granted an open return to the UK due to the political circumstances in Poland. On her way back to the UK after her short visit to Vienna, she was mistakenly given "an unlimited leave to remain" stamp permitting her to settle in the UK. Since then, she has lived in London. Her two children were born in the UK and brought up as bilingual speakers of Polish and English. One of them is a newly qualified lawyer and the other one is a teacher who moved to France, where she works in a school as a language support coordinator.

Renata had various jobs in London. She worked as a waitress in a restaurant, a qualified masseur in fitness and health clubs and later as an interpreter in hospitals. In the interview, she explained that she learned about the UK socio-legal, welfare and housing systems through her own life experience. She managed the process of her divorce on her own, as she could not afford legal representations or support. She had to learn to deal with a single parent's life difficulties and to search for support available through particular procedures and institutions; she was also regularly helping others with various legal matters. Therefore, she decided to use her skills and she began her career as an adviser. She completed CAB professional training and gained formal qualifications of an adviser and was permanently employed by EEAC since 2013, where she continues her professional development.

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<sup>1</sup> Łazarski School – currently a University in Warsaw, "ranked the best university in Poland in the most recent edition of U-Multirank, a global ranking funded by the European Commission of over 1200 universities worldwide": <http://recruitment.lazarski.pl/start/>.

## 5.2 Language Profiles and attitudes

Renata speaks Polish as her first language and is highly proficient in English. She learned Russian (a compulsory subject in schools in Poland in the 1970s and 1980s), German and English in secondary school. She also took private lessons in English.

Her attitude towards languages and communication were explored in the interviews. For Renata, Polish is the language which she perceives as hers, acquired and “sucked in with my mother’s milk”, as she stated in the following interview extract. In contrast, “English is very much learned and yet not too well”. She feels that she is lacking a lot in English, which is always “kind of second one”.

<b>DJP</b>	<i>tak? to uważasz że jest twój język?</i>	is it? do you feel this is your language?
<b>R</b>	<i>tak . zdecydowanie wyuczony .. wyspany z mlekiem matki . angielski jest nabyty jak najbardziej i to też nie w pełni tego słowa znaczeniu ..</i>	yes . definitely . acquired . sucked in with my mother’s milk . English is very much learned and yet not too well ..
<b>DJP</b>	<i>jak nie w pełni?</i>	not too well?
<b>R</b>	<i>no bo mam tyle braków ... no robię na tyle ile mogę daje sobie radę ale</i>	I am lacking a lot ... I do as much as I can and I manage but
<b>DJP</b>	<i>braków? jakich braków?</i>	lacking? lacking what?
<b>R</b>	<i>w porozumiewaniu się po angielsku</i>	when communicating in English
<b>DJP</b>	<i>ale dlatego że co że brakuje ci słów czy=</i>	but is it because you don’t know words or ?=
<b>R</b>	<i>=no nieraz tak wiadomo że=</i>	=sometimes yes it’s obvious=
<b>DJP</b>	<i>=a w polskim ci nie brakuje?</i>	= but don’t you lack words in Polish (as well)?
<b>R</b>	<i>nie aż tak jak w angielskim .. jest zawsze tym drugim .. gdzieś tam ...</i>	not as much as in English ... it’s always the kind of second one ...somewhere there ..
Source: Interview IM2 (R: Renata:DJP: researcher		

Renata feels more comfortable using Polish rather than English, particularly on some formal occasions such as meetings, court cases. She felt that the limitations were caused by the range of the vocabulary of her English (see the following interview extract).

<b>R</b>	<i>w polskim zawsze się czuję komfortowo . natomiast z używaniem angielskiego . na pewno nie zupełnie (...) jak są to jakieś spotkania czy jakieś powiedzmy sprawy sądowe czy coś takiej wysokiej rangi to wtedy się nie czuję komfortowo . jak muszę mówić . zasobu słów i możliwości</i>	<i>I always feel comfortable with Polish . but to use English . for sure not quite (...) when there are some sort of meetings or let’s say court cases or something of high importance then I don’t feel comfortably . when I have to speak . the range of vocabulary the abilities</i>
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**Language(s) at home.** Renata communicates in Polish with her mother and speaks English with her partner who does not speak Polish. According to her interview, her children were brought up speaking Polish as their heritage language and English as their second language. She sent her daughters to Polish complementary schools. She was “stubborn” and stuck to Polish when answering her children’s questions asked in English.

R	<i>na początku po polsku a potem dziewczyny zaczęły narzucać angielski</i>	<i>at the beginning in Polish and then they started to English</i>
DJP	<i>tak? .. w jakim wieku?</i>	<i>really? ... at what age?</i>
R	<i>miedzy miedzy sobą zaczęły się komunikować najpierw po angielsku natomiast ja zawsze .. stałam twardo i odpowiadałam po polsku ..na pytania nawet zadawane po angielsku no bo je motywowałam do tego żeby mówiły po angielsku .. pooo polsku! ..a one miedzy sobą same to szu szu szu {whisper} i wiesz..</i>	<i>Between themselves started to communicate in English but I always ... I was stubborn and I was answering in Polish .. even to those questions asked in English because I was motivating them to speak English . speeeeeek Polish! (realising her mistake, Renata self-corrected). and they between themselves sh sh sh {whisper} and you know.</i>

Source: Interview IM2

Renata was insistent that “everyone speaks Polish” and reprimanded her children for speaking English and for excluding their grandmother from communication.

R	<i>tak .. no wiesz staramy się mówić po polsku wtedy kiedy wszyscy rozumieją mówią w tym języku jak ktoś nie mówi po angielsku tak jak {moja mama} to ja ciągle strofuję dzieci żeby przechodziły na polski . bo tak to one mówią mówią o polsku i odpływają potem . babcia siedzi i mówi no i co? No co? No i co?</i>	<i>yes .. well we try to speak Polish when everyone {present} speaks Polish when someone doesn't speak English just like {my mother} then I continuously reprimand children and ask to switch to Polish . because they kind of speak and speak in Polish and then drift away . and grandma sits and says and now what? What now?</i>
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She admits that sticking to Polish-only practice with her daughters can become a bit tricky now that they are adults and life “dictates its own conditions.”

R	<i>no .. parents to tylko mama. Tylko po polsku mówie natomiast jeśli chodzi o porozumiewanie się z dziećmi no to też różnie to bywa . czasami . czasami już teraz jak są dorosłe to i żeby się szybciej skomunikować to przechodzę na angielski jak są jakieś krótsze określenia czy bardziej dosadne .. to staram się nie ale życie bywa różne .. {laughin} dyktuje swoje warunki</i>	<i>well .. parents .. this would be only my mother . I speak Polish only with her . but when it comes to children then it gets different . sometime . sometimes . as they are adults now so to communicate faster {easier} I switch to English when there are some shorter expressions or more exact .. generally I try not</i>
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*to but life can be tricky .. {laughing} it  
dictates its own conditions*

*(Source: IM2)*

Renata understands that her children may be not familiar with many words in Polish. Some Polish may be like some sort of “wolves”. When asked later why she used this metaphor, Renata explained that wolves are something unknown, dangerous and difficult to describe in general.

- R *i używając nawet niektórych słów takich których po polsku się normalnie używa tylko dla nich one są jakieś takie jak wilki . gdzieś tam . nie słyszały albo zapomniały albo jedna albo druga .. i ja już od razu wiem że jak coś tam powiem i nie widzę reakcji to znaczy że to w ogóle nie rozumiały ..*
- and even when using these kind of words which are normally used in Polish but for the girls these words are like some sort of wolves somewhere . they haven't heard these words . or they forgot one girl or both of them .. and I know immediately that when I say something and there is no reaction it means they haven't understood a thing ..*

*Source: IM2*

**Learning English and other languages.** Although Renata has lived in the UK for about 35 years and begun learning English in her secondary school, her self-evaluation of her language proficiency in English is modest and contrasts vividly with her perception of her proficiency in Polish. She is very aware that “English here differs from English learned in Poland” and new speakers are afraid to speak. But for Renata, the most important thing is to break the barrier and face challenges by using the skills one already has, as she explains with the analogy of “Kali Kill”, i.e. to make mistakes but achieve their goal. “Kali kill, Kali eat” (Kali zabić Kali jeść’ in Polish) is a phrase referring to someone’s low but functional language skills. Kali is a character from the book “In Desert and Wilderness” (Polish: W pustyni i w puszczy), a popular young adult novel by the Polish author and Nobel Prize-winning novelist Henryk Sienkiewicz, written in 1911. Kali is a good character who helped two kidnapped Polish children to run away across Africa. Kali speaks only some Polish and tends to use verbs in their infinitive forms. The book is compulsory to read in primary schools, Polish classic reading, well known across generations. According to DJP, Kali’s way of speaking captured by the writer is used widely in a variety of contexts by people of all ages.

- R *... to co ja też wielokrotnie mówiłam tu przyjeżdżającym czy dzieciom znajomych którzy . wiadomo że jak tu człowiek z Polski przyjedzie to ten angielski jest inny . z nauczonym angielskim z Polski . (...) i przede wszystkim ludzie się boją mówić a ja mówię .. najważniejszym jest to . żeby przełamać tą barierę i mówić . mówić Kali zabić . robić błędy . ale mówić . bo jak ktoś się będzie koncentrował*
- ... this is what I have told many times to those arriving here or my friends' children who . obviously when someone comes from Poland then this English here differs . from the English learned in Poland . (...) and first of all people are scared to speak and I say .. it is the most important thing . to break this barrier and speak . speak 'Kali kill' . make mistakes . but speak . because if*

*na tym jak ma powiedzieć poprawnie i zajmie  
mu to 10 minut to już jest nieraz po ptakach  
tak zwanych bo już się temat zmienił*

*someone concentrates on trying to say  
something correctly and this takes them 10  
minutes then sometimes it's a day late and a  
dollar short because the subject has already  
changed*

DJP *prawda. tak jest*

*true . that's right*

R *tylko to dla niektórych jest łatwiej przełamać tę  
barierę strachu czy wstydu czy jednego i drugiego  
.. a jednym trudniej*

*but for some it is easier to break the barrier of  
fear or embarrassment or both .. and more  
difficult for others*

*(Source: IM2)*

Renata passed her A levels in Russian and German languages and later she learned Spanish in the classroom for more than a year. She recalled that immediately after her Baccalaureate she spoke better German than English. She does not feel confident in German or Spanish. She believes she would be able to re-gain fluency in Russian, the language politically imposed in schools. Although she did not enjoy learning Russian then, she finds it easy to pick it up.

R *mmmm .. poza rosyjskim to lubiłam {laughing}  
a teraz żałuję że nie lubiłam rosyjskiego no ale  
to dyktowała sytuacja polityczna trochę w  
tamtych czasach . a ponieważ było to narzucane  
to każdy robił co mógł aby się tylko nie uczyć*

*mmmm... I liked them all {laughing} apart  
from Russian {laughing} and now I regret I  
didn't like Russian but it was dictated by the  
political situation during those times. but  
because it was imposed everybody was trying to  
do all they could just not to learn it*

*(Source: IM2)*

**Legal terminology.** Renata discusses the way she deals with legal terminologies. She is aware that she uses untranslated, original English terminology or English expressions to communicate with her Polish speaking colleagues at work, as it is “often much easier to express” and it does not make sense to translate terms and names such as types of benefits into Polish.

Renata *bo my się zajmujemy pewnym rodzajem  
powiedzmy spraw tak że na pewno tutaj  
wędrują jakieś najrozmaitsze skróty które  
tylko my rozumiemy . czego przykładem są  
twoje pytania*

*because we deal with specific type of let's say  
issues so then for sure some abbreviations  
that only we understand travel around {our  
communication} and your questions confirm  
that*

DJP *to prawda*

*that's true*

Renata *sposób załatwiania spraw . to też nieraz dużo  
łatwiej jest określić na przykład po angielsku  
bo to są angielskie wyrażenia no nie  
tłumaczymy na polski nazw benefitów bo to*

*the way of sorting things . it's often much  
easier to express for example in English  
because these are English expressions so we  
don't translate the names of benefits into  
Polish because it would not make sense*

*nie miałoby zupełnie sensu . tylko  
porozumiewamy się ich angielskimi nazwami*

*whatsoever. we communicate using these  
English expressions*

*(Source: IM2)*

She points out that these terms have less to do with which language they appear in, but more to do with listeners' familiarity with the subject matters. To illustrate this point, she gave an example when her children who are bilingual native speakers of English and Polish may also find these kind of English expressions or abbreviations incomprehensible.

*Renata ja jak rozmawiam ze swoim partnerem to on  
akurat w tej samej dziedzinie pracuje tak że  
my tylko rozmawiamy skrótami co dzieci  
nierzadko doprowadza do szału . nie bardzo  
wiedzą nie bardzo ich to interesuje . jest nudne*

*when I talk with my partner then he  
actually is from the same context as we  
happen to work in the same field so we use  
only shorter forms what drives the children  
to madness. they don't really understand  
they are not really interested. it seems boring  
to them*

*(Source: IM2)*

She adds that she finds herself in a similar situation with Polish legal terms. She does not know relevant Polish terminology nor formats of writing Polish legal documents. She has to get help with Polish legal language and formal writing in Polish legal context (IM2).

*Renata ja na swoim przykładzie ale to kilka ładnych  
lat temu . to musiałam się przestawić . co  
prawda miałam trochę pomocy od kuzynki  
która jest adwokatem to trochę mnie tam  
jednak przez telefon powiedziała jak tam  
jakiś wniosek ma brzmieć czy coś . ale  
musiałam sobie sama . jakoś z tym  
wszystkim poradzić w jakichś tam wnioskach  
do sądu w jakichś tam pełnomocnictwach czy  
tam . najrozmaitsze pisma w sprawach  
sądowych . musiałam to jakoś wszystko  
nagryzmolić a nie jednokrotnie pisząc pytałam  
tam gdzie miałam składać . jak to powinno  
brzmieć mniej więcej i wtedy sobie tam coś  
bazgroliłam na kolanach i potem w domu  
pisałam odpowiednio .. skargi jakieś takie  
tego . już nie pamiętam jakie tytuły pism ale  
głównie to wnioski jakieś pełnomocnictwa .  
jakieś prośby .*

*well on my own example but it was many  
years ago . I had to switch . in fact I had  
some support from my cousin who is an  
advocate {in Poland} and she told me quite  
a few things over the phone what this or that  
kind of application should sound like or  
something . but most of it I had to manage  
myself . when it comes to lodging applications  
in courts or to writing letters of attorney or  
something . all sorts of documents for courts .  
I had to scribble it down and quite often I  
was writing it down being in places where I  
was lodging it later on. just to keep some  
rough notes made on my knees about what  
the letter should sound like. and then I was  
rewriting it appropriately .. some complaints  
or .. I don't even remember the titles of these  
documents but mainly applications some sorts  
of letters of authority .. requests .*

*(Source: IM2)*

Renata's comments above point to the difficulties or complexities of legal terminology. Firstly, they are untranslatable and require depth of knowledge of subject matters, which means that even 'native' speakers may have difficulty with legal terminology. Secondly, because their definitions, references and applications are specific to the countries of the languages where they are used, the common practice among legal professionals is to communicate legal terminology in their original languages. Combining the two factors together, the inaccessible nature of legal terminology to lay people and existing barriers to legal advice become greater when differences in language and systems are introduced to the mix. They constitute intercultural moments in everyday multiculturalism in socio-legal advice centres.

**Translation.** During the interviews Renata gave examples of translating from English to Polish for her mother and clients at work and from Polish to English for her partner. She also talks about her role as a translator not only of languages but also that of different systems.

<p><i>Renata</i> bardzo często . którzy {clients} przychodzą i mówią „kiedy ja mam to zapłacić? . Z HMRC przyszedł list i tu jest 200 czy 300 funtów za co to jest? Do kiedy ja mam to zapłacić? Ja nie pamiętam żeby ja miał jakąś nie zapłaconą ratę” . a to jest czek . zwrot podatku . no .</p>	<p><i>very often . they {clients} come and say ‘when should I pay this? . a letter from HMRC arrived and it says £200 or £300 what is it for? by when I have to pay this? I don’t even remember I have ever had an unpaid instalment’ . well and this is a cheque . tax return . right .</i></p>
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<p><i>DJP</i> aha . hm .</p>	<p><i>aha . hm .</i></p>
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<p><i>Renata</i> nie odróżniają tego że oni dostali . to jest czek który nie jest do zapłaty tylko „pan to odwróci i biegnie do banku to panu wpłaca na konto”</p>	<p><i>they don’t see the difference that they have received . that this is a cheque which is not to be paid but ”Sir you tear it off you run to the bank and they will pay this onto your account”</i></p>
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(Source: IM2)

Apart from doing translations and interpreting for family and friends as part of her life in multilingual contexts, Renata has experience of being a trained interpreter who holds NVQ3 qualifications for public interpreting. Before her volunteering work for Citizen Advice Bureau she worked as an interpreter in London hospitals. However, her first experience as an interpreter was interpreting for visitors in Poland when she was working in PAGART (Polish Agency of Art). She recalled one of her interpreting experiences as particularly stressful, when she was sent to interpret a press conference having had no experience in the field yet.

<p><i>R</i> w PAGART – cie</p>	<p><i>when I was working in PAGART . Polish Agency of Art ..</i></p>
<p><i>R</i> (...) pierwszy szok pamiętam przeżyłam językowy jak mnie wystłali na konferencję prasową</p>	<p><i>(...) I remember the first shock I went through language-wise when they sent me for press conference</i></p>

R	<i>(...) bo ktoś tam nie przyszedł ja mówię nie za Boga ja na tyle nie znam . ale ktoś mnie wypchnął i powiedziałam nigdy więcej . bo takiego stresu się tam nabawiłam że mnie zatkało i najlepiej nie wracać do tego {laughing} ... stress straszny był (...)</i>	<i>(...) because someone didn't come and I said I swear to God I don't know that well but someone pushed me to go and I said never again in my life . the stress level was so high that I was stuck and it's better not to come back to this {laughing} ... it was and absolutely dreadful stress (...)</i>
DJP	<i>tak?</i>	<i>really?</i>
R	<i>ja pracowałam przez rok w St Thomas' Hospital jako tłumacz jako tłumacz. (...)</i>	<i>for a year I was working in the St Thomas' Hospital as an interpreter (...)</i>
R	<i>nie . głównie jak przychodzili obcokrajowcy na . Polacy . na appointments jak nie było właśnie jakiegoś interpretera . nawalił nie przyszedł z takiej jakiejś agencji to często się zdarzało że to wtedy ja tam byłam na gorąco</i>	<i>no . mainly when foreigners were coming . Poles . for their appointments when there was no interpreter . the messed up or didn't come from an agency then often it was happening that I was there immediately {to work}</i>
		<i>(Source: IM2)</i>

### 5.3 Talking about intercultural difference

The interview also created a space for talking about cultural differences. When we probed about Renata's sense of identity and belonging, she replied after some hesitation that the UK was her home. The uncertainty was clear in her answer which she softened with a hedging "probably". We could "hear" her thinking process in the rest of the answer: "Home" was the place where her children were born and where she brought them up despite life difficulties. Also, home for Renata was being "off work" to look after the family.

DJP	<i>a gdzie jest twój dom?</i>	<i>and where is your home?</i>
R	<i>{laughing} ...trudno . raczej tu .. mimo że tam też mam rodzinę . dom do którego wracam jak jadę na wakacje czy jadę odwiedzić mamę . raczej tu no bo tu już się urodziły dzieci .. na święta zawsze jesteśmy tu</i>	<i>{laughing} .. difficult .. <b>probably here</b> .. even though that I have a family there . a home to which I come back when I go to visit my mother . probably here well because children were born here .. we spend Christmas here</i>
DJP	<i>rodzice też?</i>	<i>and parents as well?</i>
R	<i>Mama moja przyjeżdża tak na święta przeważnie (...)</i>	<i>my mother yes arrives for Christmas generally (...)</i>
DJP	<i>(...) chciałybyś wrócić do Polski . albo mieszkać w innym kraju? /.../</i>	<i>have you ever thought you'd like to go back to Poland . or to live in another country? /.../</i>

R	<i>no taka myśl powraca nieraz . ale nigdy na tyle nie gości żeby jakoś to bardzo wnikliwie rozpatrywać (....)</i>	<i>well the thought returns to me sometimes . but it never stays with me for long enough to start considering it . (...)</i>
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(Source: IM1)

The UK has been a home country for Renata for a number of years. She has built a successful professional life and found a happy and respectful relationship with her English speaking new partner, who shares his professional interests in legal advice with her. Regardless, she concluded that she was perceived as foreigner, reminiscent of “perpetual foreigner syndrome”, a problem facing many Asian Americans in everyday social interactions, reported in Yi & Kim (2001) and Wu (2002). Linguistically, it is interesting that Renata chose to switch to English for the word “foreigner”. The contrast in the degree of certainty between this question about being perceived as foreigner and the previous answer as to where her home was also noticeable: “always as foreigner” vs. “probably here”.

DJP	<i>when you moved over here how were people perceiving you. how do you think they saw you (...)</i>	<i>when you moved over here how were people perceiving you. how do you think they saw you (...)</i>
R	<i>zawsze jako <b>foreigner</b></i>	<i>always as a <b>foreigner</b></i>
DJP	<i>zawsze jako foreigner? Do dziś?</i>	<i>always as a foreigner ? even today?</i>
R	<i>do dziś uważam że tak jest . to moje subiektywne odczucie</i>	<i>I believe this is the way it is even today . this is my personal view</i>
DJP	<i>a co tak . wskazuje na to?</i>	<i>and what . indicates it ?</i>
R	<i>trudno powiedzieć to jest takie trochę złożone , złożona opinia . dlatego że na to ma wpływ . najrozmaitsze sytuacje . w urzędach . głównie kontakty z urzędami sklepami z najrozmaitszymi organizacjami . zawsze jest to nyczuwalne</i>	<i>it's difficult to say this is slightly complex . it's a complex view . because the things that influence it . all sorts of situations . in the offices . mainly contacts with the offices shops with all sorts of organisations . I can always sense it</i>

(Source: IM1)

Renata talked about how she maintained her Polishness while embracing the British culture. She also made some comments about intercultural differences between “here” and “there”. De Fina’s (2016) work discussed the importance of understanding stories told by participants as the interplay of two worlds: the interactional context of the story and the story world in which the story takes place. De Fina further cited the three levels of positioning by Bamberg (1997) to demonstrate the interplay. These are:

- Positioning vis-à-vis story characters;
- Positioning vis-à-vis other participants in the interaction;
- Positioning vis-à-vis more general categories of being such as those proposed in dominant discourses

Applying these three levels of positioning, Renata was both the story-teller and the protagonist in the story and she clearly aligned herself with the interviewer by following the lead. She described herself as a responsible Polish mother who sent their children to Polish complementary schools so that they do not miss out Polish education, and someone who enjoys intercultural living: celebrating Mother's Day in both languages (Polish and English) twice a year, the British (in March) and the Polish way (26<sup>th</sup> of May). Renata's mother arrives nearly every Christmas and they celebrate Christmas following Polish traditions.

In talking about different cultural practices, e.g., "paying bills on time", she presented her as a typical Pole. She commented that many Polish people were like her, who was brought up knowing we must not live on credits. But in Britain it is quite common for people to wait until they get a final reminder before paying their bill.

R	<p><i>Tak . wydaje mi się że tak że my z domu wynosimy przynajmniej ja tak pamiętam i tak jak moja mama jeszcze do tej pory prawda . mocno starsza pani . wpajano nam to że nie żyło się na kredyt . wszystkie rachunki trzeba było płacić bo to źle wyglądało jak człowiek nie zapłacił w terminie . tutaj nie ma takiego pojęcia że coś 'źle wygląda' tutaj bardzo często jak człowiek nie dostanie czerwonego rachunku to w ogóle nie pomyśli nawet o tym żeby płacić . wyłączając mówię Polaków bo to jest bardzo mała ich garstka która ma problemy z money management</i></p>	<p><i>yes . I think we learn in our family homes at least this is as I remember it and just like my mother even now right . already an elderly lady . we were brought up knowing we must not live on credits . all bills had to be paid because it 'looked bad' if one hadn't paid their bills on time . here there is not even such concept that something could 'look bad' here very often if one doesn't get a bill in red they wouldn't even think of paying anything at all . excluding the Poles because I say there is only a small number of them who struggles with money management</i></p>
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(Source: IM1)

In another story about her intercultural living, she looked back at her experience of working in a restaurant during her early days of arriving in the UK with a sense of humour. When someone ordered iced tea, not knowing that iced tea is a kind of cold tea, she took to the task literally and put a tea bag over ice along with some lemon.

R	<p><i>ja zbierałam zamówienie no i oni 'ice tea' zamówili .. ja nie w życiu się nie spotkałam z 'ice tea' bo dla nie herbata tea to zawsze była gorąca i z cytryną w Polsce</i></p>	<p><i>I was taking an order and they ordered 'ice tea' ... I had never come across 'ice tea' before cause for me tea meant a hot drink with lemon as it is in Poland</i></p>
---	---	--

DJP ubum

ubum

R	<i>no więc usiłowałam ale nie chciałam porażki pokazać więc sobie pewnie fonetycznie zapisałam albo coś i potem się zastanawiałam co to może być jak to zjeść jak to podać przede wszystkim .</i>	<i>so I was trying to but I guess didn't want to show my failure so I wrote it down phonetically or something and later on I was thinking what it could be how to eat it how to serve it first of all .</i>
DJP	<i>no</i>	<i>yeah</i>
R	<i>i nie miałam się kogo zapytać ...(...) no i nawaliłam tam lodu z lodziarki tylko lodu takiego crushed .. na to wrzuciłam torebkę herbaty i cytrynę {laughing} plasterek cytryny i zalałam o wrzątkiem {laughing}</i>	<i>there was no one to ask .. (...) well and I threw lots of ice from the freezer into them {glasses} but crushed ice .. then put a tea bag on it and lemon {laughing} a slice of lemon and I poured hot water over it {laughing}</i>
DJP	<i>{laughing} no i rozwiązałaś problem</i>	<i>{laughing} well but you solved the problem</i>
R	<i>i z taką / / unintell/ / herbatę z cytryna .. bo mi się herbata kojarzyła tylko herbata z cytryna ... Jak ja im to przeniósłam na ten stół postawiłam to jeszcze takiego wybuchu śmiechu nie słyszałam.</i>	<i>and with this / / unintel/ / tea with lemon .. because tea for me was tea with lemon ... when I brought it to them and when I put it on the table I had never heard such loud laughter before</i>

(Source: IM2)

Interpreting Renata's stories through the interplay of two worlds also helps to understand the dichotomies such as Polishness vs Britishness, and here and there, which recurred in her replies as themes. These terms are probably brought into the conversation by the way the questions were asked and the context that Renata understands our research interest in migrants' experience). This raised the methodological issue of researchers' positioning in interviews and the related question of to what extent cultural differences were talked into being in interviews.

## 6. EEAC in social media

The on-line presence and social media of EEAC (renamed as EERC in July 2016) is maintained by BD, its director.

A screen shot of its website landing page can be found in Figure 13. On the top line are the hyperlinks to Facebook, Twitter and a donation page represented by \$. The donation appeal at the top half of the landing page is simple, but effective: “Personal donations form a key part of the charity’s income. It is not all about money though. It is your commitment to our cause, faith that we can make the change happen and love for people who are less fortunate.”

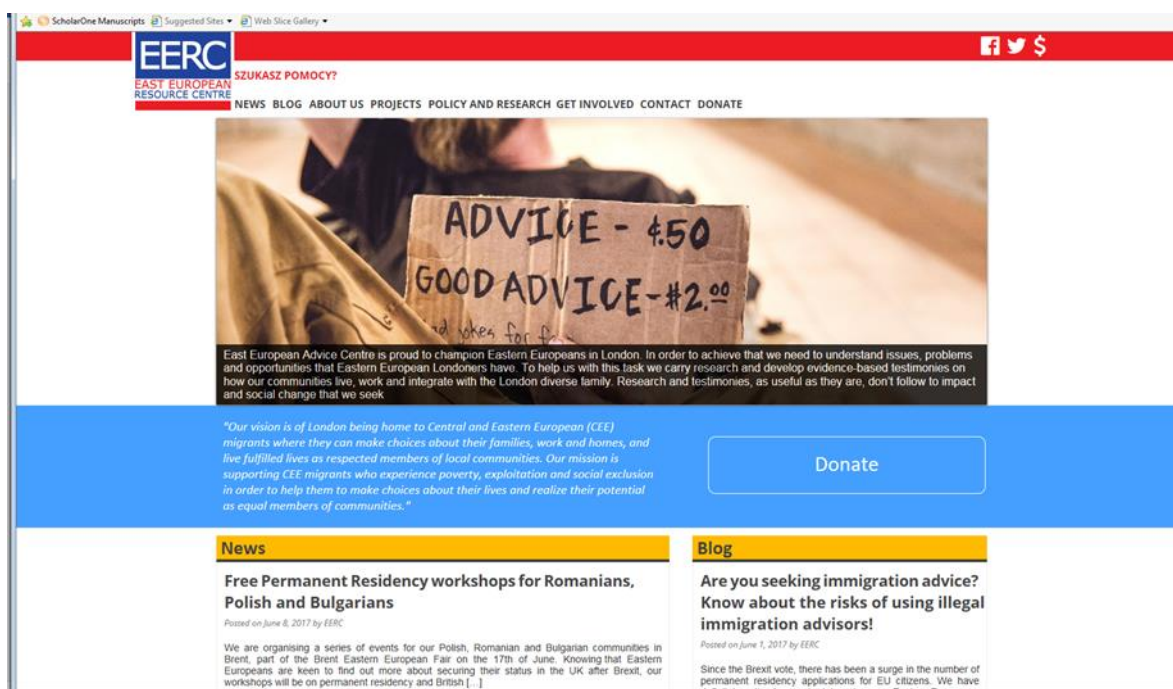


Figure 13 EEAC website landing page

The top tabs include news, blog, about us, projects, policy and research, getting involved, contact, and donate. The range of tabs and the predominant use of English in the main pages suggest that the website is designed with an external audience (rather than staff and clients) in mind such as supporters, volunteers, donors, media, or charities who look for information about the organisation does. Along with its primary purposes, there is also some attempt to engage with Polish speakers -- there is one phrase in Polish on the top of tabs, “Szukasz pomocy?” meaning “Are you looking for help?” The link takes audience to a website in Polish (translation of the website is provided in Section 8.6.1).

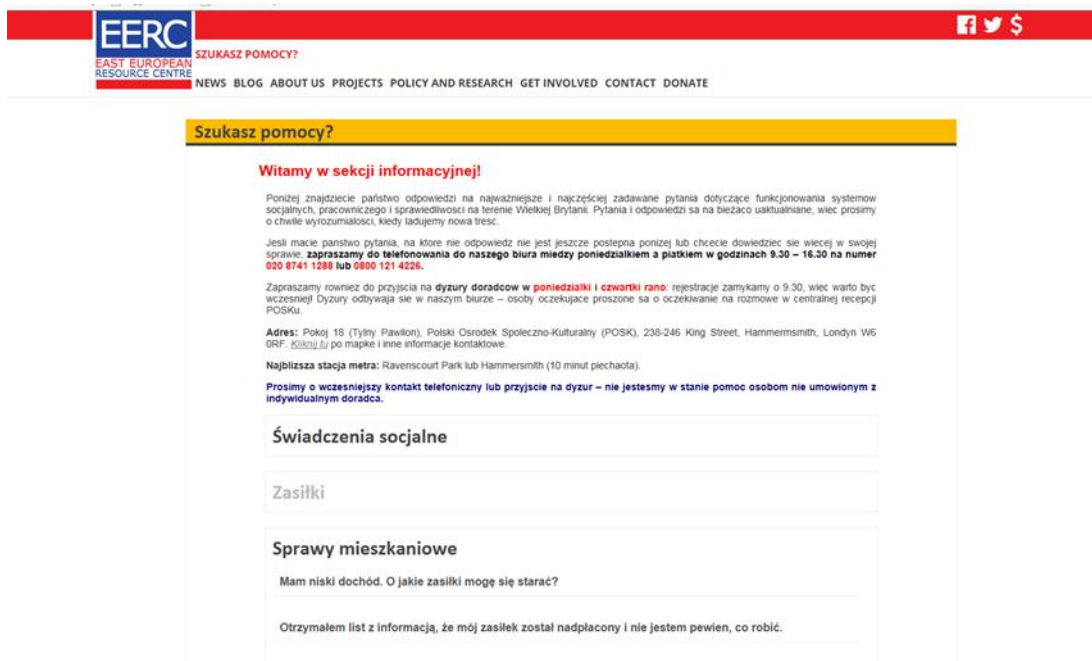


Figure 14 The landing page for “Szukasz pomocy?” [Are you looking for help] link

EEAC has Facebook and Twitter accounts (Figures 15 and 16). The EEAC logo is prominent and consistent in both accounts and the website.

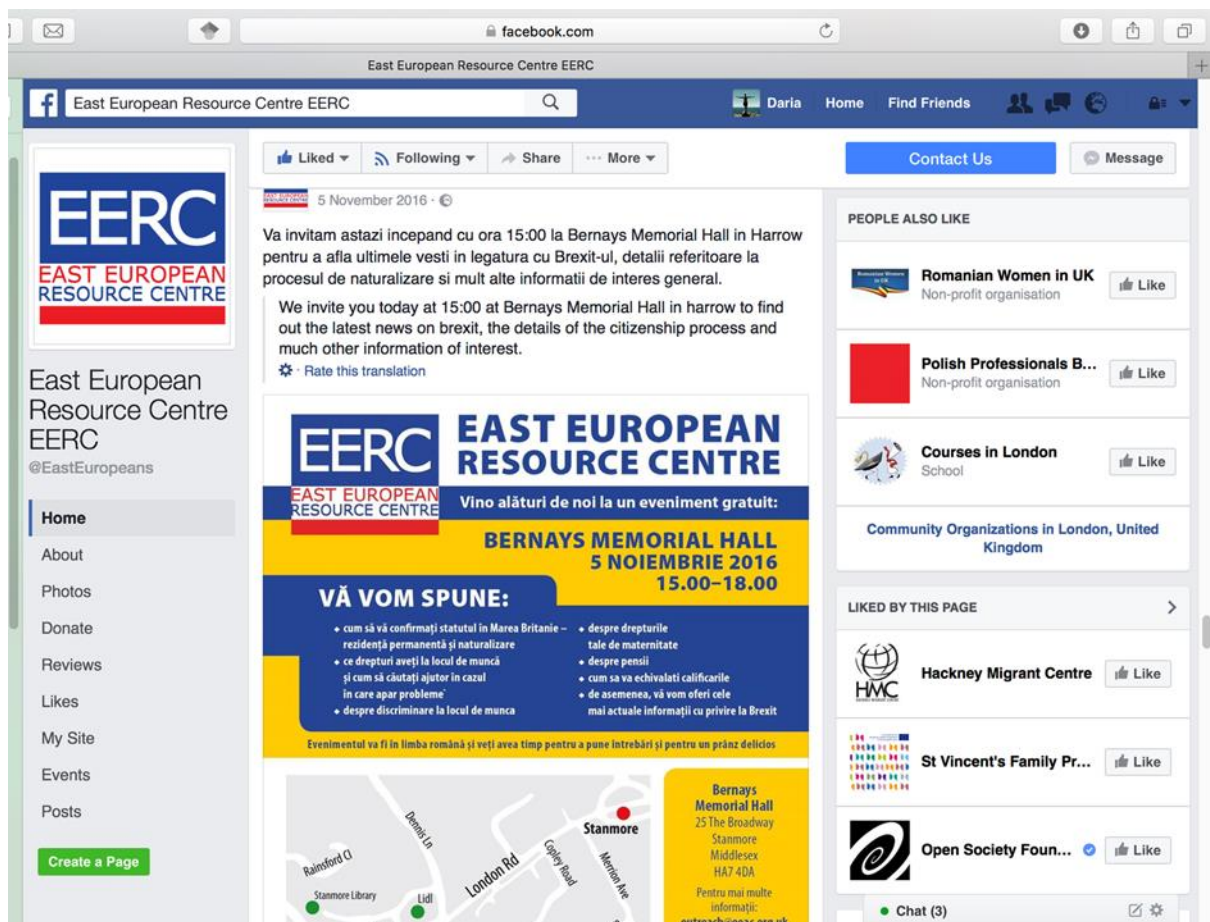


Figure 15 Screen shot of the Facebook account, 5th November 2016

In the interview, BD showed some awareness of different affordances and constraints of social media platforms. She believes Facebook is helpful in connecting with EEAC target communities (much more focused on our kind of target communities, BD's interviews, Source: I4BD). In the above screenshot, the column on the right shows connection among like-minded organisations. EEAC "liked" Hackney Migrant Centre, St Vincent's Family Project, and Open Society Foundation. After the EU referendum, EEAC has added a new service in Hate Crime Advocacy and Advice, as shown in the following screen shot (Figure 16).



Figure 16 Screen shot of the EEAC Facebook page on 20 March 2017

Twitter is understood by BD as a tool suitable for reaching “widely understood stakeholders of all sorts”, including the mainstream media, and getting them interested. The Twitter account as of 20 March 2017 has made 452 tweets, is following 486 other Twitter users, and has 382 followers.



Figure 17 Screen shot of the Twitter account on 20 March 2017

## **7. EEAC in the media post the EU referendum**

### **7.1 Racist graffiti incident**

Polish communities in the UK were thrown into the public attention post the EU referendum by a disturbing incident of racist graffiti left on the POSK entrance where EEAC is based (BBC News, 2016-06-26 online, source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-36634621>), just days after Britain voted to leave the EU. The act was initially investigated as a racially motivated hate crime against Polish migration by the police. EEAC's public presence was maintained through dignified "silence" and no comments are made by the staff. As advocates of the most vulnerable people from the Polish and other East European communities, they seemed to be one of the target recipients of the racist message to the Poles left on the POSK entrance. The TLANG Team sent a letter of support to EEAC via email (Figure 18), offering our appreciation of EEAC's work and good wishes. Renata replied on behalf of the organisation with a clear and brief message (Figure 19).

From: [Daria Jankowicz - Pytel <d.pytel@dps.ac.uk>](mailto:Daria.Jankowicz-Pytel@dps.ac.uk)  
Subject: [REDACTED]  
Date: [REDACTED]  
To: [REDACTED]  
Bcc: Zhu Hua <zhu.hua@bbk.ac.uk>, Li Wei <li.wei@ucl.ac.uk>, Angela Creese <a.creese@bham.ac.uk>, Forsdick, Charles <C.Forsdick@liverpool.ac.uk>, Daria Jankowicz - Pytel <d.pytel@bbk.ac.uk>

Dear [REDACTED] and all the colleagues at the Eastern European Advice Centre at POSK,

We are horrified to hear about the racist graffiti, post and other abuse targeted at POSK. We condemn these criminal acts and any racial attacks in the strongest possible terms.

Through our research project with you at EEAC, we really appreciate the important work you are doing for the Polish and other Eastern European communities across London, which contributes crucially to the community cohesion, well-being and prosperity of the British society. It is the very kind of work you and other community colleagues do that make London such an exciting place to live in. And the work takes on new and particular significance at this challenging post-EU-referendum time. We must do all we can, together in solidarity, to make sure that this work continues and that Britain is a diverse, multicultural society that it should be.

Please do take care and make sure that you, your colleagues and your clients are safe. Do let us know if there is anything we can do to help you.

All very best wishes

Daria Jankowicz-Pytel, Research Assistant, AHRC Translation and Translanguaging Project, Birkbeck College, University of London  
Zhu Hua, Co-Investigator, AHRC Translation and Translanguaging Project, Professor at Birkbeck College, University of London  
Li Wei, Co-Investigator, AHRC Translation and Translanguaging Project, Professor at UCL Institute of Education, University College London  
Angela Creese, Principal Investigator, AHRC Translation and Translanguaging Project, Professor at University of Birmingham  
Charles Forsdick, Theme Fellow, AHRC Translating Cultures Programme, Professor at University of Liverpool

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Daria Jankowicz - Pytel <[d.pytel@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:d.pytel@bbk.ac.uk)>  
Zhu Hua <[zhu.hua@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:zhu.hua@bbk.ac.uk)>  
Li Wei <[li.wei@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:li.wei@ucl.ac.uk)>  
Angela Creese <[a.creese@bham.ac.uk](mailto:a.creese@bham.ac.uk)>  
Charles <[C.Forsdick@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:C.Forsdick@liverpool.ac.uk)>

Figure 18 A solidarity note to EEAC from the TLANG team

From: [REDACTED]  
Subject: RE: To the EEAC Team - A note of solidarity  
Date: 5 July 2016 at 18:00  
To: Daria Jankowicz - Pylet d: [REDACTED]

Dear All,

Thank you very much for expressing your solidarity with us and for all your warm wishes. We very much hope this was a solitary incident and we continue to support Polish and other East European migrants in the UK.

On behalf of all of us at East European Advice Centre.

Many thanks and best regards,

[REDACTED]

Welfare and Housing Advisor

East European Advice Centre



[www.eeac.org.uk](http://www.eeac.org.uk)

Check us out on [Facebook](#) and Twitter: @East\_Europeans

Please help us to help others! Your donation makes our work possible.

Please donate through our secure donation [webpage](#). Thank you for your generosity.

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: [REDACTED]  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: To the EEAC Team - A note of solidarity

Dear [REDACTED] and all the colleagues at the Eastern European Advice Centre at POSK,

We are horrified to hear about the racist graffiti, post and other abuse targeted at POSK. We condemn these criminal acts and any racial attacks in the strongest possible terms.

Through our research project with you at EEAC, we really appreciate the important work you are doing for the Polish and other Eastern European communities across London, which contributes crucially to the community cohesion, well-being and prosperity of the British society. It is the very kind of work you and other community colleagues do that make London such an exciting place to live in. And the work takes on new and particular significance at this challenging post-EU-referendum time. We must do all we can, together in solidarity, to make sure that this work continues and that Britain is a diverse, multicultural society that it should be.

Please do take care and make sure that you, your colleagues and your clients are safe. Do

Figure 19 A reply from EEAC to the TLANG solidarity note

A TLANG blog on linguistic xenophobia was published on-line (<https://tlangblog.wordpress.com/2016/07/13/linguistic-xenophobia-and-why-it-should-be-resisted>, a screen shot in Figure 20) and circulated through the mailing list of the British Association for Applied Linguistics. Through a united voice, the TLANG team deplored the increase in xenophobic and racist hate crime, and demand legal penalties for those who engage in it, as well as seek ways of preventing such incidents in future. According to the blog, linguistic xenophobia or symbolic linguistic violence involves abuse directed to others who are speaking another language, or speaking with a “foreign” accent. It can range from subtle disapproval, to open expressions of hostility, to extreme physical violence. The blog cited the director, BD’s statements describing symbolic linguistic violence that many Eastern Europeans have suffered, particularly post-referendum:

“Poles and other Eastern Europeans [EU 2004 and 2007 accession nationals] have been victims of racially-motivated harassment at work and in schools for the last 10 years at least. Symbolic linguistic violence, for example singling out Polish workers to ban them from using the Polish language during breaks, has been so deeply normalised that many of us treat it as a deal we have to accept when moving to the UK. Linguistic responses follow: many Eastern Europeans refusing to use their mother tongue among friends on public transport, or changing first names to make them sound more British. The post-referendum wave of hate speech acts only as a reminder that migrant and BME communities are always vulnerable to tensions lurking under the cover of political correctness and that words hurt as much as a slap in the face.” (BD, cited in the TLANG blog)

## Linguistic xenophobia and why it should be resisted

TLANG team

Like many around the country, the TLANG team have been shocked by the upsurge of xenophobia and racist hate crime which the police believe have been triggered by the BREXIT vote <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jul/11/police-blame-worst-rise-in-recorded-hate-on-eu-referendum>. The outcome of the vote seems to have been interpreted by some as permission to hate, or rather to express that hatred through abuse and violence. As part of the TLANG Project ([website](#)) we are working with the East European Advice Centre, housed in the Polish Social and Cultural Association (POSK) building in Hammersmith, London. As widely reported in the media, POSK came under racist attack with graffiti smeared over its front door the day after the EU Referendum.



Figure 20 The TLANG Blog, 2016-07-13 “Linguistic xenophobia and why it should be resisted”

An interesting twist to the event was that it later emerged that the graffiti may have been misunderstood. According to an online news website (West London online - not racist graffiti? - <http://www.getwestlondon.co.uk/news/west-london-news/polish-centre-graffiti-misunderstood-suggestions-11578663> (08.12.16), the message, “F\*\*\* you OMP”, was actually

aimed at a political think tank in Poland and therefore not a racist attack. We do not know whether the police have come to any conclusion in their investigation. However, the lack of any follow-up announcement from the Police seems to lend support to the suggestion of “being misunderstood”. If this is indeed the case, was the media too quick to jump to the conclusion that there was a racist motivation? And does it matter whether the incident was misunderstood or not? The incident, reported as a racially motivated slur in the first place in the media, was followed by many subsequent racism abuse and incidents on the street, in the supermarket and in social media as highlighted on the EEAC website (more in 7.3).

## 7.2 EEAC media appearance

After the EU Referendum, EEAC has made frequent appearance in the mainstream media. According to the “EEAC in Media” section on its website, the organisation is cited in the Financial Times, BBC Radio, the Observer, BBC Radio London, Sky News, Evening Standard as well as media in languages other than English, for example, Dzieje and Gazeta Prawna in Polish; and Trouw in Dutch. The director, BD, has become, and been positioned as, a spokesperson representing East Europeans in London. Her legitimacy of being a representative was justified through her office as director of EEAC and the revelation of her personal circumstances, being a pole herself and in the process of applying for a presumably British passport.

Her comments in the media can be broadly classified into the following topics: impact of Brexit vote on communities; racism; sense of belonging, uncertainty, loss of trust, etc. These themes are illustrated in the excerpts below:

### **Impact of Brexit vote on communities:**

Cited in Alternet (<http://www.alternet.org/world/refugees-and-migrants-what-its-wake-brexit>) on 24 June, 2016, BD talked about the Eastern European community’s response:

“The response to the Brexit in our community is dual,” BD, **director of the East European Advice Center**, told AlterNet. “It’s panic about what will happen to us and bitter disappointment, because people have read the campaign literature that is strongly anti-immigration in tone, and they have woken up in a country that doesn’t want them. It’s an incredibly emotional moment for the whole community, which has dealt with rhetoric about Eastern Europeans stealing jobs, like Polish cleaners and Romanian construction workers.”

### **“Legitimised” Racism**

BD, **director of the London-based Eastern European Advice Centre**, told me that “racism being legitimised is the biggest problem we’re facing since the Leave vote.” Brexit is intensifying the experience of prejudices that are part and parcel of the working life of many Eastern Europeans in Britain, she says. “We experience racism in workplaces, our kids get bullied at schools – just a few weeks before the referendum, a Polish teenager committed suicide as a result of racist bullying at a school in Cornwall”

BD says: “Because racism is the common experience, many Eastern Europeans simply see it as ‘a price you pay’ for working in Britain. They grew to see it as the norm in this country. Therefore they don’t tend to report racist incidents or take any action.”

2016-07-11, Open Democracy: When they call Brexit a “working class revolt”, they mean the white British working class, (source: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/uk/hsiao-hung-pai/when-they-call-brexit-working-class-revolt-they-mean-white-british-working-class>)

## Sense of belonging

“European expats who have put down roots in Britain woke up confronting the threat of a tectonic shift in their relationship with their adopted country”

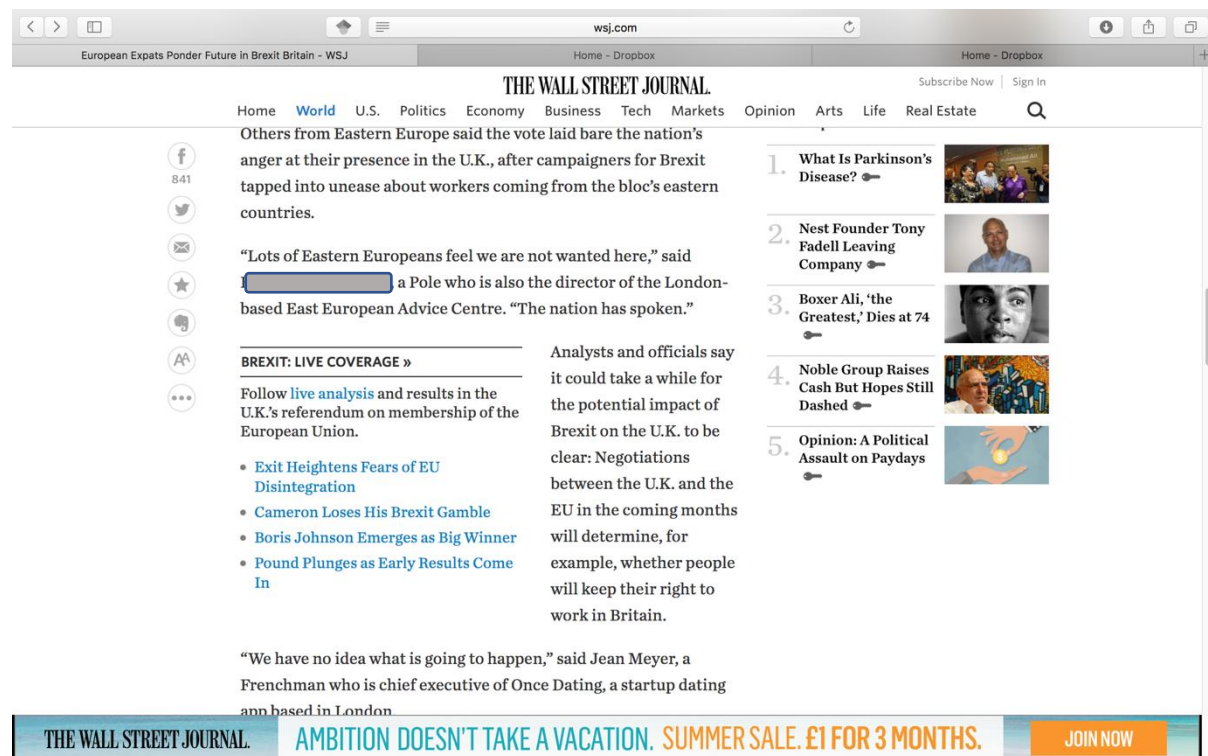


Figure 21 Wall Street Journal, 2016-06-24, online

(source: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/european-expats-ponder-future-in-brexit-britain-1466762872>)

*“Lots of Eastern Europeans feel we are not wanted here”*

said BD, *a Pole who is also the director of the London-based East European Advice Centre*. “The nation has spoken.” Analysts and officials say it could take a while for the potential impact of Brexit on the U.K. to be clear: Negotiations between the U.K. and the EU in the coming months will determine, for example, whether people will keep their right to work in Britain.”

## Loss of trust in authorities and system (no guarantee for the EU citizens’ rights in the UK):

“BD, who herself is now applying for a passport, says she is disappointed with the British government, which is refusing to guarantee the rights of EU citizens already in the UK. Ms D, who is *director of the East European Advice Centre*, said: “This is not what we would expect from the British state, quite frankly. “I mean this is not how Britain works and this is not the sort of values we would expect.”

Sky News, 2016-08-26 “Citizenship Applications From Eastern Europeans Rise Post-Brexit” (source: <http://news.sky.com/story/brexit-sparks-uk-citizenship-stampede-among-eastern-europeans-10550228>)

While she was quoted frequently to use the first person pronoun to speak on behalf of the Polish community, on some occasions, she referred to the community, Polish or East Europeans, as “they”, “the whole community” or “Eastern Europeans”. Stylistically, the use of third person pronouns and reference term created an aura of detachment and objectivity in contrast with the direct emotional appeals evoked by the first person pronouns.

### 7.3 Hate crimes and social media

After the EU referendum, EEAC dedicated itself to fighting hate crime and to supporting its victims. There are examples of EEAC’s engagements in public projects bringing politicians, members of local authorities, community leaders and policy makers to work together with members of local communities. Also, there is evidence of their attempts to reach out to individuals who are able to positively impact on the situation. These engagements are captured in the news section of their website, Twitter and Facebook. The following Figures 21, 22, 23 are examples of EEAC’s publicity campaign for a public event against hate crime organised in Islington on their website, Twitter and Facebook.

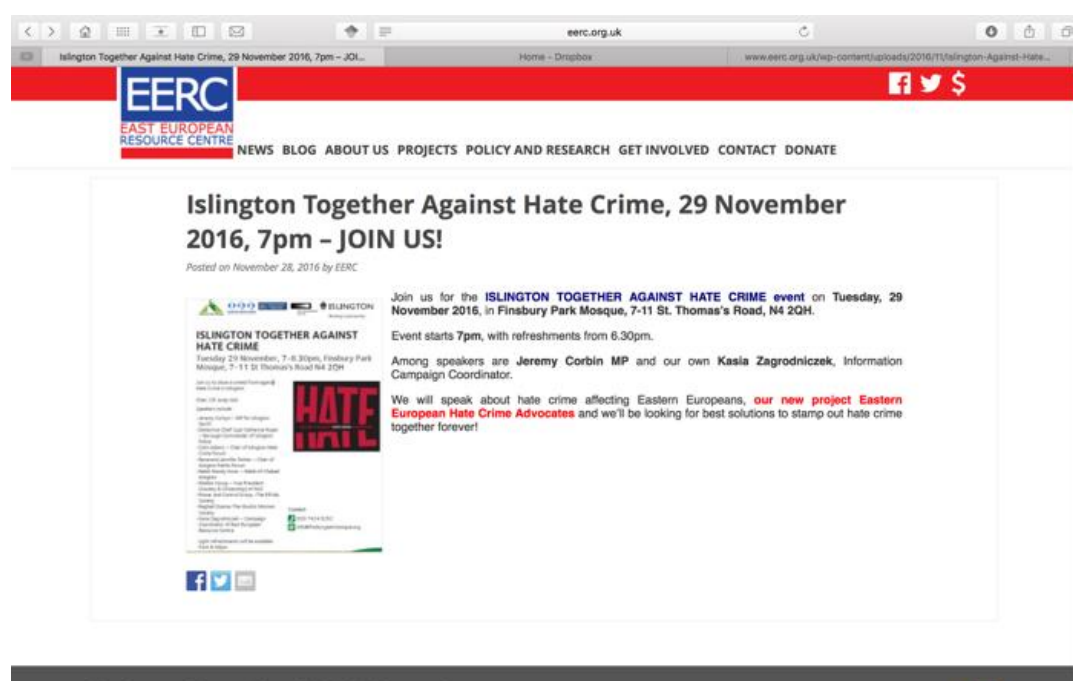


Figure 22 Islington Together Against Hate Crime Event – Website publicity

*“Among speakers are Jeremy Corbyn Renata and our own Kasia Zagrodniczek, Information Campaign Coordinator.*

*We will speak about hate crime affecting Eastern Europeans, our new project Eastern European Hate Crime Advocates and we’ll be looking for best solutions to stamp out hate crime together forever! ”*

EEAC website, 2016-11-29, “Islington Together Against Hate Crime” (source: <http://www.eerc.org.uk/2016/11/28/islington-together-against-hate-crime-29-november-2016-7pm-join-us/>)

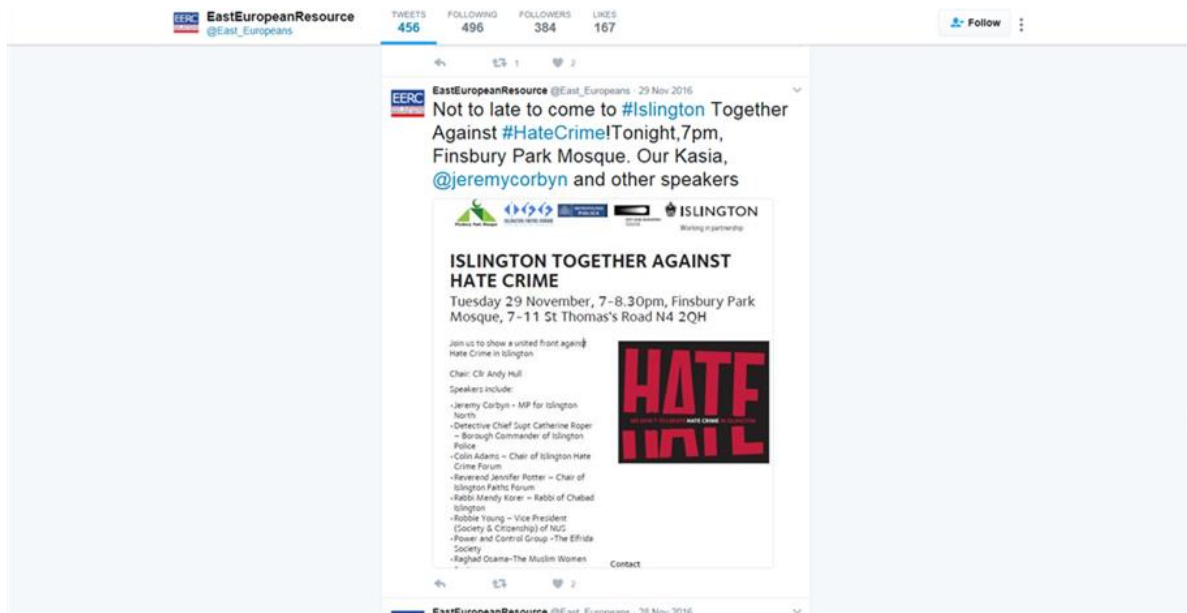


Figure 23 EEAC against hate crime - community meeting with Jeremy Corbyn, EEAC Twitter

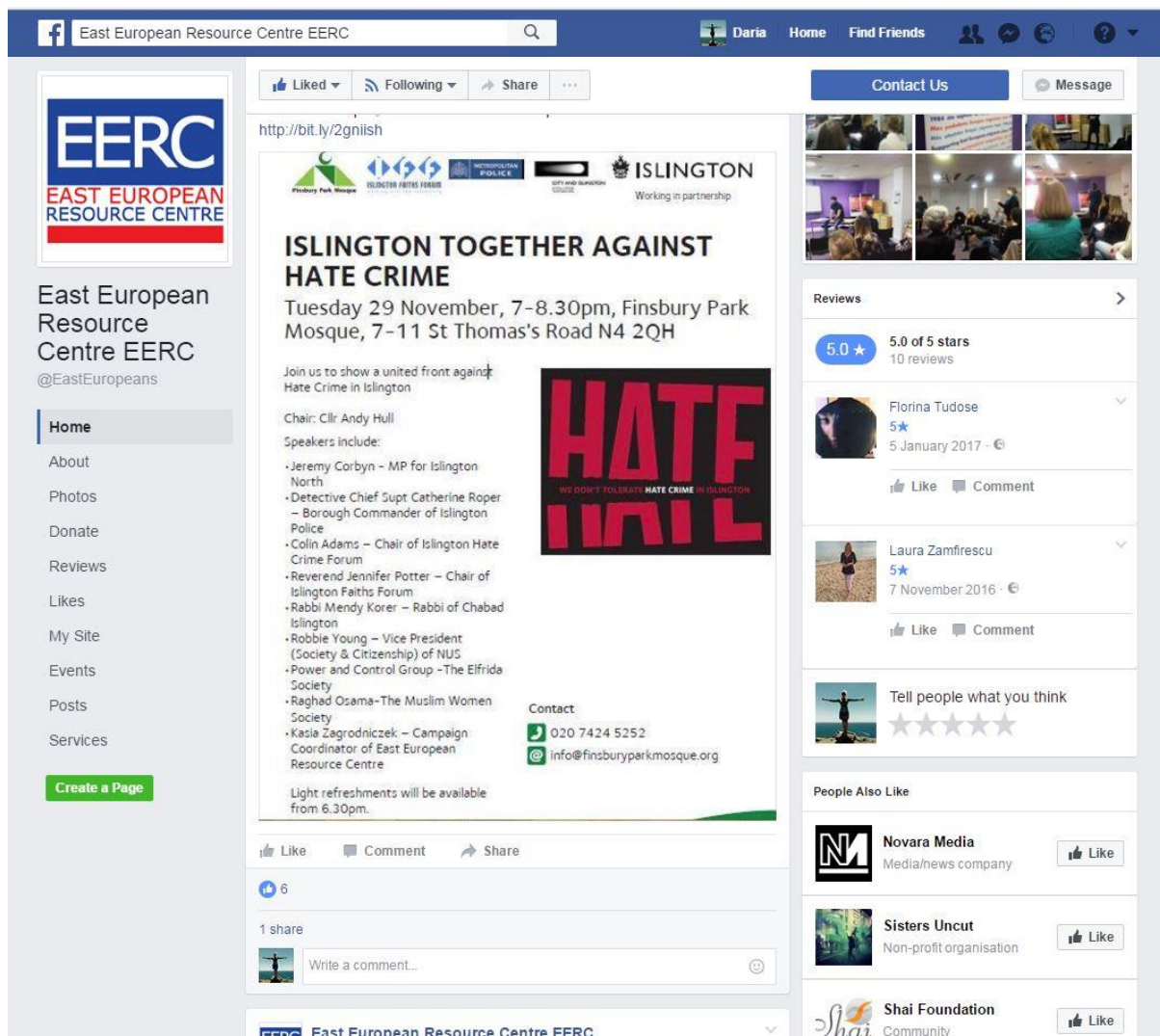


Figure 24 EEAC against hate crime - community meeting with Jeremy Corbyn, EEAC Facebook

While all the postings in the three media contain the event poster, there are some noticeable differences in the way they make use of affordances of each platform and reach out to their different audiences. On the website, where space is not an issue, the poster was displayed on the left and became the visual aid for the text on the right which serves as the focal point. The text highlights the venue and time, speakers, and the main content of the talk. The key information (i.e., the title of the event, date, location, speakers' names, the new project) are highlighted in colours and fonts. They are phrased in short sentences and presented in separate paragraphs for each sentence. The tone is informal and friendly. The mention of "our own KZ, Information Campaign Coordinator" alongside other speakers not only puts EERC's work on par with other significant stakeholders, but also reduces interpersonal distance with the audience. In contrast, Facebook posting contains the event poster only. The tweet, which was posted on the day of the event, urged their audience to come along to the event. It uses two hashtags, #Islington and #Hatecrimes, to connect with wider audiences. It also contains a "mention" to interact with Jeremy Corbyn.

The following postings of a news story of a fatal racist attack (Figures 25, 26, 27) on the website news section, Facebook and Twitter provide another example of the range of adjustments in light of media platform and audiences. The story was made relevant to the website news

audience through an emotive adjective, sad, and the reference of the protagonist in the story as a Polish man. The website commentaries substantiate the news value of the story by mentioning the source of the news, BBC, Evening Standard, The Sun and Mail online. It also emphasises all the likeable qualities of the man who was killed, a family man spending time with his brother and children and living with his Mother. In a separate paragraph, the commentaries go on to point out that this is not an isolated story and there are other victims who died of racist and hate crimes. While public awareness raising campaigns on the website are synchronised on Twitter and Facebook posting, there are different foci. In the Facebook posting, EERC embeds a link for reporting hate crime and urges people to report such crime without hesitation. In the tweet, the victim's name was shortened to Arex, presumably to fit in the character restriction, the hate crime hashtag was added with a mention of @true\_vision\_hc, a police-funded web site with information about how to stop hate crime.

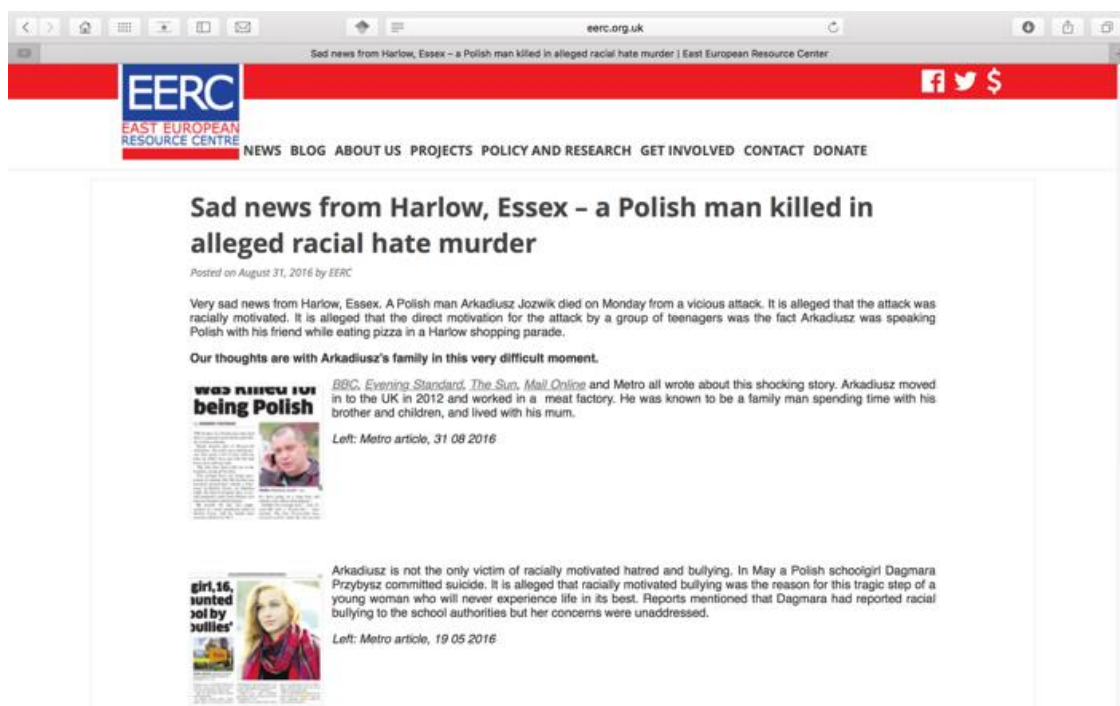


Figure 25 Fatal hate crime on a Pole acknowledged and recorded on the EEAC website

(Source: <http://www.eerc.org.uk/2016/08/31/sad-news-from-harlow-essex-a-polish-man-killed-in-alleged-racial-hate-murder/>)

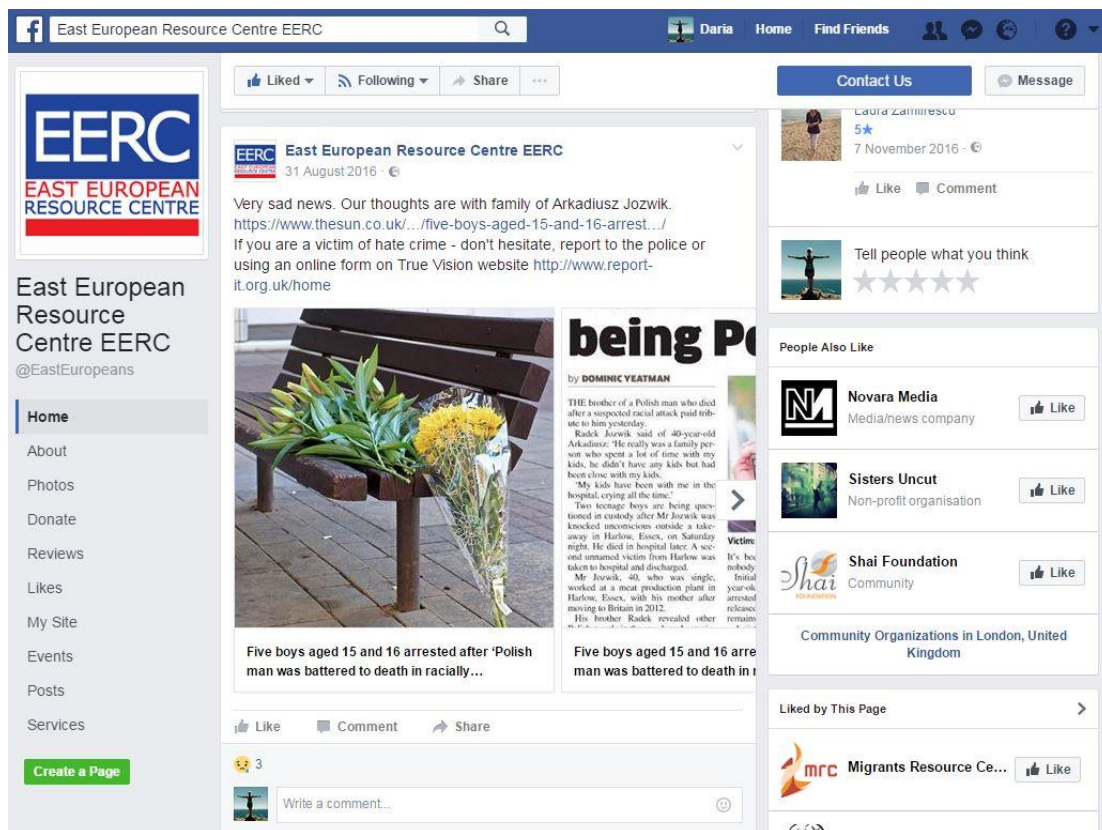


Figure 26 Fatal hate crime on a Pole acknowledged and recorded on the EEAC Facebook



Figure 27 Fatal hate crime on a Pole acknowledged and recorded on the EEAC Twitter



## **8. Multilingual reality: language audit**

To understand communication and language use in international organisations, “language audit” or “linguistic audit” has been proposed as a way of evaluating effective communication in multiple languages and mapping capability, function and people against the identified need in the workplace (Reeves & Wright, 1996, p.5, an application case study can be found in Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002). We apply the same approach in our first step in understanding multilingual reality of EEAC in its workplace and social media presence. We shall start with a review of EERC’s capability, function and needs in language and communication. We then look into linguistic repertoires in interactions in the workplace, translation and language choice as evident in the fieldnotes and recording. This is followed by an investigation into linguistic landscapes, defined as “visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region” (Landry and Bourhis, 1997, p. 23). We then compare the prominence of multiple languages in social media, which is an extension of the workplace.

### **8.1 Understanding EEAC’s capability, function and people**

As listed on the website, EEAC has six main members of staff of whom five speak Polish as a first language and one speaks Romanian as first language. The staff are supported by a team of volunteers: 7 speak Polish as first language; 5 Romanian, 1 Lithuanian, 1 Bulgarian, 1 Hungarian, and 1 Macedonian (it is not clear on the website whether these volunteers and staff speak other languages). One of its past volunteers spoke Czech. The preferred working language within the team is Polish, with some specialised terms rendered in English (See Section 8.4).

EEAC is a charity supporting East Europeans living in London. Over the years, in their outreach community activities, EEAC has extended the number of communities it works with, including Romanian and Bulgarian in addition to the Polish community. The languages of the outreach activities are usually those of communities such as Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian (for example, the languages of the social media in Section 8).

Clients who come to the centre and seek advice are predominantly Polish speakers, and occasionally Romanian, Russian, Lithuanian and Bulgarian speakers (see Section 8.2, Linguistic repertoires in the workplace). The working languages in consultation are Polish and English with translation in operation.

The working language with the external partners including public agencies, local authorities, policy makers, police, charities, donors, academia and media is English. In supporting their clients, EEAC works with many public agencies and local authorities such as the Department of Work and Pension, council housing department, legal advice centres, citizen advice centres. English is the language of institutional communication, while EEAC makes effort to ensure translating services are accessible to their clients when clients interact directly with external agencies.

### **8.2 Linguistic repertoires in the workplace**

We witnessed a range of linguistic repertoires during individual communicative events (advice sessions, an outreach workshop, telephone consultation etc.). Mention of these languages within fieldnotes is exemplified in the excerpts below. Apart from English (Fieldnotes excerpt a & g), the languages heard, seen or mentioned include Polish (Fieldnotes excerpt a & g), Romanian

(Fieldnotes excerpt b & f), Russian (Fieldnotes excerpt c & e), Lithuanian (Fieldnotes excerpt d & e), and Bulgarian (Fieldnotes excerpt f),

- a. While all in our room become silent I can hear K next door speaking English to her client but I cannot distinguish all words. She asks her client about how they have been in the UK; the client answers '10 years'. There is another person speaking Polish entering the next door too. He asks about applying for a British passport. K explains that it is paid advice (DJP/16.03.16)
- b. Everyone, including Renata, comments we need to dig our winter coats out from the backs of our wardrobes. 2°C outside. V, the Romanian speaking volunteer is already in, Renata runs to the main building to bring some more drinking water. (DJP/27.04.16)
- c. A pile of letters and folded documents is on the table in front of him. Some blue scribbles in English are on the top envelope. I see it says in Russian: '22 mapra [the 22 of March]' and there is also time: '14:00'. These are details of today's meeting. (DJP/22.03.16)
- d. We asked Renata if we should leave, as she originally told us that we should stay for an hour only. Renata told us that the next client will be a Lithuanian man and she thought he knew some Polish. (LW/18.03.16)
- e. Going through the form, Renata mentioned Interpreter. C said that he could speak Lithuanian or Russian. I think he mentioned some relatives, but I could be wrong. Renata was pleased to hear about his languages. (ZH/22.03.16)
- f. KZ asks about the feedback on her sessions; she collects all her paperwork next to her laptop with a sticker – employment – on it. While we write the feedback, she talks with PD about her future talks and meetings regarding employment with other communities too; she mentions Bulgarian and Romanian. (ZH/26.04.16)
- g. I took some leaflets, in Polish and English separately, and one in another language. Renata confirmed that it was Romanian. She said that on Thursdays they tend to have clients speaking Bulgarian and Romanian and they have staff who know these languages. DJP told me that the contents of the leaflets are not exactly the same. (LW/18.03.16)

### 8.3 Translation

Translation or interpreting frequently occurs in interactions and in the workplace.

**Translation as a way of meaning calibration.** When working with clients, Renata also uses Google Translate to check the meaning of Polish or English expressions or terminology in order to serve her clients (exemplified in Fieldnotes excerpt h, below). Fieldnote excerpt i records an instance when Renata works out a medical term, gout, whilst switching between Polish to English.

- h. I realise that today Renata also works with Google Translate. She picks particular words from the client's reports and checks their meanings. (DJP/21.04.16)
- i. Renata goes to another room to fetch more files. Mr P talks about the weather. When she gets back, Mr P confirms the lists of health issues she reads to him. Renata reads the list in Polish but she reads "gastritis" in English. She asks if anything has changed. Mr P adds he has "dna moczanowa" [gout] and severe problems with his blood pressure. Renata and I are trying to work out its translation into English. Renata finds it on the Internet and tells me it's 'gout'. (DJP/17.04.16)

**Translation as a way of learning subtle differences in the key legal terms.** There is also an interesting example captured during an outreach session. During a presentation, KZ, a member of EEAC staff, demonstrates to a Polish audience, nearly all of whom are local residents in East London, two possible English translations {“harassment” and “bullying”} of a Polish word “nękanie”, each bearing different context and resulting in different legal consequences.

- j. She {KZ} explains intricate details of the employment law by giving us examples. On the other hand, she rigidly sticks to the content of her slides, where many issues are referred to by using English terms but their definitions are given in Polish, i.e.: ‘harassment’ or ‘bullying’. She warns about the meanings carried by these words. She tries to describe and capture the differences between them. She explains that in Polish one word [‘nękanie’(PL)] could describe both cases, so it could in English, but ‘bullying’ has lesser legal coverage {than harassment}. She explains that ‘harassment’, on the other hand, has particular features and these features are addressed to in The Equality Act. (DJP/26.04.16)

**Translating as a way of bridging linguistic and knowledge expertise.** In instances where there are no shared linguistic repertoires between the staff on call and the clients, another member of staff or volunteer would act as an interpreter. Fieldnotes excerpt k records an instance of team-working where a volunteer sharing the same linguistic repertoire as the client mediates between Renata who is an expert on the matter being consulted and the client. In another instance (Fieldnotes excerpt l), the volunteer acts as a messenger between Renata and the Romanian-speaking client.

- k. V {the Romanian speaking volunteer} gets through to the Romanian speaking client. She translates to us that the client forgot about the appointment today and they try to book another date. Renata checks her calendar and suggests next Thursday. They agree and V gets off the phone. (DJP/27.04.16)
- l. I hear that the Romanian speaking volunteer (V) picks up the phone. She does not seem to know how to help the client and comes to Renata for help. The speaker speaks only Romanian, so V interprets the conversation. A woman on the phone has three children and her life gets difficult, she would like to apply for the child tax credit and housing benefit. Renata asks about their employments, the number of years in the UK and partner’s employment situations. V translates and Renata asks to book the client in. (DJP/20.04.16)

**Offering and setting up accessible translating service as part of support.** Renata is mindful that many of her clients need access to interpreting services when they are interacting directly with various agencies. She takes the trouble to check whether such agencies could provide an interpreting service, as seen in Fieldnotes excerpt m.

- m. Renata speaks to the advisor on behalf of CF whose payment was stopped and who hasn’t requested a mandatory reconsideration. Renata explains there is no written reply yet and CM wants to know the reason. ... Renata asks if it is possible to get a Polish interpreter for CF and the advisors confirms she will arrange it. (DJP/21.03/16)

There is limitation in their capacities, however. As the staff explained in Field note excerpt n, they cannot guarantee to offer interpreting services at any time. It depends on who is available.

- n. We are sitting in the silence. There is a lady sitting in the room next door. As the spaces are very small, I can hear her working, she is on the phone with someone. She explains that she

doesn't speak Polish and fetches another colleague from the room further down the corridor to help with interpreting. She also explains to the person on the phone they cannot offer interpreting services at all times, only if the speakers of that language are available and starts explaining the way the charity works. She suggests the drop-in sessions and explains some procedures, I cannot hear everything. (DJP/16.03.16)

#### 8.4 Language choice

Polish While linguistic repertoires show the range of languages in the workplace, language choices are about which languages are used and for what purposes. The team identified Polish as the language used most frequently, both during the face-to-face advisory sessions and over-the-phone conversations. It is a language generally used for conversations between Renata and her clients, the majority of whom speak Polish. It is also the language of clients' intimate narratives and storytelling. These themes are illustrated in the fieldnotes excerpts below:

- o. Renata leaves the room to get the phone, she jokes in Polish with someone outside about getting younger and younger. (DJP/22.03.16)
- p. Someone suddenly comes in through the main entrance and asks in Polish about pension for her husband. She apologises for popping without an appointment and Renata directs her to DJ. DJ lets the client in for 'two words only' and they close the door to their room behind them. I cannot hear anything more. (DJP/12.04.16)
- q. The client, Mrs Z, is in her fifties. She speaks Polish to Renata and they start with the paperwork when the phone rings. I can hear a man is asking about an advice on his employment situation, as he was fired yesterday and needs some guidance. (DJP/21.04.16)

Polish is the preferred language of communication between staff, as most of the staff speak Polish. The team was given access to a team meeting. Prior to its start, BD was heard talking to ZH about having the meeting in Polish as opposed to English. She justified her choice by observing that Polish is "just more natural". The naturally occurring conversation where this exchange occurred is shown below:

Time	Who	Transcript	Translation
		//un// {arranging seats around the room} // un and laughing//	//un// {arranging seats around the room} // un and laughing//
00:05:41	BD (to ZH)	We don't currently have any non-Polish speaker so we dont really have these meetngs //un//	We don't currently have any non-Polish speaker so we dont really have these meetngs //un//
	ZH	go ahead I just really . . thank you	go ahead I just really . . thank you
	BD	It's just more natural I suppose	It's just more natural I suppose
	ZH	Yeah .. absolutely	Yeah .. absolutely
	BD (to DJP)	No wiec właśnie . nie mamy agendy . czy ty nagrywasz już .	exactly this. we haven't got the agenda. are you recording already.
	DJP	Tak już tak	yes I do now

(source: LonLawAud\_20160622)

## English

English appears to be used in institutional communications, when Renata communicates with various agencies on behalf of her clients, as evident in Fieldnotes excerpt r, below, or when Renata interpreting for her clients ( excerpt s)

- r. Renata explains in English to the advisor on the phone that all documents were sent and maybe they may have not received it yet because of the Easter break. I can hear the voice on the phone explaining something to Renata for a long time. Renata notes down the dates. (DJP/22.03.16)
- s. They just remember that Mrs Z was supposed to ring DWP to provide them with her bank details which she didn't provide while being with them on the phone last time. Renata makes the phone call and they get through security questions, the recorder is paused. Mrs Z gives her phone number and bank details to Renata in Polish who translates them into English for the officer. (DJP/21.04.16).

Specialised terms in English are often heard in conversations. In the following fieldnotes excerpt t, Renata and A use English words or conventional terms, such as appointments and GPs in their conversation.

- t. Renata and A (client) try to find the surname of the GP looking after A during the case. They go through the documents and use a lot of English words 'appointments' and 'GP'. A continues his story and does not seem to notice that ZH does not speak Polish. (DJP/03.03.16)

Interestingly, in the abovementioned team meeting, although Polish was preferred as the language of the meeting, there were many words and terms rendered in English. In the extract of the fieldnotes excerpt u provided below, BD was heard talking about post, peer education and career advice English. At one point, she talked about "support i supervision [support and supervision]", using the Polish word "i" (meaning "and") between two English words.

- u. B takes time to discuss another option for potential funds dedicated to teaching clients to use online resources, to do online tasks expected from them (in context of social welfare, immigration, utility bills etc). She suggests there would be a 'post' for 'support i supervision [support and supervision]' where clients would be sent to volunteers to do online applications or similar. They talk about future and that people need to be educated and taught how to manoeuvre through the Internet's reality so to get problems solved. Renata suggests that until 2020 there will be 'hiccups'<sup>2</sup>. I am not certain what is the project's exact focus but I don't want to interrupt. B explains that the scheme will be very much 'peer educated' not 'career advice' – teaching how to use the tool of the Internet. (DJP/22.06.16)

In one of the interviews, Renata reflected on her use of language(s) in the workplace. She reported that sometimes the language she uses with her Polish speaking colleagues at work contains untranslated, original English terminology or English expressions "as it is often much easier to express in English" and translating terms such as *Benefits* into Polish would not make sense:

M	<i>bo my się zajmujemy pewnym rodzajem powiedzmy spraw tak że na pewno tutaj wędrują jakieś najrozmaitsze skróty które tylko my rozumiemy . czego przykładem są twoje pytania</i>	<i>because we deal with specific type of let's say issues so then for sure some abbreviations that only we understand travel around {our communication} and your questions confirm that</i>
D	<i>to prawda</i>	<i>that's true</i>
M	<i>sposób załatwiania spraw . to też nieraz dużo łatwiej jest określić na przykład po angielsku bo to są angielskie wyrażenia no nie tłumaczymy na polski nazw benefitów bo to nie miałyby zupełnie sensu . tylko porozumiewamy się ich angielskimi nazwami</i>	<i>the way of sorting things . it's often much easier to express for example in English because these are English expressions so we don't translate the names of benefits into Polish because it would not make sense whatsoever . we communicate using these English expressions</i> Source (IM2)

She was also aware that she uses abbreviations of organisations, forms and benefits apart from English legal terms. However, as she pointed out, these kind of English expressions or abbreviations may not be understandable to English speaking listeners either, such as her children or friends.

M	<i>ja jak rozmawiam ze swoim partnerem to on akurat w tej samej dziedzinie pracuje tak że my tylko rozmawiamy skrótami co dzieci nieraz doprowadza do szału . nie bardzo wiedzą nie bardzo ich to interesuje . jest nudne</i>	<i>when I talk with my partner then he actually is from the same context as we happen to work in the same field so we use only shorter forms what drives the children to madness . they don't really understand they are not really interested . it seems boring to them</i> Source (IM2)
---	---	--

She provided further example to support the view that legal terms are specialised terms and whether they are in English or Polish matters less. As a Polish speaker, she had to get help with Polish legal terms and formal writing in Polish legal context, as she explains in the excerpt below:

*M ja na swoim przykładzie ale to kilka ładnych lat temu . to musiałam się przestawić . co prawda miałam trochę pomocy od kuzynki która jest adwokatem to trochę mnie tam jednak przez telefon powiedziała jak tam jakiś wniosek ma brzmieć czy coś . ale musiałam sobie sama . jakoś z tym wszystkim poradzić w jakichś tam wnioskach do sądu w jakichś tam pełnomocnictwach czy tam . najrozmaitsze pisma w sprawach sądowych . musiałam to jakoś wszystko nagryzmolić a nie jednokrotnie pisząc pytałam tam gdzie miałam składać . jak to powinno brzmieć mniej więcej i wtedy sobie tam coś bazgroliłam na kolanach i potem w domu pisałam odpowiednio .. skargi jakieś takie tego . już nie pamiętam jakie tytuły pism ale głównie to wnioski jakieś pełnomocnictwa . jakieś prośby .*

*well on my own example but it was many years ago . I had to switch . in fact I had some support from my cousin who is an advocate {in Poland} and she told me quite a few things over the phone what this or that kind of application should sound like or something . but most of it I had to manage myself . when it comes to lodging applications in courts or to writing letters of attorney or something . all sorts of documents for courts . I had to scribble it down and quite often I was writing it down being in places where I was lodging it later on . just to keep some rough notes made on my knees about what the letter should sound like . and then I was rewriting it appropriately .. some complaints or .. I don't even remember the titles of these documents but mainly applications some sorts of letters of authority .. requests .*

Source (IM2)

## 8.5 Linguistic landscapes

### 8.5.1 Notice board

The notice board is located in the main POSK building, in the corridor leading from the main hall to the rear pavilion, where the EEAC offices are. The corridor links with two other entrances: a corridor leading to the Polish restaurant and a bookshop, and a staircase to further facilities where Polish theatre, art and music are performed for the public. All the leaflets on the noticeboard are printed and placed neatly. The information is mainly in the Polish language, with only some elements in English, such as geographical places, names of events or proper nouns etc. The display includes two advertisements by EEAC, further advertisements by a private firm dealing with translations and legal advice, a charity collecting money to support an ill Polish child, a club associating Polish artists and activists, and a notice with contact details for the association of Polish technicians. The ownership and regulations of the noticeboard are reinforced in clear messages at two places: one is a large poster at the focal part of the board, reminding that “ogłoszenia be podpisu kierownika POSKU- będą usuwane” [the adverts not signed by the POSK manager will be removed]; the other is the top line running across the noticeboard, saying in capital letters “UWAGA: OGŁOSZENIA NA TABLICY TYLKO ZA ZGODĄ HOUSE MANAGERA” [translation: attention: adverts on the notice board allowed only if agreed with the house manager]. The phrase, “house manager” is predominately an English phrase adapted into Polish morpho-syntactically with “a” at the end of the phrase marking the Polish genitive case for the noun “manager”.



Figure 28 Notice board in POSK in the main corridor leading to EEAC

### 8.5.2 Bilingual signposts

EEAC is located at the back of a Pavilion next to the POSK. The only entrance is via the POSK buildings. It is therefore essential that anyone who visits the centre can follow the bilingual signposts which are provided (Figure 29). The upper sign is for EEAC which says:

“East European Advice Centre

Room 18 / Pokój 18

Rear Pavilion/ Tylny Pawilon”

The text on the sign is in blue, the colour of EEAC logo. The name EEAC is right in the middle. The bilingual equivalents for the room number and the location are placed next to each other in the order of English and then Polish. The size of fonts decreases from the top to bottom: the name of the organisation in largest size at the top and the location smallest at the bottom.



*Figure 29 Bilingual signs*

The lower sign (Europejska Wyższa Szkoła Prawa i Administracji) is for another institution, The European Higher School of the Law and Administration.

### **8.5.3 Bilingual polite notice**



Figure 30 Bilingual polite notice in a consultation room (in English and Polish)

There is a polite notice on the wall facing the client seat in the consultation room. Although the bilingual sign is matched in format, there are adjustments in the style according to languages. For example, the Polish note uses the heading “Drodzy Klienci” [Dear Clients] while the English one “polite notice”.

#### 8.5.4 Publicity leaflets

Publicity leaflets available on the table in the consultation room in three languages: Polish, English and Romanian.

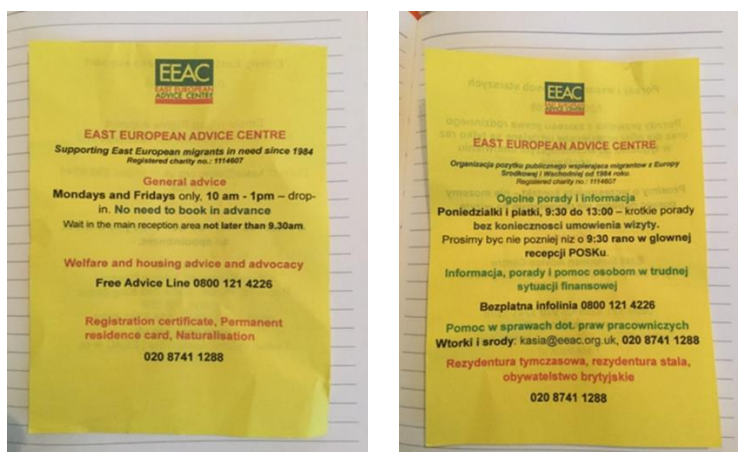


Figure 31 EEAC leaflet in English and Polish (front page)

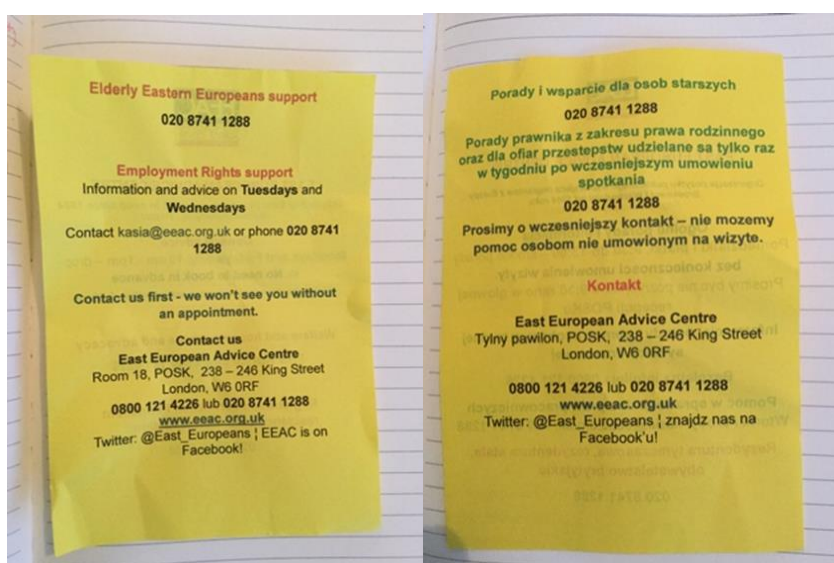


Figure 32 EEAC publicity leaflet in English and Polish (back page)

We compared the EEAC publicity leaflets produced in English and Polish. Translation of the Polish version of the leaflet is provided below and differences between the Polish and English version of the leaflet are highlighted in red.

Audience design (borrowing the term from Bell, 1984, referring to the phenomenon when one shifts the way of speaking in response to audience) element is clearly there. Adjustment is evident in the information applicable and relevant to the target community and the instruction. For example, while both versions mention employment rights support and permanent residence, other services are different. The Polish version mentions advice for people in difficult financial situations, facing temporary residence, needing support for the elderly, and requiring legal advice regarding family law matters and advice as victims of crime. In contrast, the English version highlights welfare, housing, and registration certificates.

There are also some differences in instruction and information, suggesting that the leaflet designer may use Polish as the source language and then translate into other languages. For example, in the English version, the Polish word “lub” (meaning “or” in English) is inserted between two contact numbers, suggesting that this may be “copy and pasted” from the Polish version. The Polish version asks not to arrive at the POSK main reception hall before 9:30 in

the morning. This is to discourage clients from turning up too early, a legacy from the communist era that people tended to arrive well ahead and to queue for a very long time – although this cultural practice is changing. However, the English version says something opposite, “Wait in the main reception area not later than 9:30am”. This may well be an accidental error, possibly due to the translation from Polish into English.

[Front page]

East European Advice Centre

Public service supporting migrants from Central and East Europe since 1984. Registered Charity number: 1114507

General advice and information

Mondays and Fridays 9:30 till 13:00 - quick advice sessions with no need to pre-book

Please, **do not arrive at the POSK main reception hall before 9:30 in the morning.**

**Information, advice and support for people in difficult financial situation**

Free phone: 08001214226

**Help with employment rights matters**

**Tuesdays and Wednesdays [kasia@eerc.org.uk](mailto:kasia@eerc.org.uk) 02087411288**

**Temporary Residence, Permanent Residence**

**British Citizenship**

**02087411288**

[Back page]

**Support and advice for the elderly**

**02087411288**

**Legal advice regarding family law matters and advice for victims of crime is available once a week and via booked appointments only**

**02087411288**

**We are unable to help to people with no booked appointments – please contact us prior to your visit**

**Contact**

East European Advice Centre

Rear Pavilion, POSK, {further contact details}

The cross-linguistic differences as evident in both the bilingual polite notice and multilingual publicity leaflets show the text designer’s awareness of the need to adjust to the audience, based on the assumed knowledge and expectation of the audience and culturally-appropriate etiquettes.

## 8.6 EEAC Social media

### 8.6.1 Website

As discussed earlier in Section 5, the EEAC website is predominantly in English, suggesting that the website is designed with external audiences who operate in English in mind. There is some attempt to engage with Polish speakers on the landing page-- there is one phrase in Polish on the top of tabs, “Szukasz pomocy?” meaning “Are you looking for help?”. The link takes audience to a website in Polish which provides information about EEAC service (Figure 33).

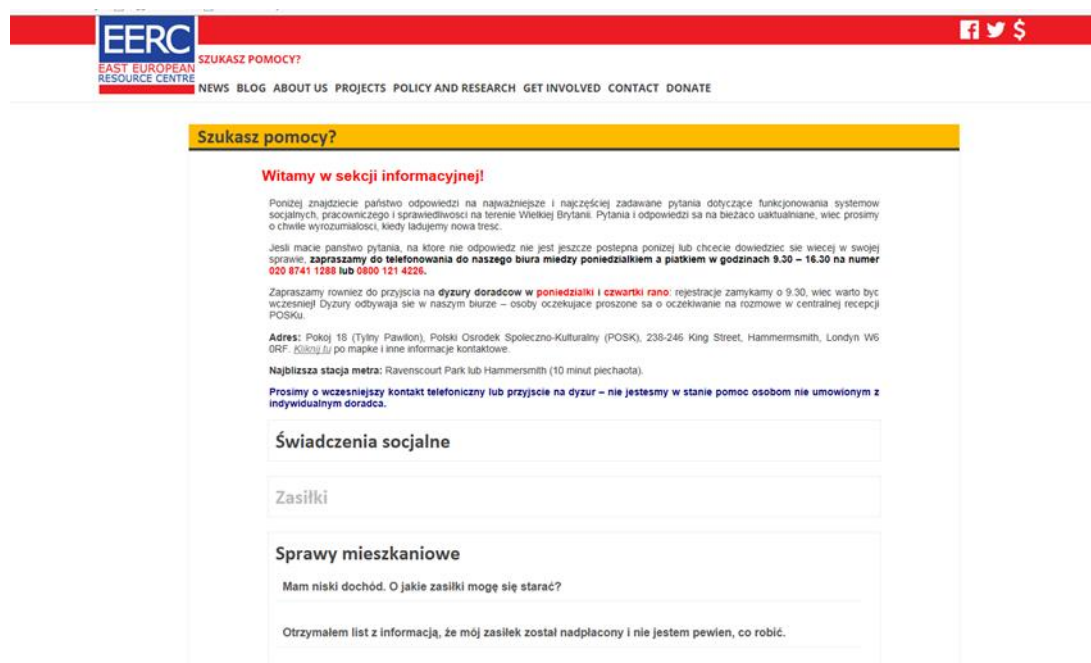


Figure 33 The website accessible through the link, “Szukasz pomocy?” meaning “Are you looking for help?”

Translation for the website is provided below:

“Welcome to the information section!

Below you will find answers to the most important and most frequently asked questions about the social system, employment rights and legal systems in the United Kingdom. Questions and answers are updated regularly, so please be respectful when we load new content.

If you have questions that are not answered, or if you would like to find out more about your case, please call our office between Monday and Friday from 9.30 am - 4.30 pm at 020 8741 1288 or 0800 121 4226.

We also would like to invite you to come to our office on Mondays and Thursdays mornings to meet with our advisers: the registration closes at 9.30, so it is recommended to be earlier! Appointments take place in our office - clients are asked to wait to be seen by the POSK central reception.

Address: Room 18 (Rear Pavilion), Polish Social and Cultural Center (POSK), 238-246 King Street, Hammersmith, London W6 0RF. Click here for map and other contact information.

The nearest tube station: Ravenscourt Park or Hammersmith (10 minutes' walk).

Please contact us by phone prior to the meeting or come and wait to be seen. We are not able to help people who are not booked with an individual advisor.” (end of translation)

The website is clearly under development. A list of services is available but only two links (social help and housing issues) are live. The rest of the services, showing in grey, are not accessible.

Apart from this exclusively Polish “Are you looking for help” page, other languages are only visible under the news tab. The content under other tabs is in English only. When the news items are relevant for communities, the languages of communities are adopted. In the following example (Figure 34), we see an announcement in Romanian about an outreach meeting for the Romanian community. Similarly, the example in Figure 35 is in Polish and aims for Polish community.

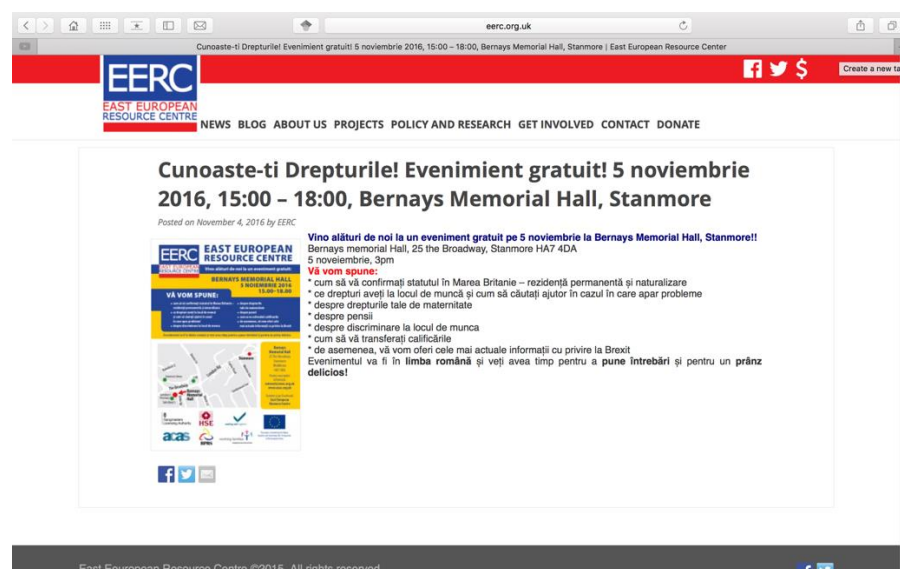


Figure 34 Information about an outreach meeting for the Romanian community on the EEAC website

Translation for the content is provided below:

“Know your rights! Free event! 5 November 2016 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Bernays Memorial Hall, Stanmore

Posted on November 4, 2016 by EEAC

Awareness-raising workshops 5 Nov 2016. Join us at a free event on 5 November at Bernays Memorial Hall, Stanmore!!

Bernays Memorial Hall, 25 The Broadway, Stanmore HA7 4DA

5 November, 3pm

We will tell you:

- \* How to confirm your status in the UK - permanent residence and naturalization
- \* What are your rights in the workplace and how to seek help if problems arise

- \* About your maternity rights
- \* About pensions
- \* About discrimination at work
- \* How to transfer skills
- \* Also we will provide the latest information on Brexit

The event will be in Romanian and you will have time to ask questions and a delicious lunch!”  
(End of translation)

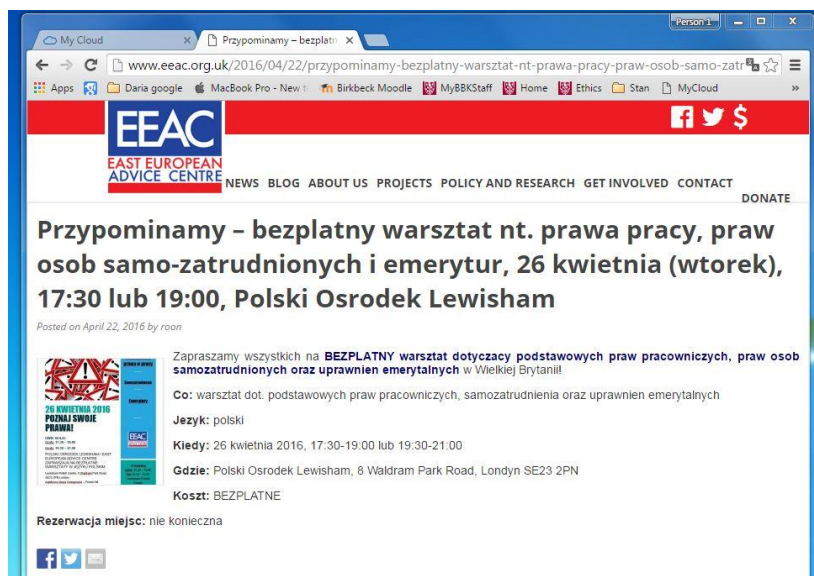


Figure 35 Information about an outreach meeting for the Polish community on the EEAC website

Translation:

“We would like to remind you - a free workshop on employment rights, self-employed rights and pensions, 26 April (Tuesday), 17:30 or 19:00, Polish Lewisham

Posted on April 22, 2016 by EEAC

PCL workshop on 26th May2016 PL We invite everyone to a FREE workshop on basic labour rights, self-employed rights and pension rights in the UK!

Subject: a workshop on basic employment rights, self-employment and pension rights

Language: Polish

When: April 26, 2016, 17: 30-19: 00 or 19: 30-21: 00

Where: Polski Osrodek Lewisham, 8 Waldram Park Road, London SE23 2PN

Cost: FREE

Reservation of places: not necessary” (end of translation)

### 8.6.2 EEAC Facebook

The posting on the EEAC Facebook page follows the same practices that we just demonstrated in the EEAC website news section: the language choice follows target communities. Table 2 shows the breakdown of the postings in different languages. Examples of Facebook postings in Romanian and Polish are provided in Figures 36 and 37.

**Table 2: Languages in EEAC Facebook postings**

Language in Facebook postings	Number and percentage
English	52 (59%)
Polish	13 (15%)
Romanian	18 (20%)
Bulgarian	1 (1%)
Other (photo updates)	4 (5%)
Total (13.10.2015 – 07.09.2016)	88

The screenshot shows the Facebook page of the East European Resource Centre (EERC). The page header includes the EERC logo and name. The main content area features a post from November 5, 2016, in Romanian. The post invites people to an event at Bernays Memorial Hall in Harrow to discuss Brexit and citizenship. Below the text is a graphic with the EERC logo and event details in Romanian. To the right, there are sections for 'PEOPLE ALSO LIKE' and 'LIKED BY THIS PAGE', listing various organizations like 'Romanian Women in UK' and 'Hackney Migrant Centre'. The left sidebar shows the EERC profile information and navigation links.

**Language in Facebook postings**

Language in Facebook postings	Number and percentage
English	52 (59%)
Polish	13 (15%)
Romanian	18 (20%)
Bulgarian	1 (1%)
Other (photo updates)	4 (5%)
Total (13.10.2015 – 07.09.2016)	88

Figure 36 EEAC Facebook posting in Romanian

(English translation of the top lines is provided by Facebook)

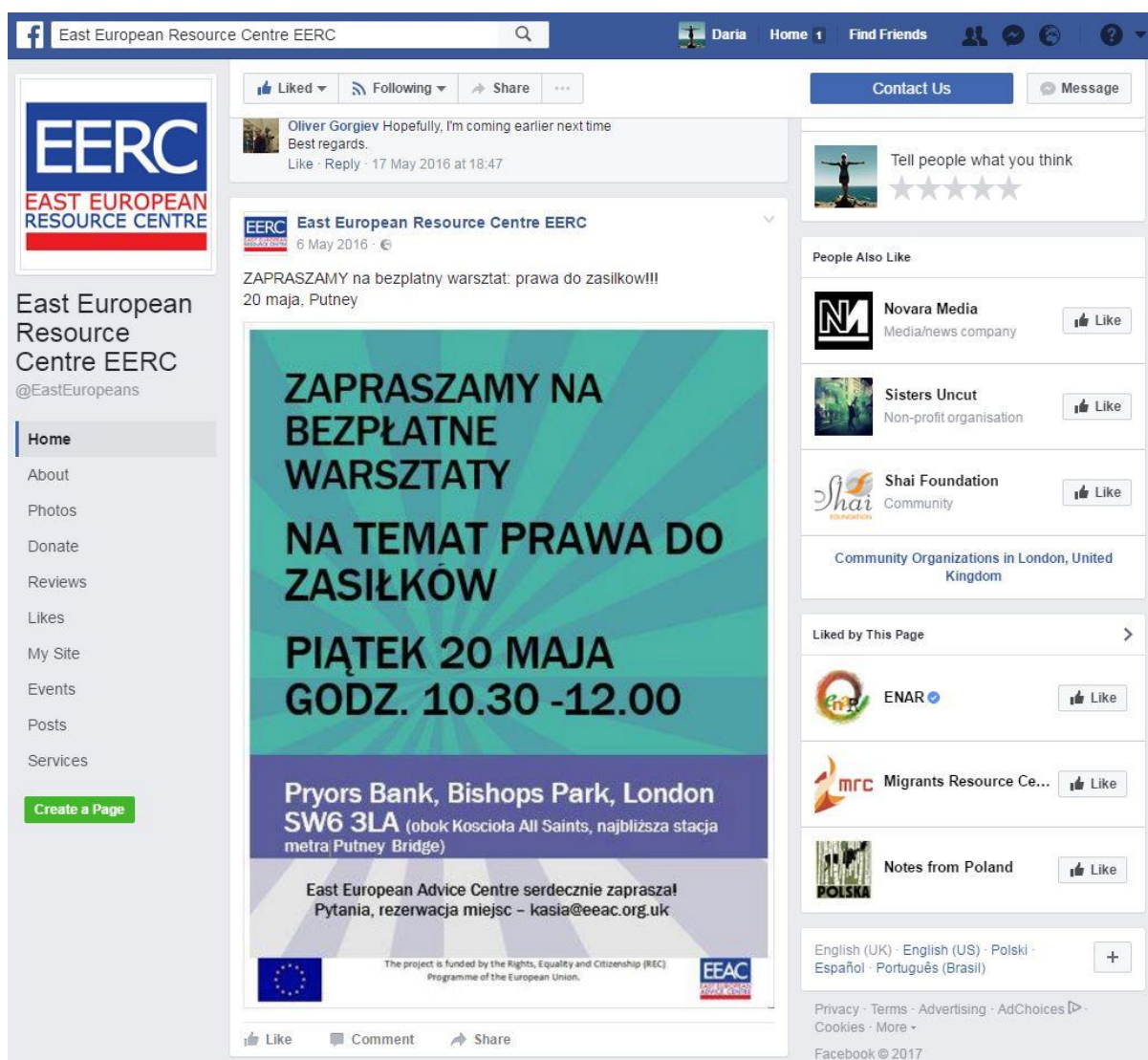


Figure 37 EEAC Facebook posting in Polish

(Translation: You are invited to the free of charge workshop: the right to benefits!!! 20 May, Putney)

### 8.6.3 EEAC Twitter

The same practice applies to EEAC tweets. The following figures contain examples of tweets in English, Romanian, Bulgarian and Polish. The tweets include a hashtag for different communities, for example, #romena for the Romanian community, #polski for the Polish community and #България for the Bulgarian community.

Table 3 Language in EEAC tweets

Language in tweets	Number and percentage
English	50 (82%)
Polish	6 (10%)
Romanian	4 (7%)
Bulgarian	1 (2%)



EastEuropeanResource @East\_Europeans · Sep 1

With a brilliant banner donated by  
@DisplayWizard! Thank you!!!



Figure 38 EEAC tweet in English



EastEuropeanResource @East\_Europeans · 19 May 2016

#romana SMINAR GRATUIT! Îți datorează cineva bani pentru munca  
prestată? document care certifică rezidența permanentă?



**24 MAI 2016**  
**SEMINAR GRATUIT**  
**CUNOASTE-TI**  
**DREPTURILE!**

Orele 18.30 – 20.00 (18.00 pentru GUSTĂRI  
UȘOARE)

8 Waldram Park Road, Londra, SE23 2PN

Cea mai apropiată stație este Forest Hill  
Overground (trenul supratran).

Seminarul va avea la sfârșit o sesiune de  
întrebări și răspunsuri.

Pentru a rezerva un loc, trimiteți un mail la  
[outreach@eeac.org.uk](mailto:outreach@eeac.org.uk)



The project is funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union.

Îți cunoști drepturile  
la lucru?

Știi cum să te  
înregistrezi ca liber  
profesionist?

Lucrezi în  
construcții? Află mai  
multe despre CSCS și  
CIS.

Îți datorează cineva  
bani pentru munca  
prestată?

Știi cum să aplici  
pentru un certificat  
de înregistrare sau  
un document care  
certifică rezidența  
permanentă?

EAST EUROPEAN  
ADVICE CENTRE  
[www.eeac.org.uk](http://www.eeac.org.uk)  
020 8741 1288



Figure 39 EEAC tweet in Romanian.

“#romana SEMINAR FREE! You owe someone money for work? document certifying permanent residence?” (End of translation)



Figure 40 EEAC tweet in Bulgarian

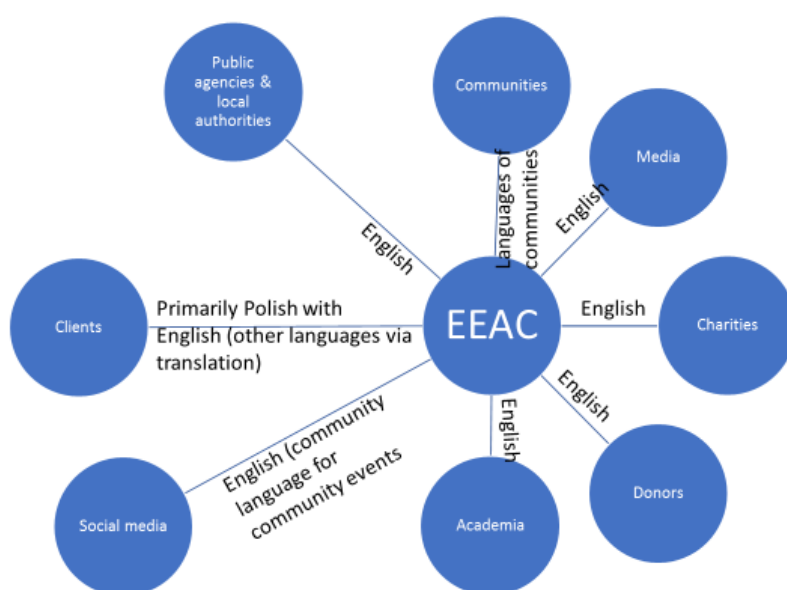


Figure 41 EEAC tweet in Polish.

## 8.7 Summary and discussion

Language audit shows an organically developed grass-roots approach to multilingual needs in the workplace (see Figure 42). These include some attempts to use different languages to reach different communities (e.g. leaflets and social media postings) and to adjust content and forms of politeness according to audiences of different languages. Polish is perceived as the desired language of the workplace where and when the staff have choices and in fact used most frequently with their clients, most of them speak Polish as first or additional languages. English is the “de facto” working language with external organisations (this also relates to the predominant presence of English on the website and on the social media). In reality, however, terms and phrases in English frequently occur in workplace interactions. While translation is used as a way of meeting language needs, it is also used to calibrate meaning and as a tool to demonstrate the nuanced difference between target and source languages.

Despite many examples of flexible multilingualism in interactions observed by the research team, languages are largely treated as discrete entities in writings. Different languages are used predominantly separately from each other in the linguistic landscape with only occasional switches between languages. The discrepancies between interaction and writings may be to do with pre-planning involved in writings, out of a monolingual ideology which equates one language with one community/nation and assumes one speaker one language only. For example, the website staff listing does not mention that some of the staff may speak languages other than the national language of place of origin. This monolingual ideology stands in contrast with translanguaging practices we are going to examine in the next two sections.



*Figure 42 Multilingual needs and reality in EEAC workplace*

## 9. “Navigating British systems”: Discrepant roles of a socio-legal adviser

### 9.1 The system

The EEAC positions itself as an intermediary third party that operates in the space between the British legal, social welfare and benefits system and clients (specified here as “disadvantaged Eastern European migrants” who need help). This is evident from the statement on the “what we do” section on their website.

*“Frontline delivery of information, advice and advocacy for disadvantaged Eastern European migrants in need of help to navigate British systems, develop confidence and skills, and improve integration with the British society”* (“What we do” section on EEAC/EERC website)

A system, in layman’s terms, refers to a set of procedures, approaches, or frameworks that work together and form a complex whole. “British systems”, used in the plural form in the text above, implies the existence of multiple mechanisms whereby things are done in the UK. These could be complex things such as the education system, the health care system, the housing system, or the welfare system. They could be something small, something routinely followed and taken for granted in the forms of customs, such as a queuing system in front of a service desk, whereabouts one stands on an escalator, or whether to give a restaurant waiter a tip and, if so, how much. Despite attempts to make (some) systems transparent and less bureaucratic (e.g. discourse of post-bureaucratic organisation, Iedema, 2003), in reality, it is difficult to pin down what systems really are. They remain amorphous. We often hear people talking about “being lost in the system” or “the system’s failure”. In the applied linguistics field, the system has been studied from perspectives of organisations (or bureaucracy) and institutional discourse. These studies have highlighted the challenges involved in working with the institutional systems.

, Studies suggest that institutional discourses are not accessible to everyone. It is “another sublanguage” which “affects us one way or another, from the moment we are born” and “it manifests itself in birth certificates, hospital forms, medicare/Medicaid forms, tax forms and booklets, grants applications, regulations, credit agreements, notices and so on” (Charrow, 1982, p. 173). Institutional discourses contain “features which are attributed to institutional practice, either manifestly or covertly, by professionals (and clients)”, and is “characterised by rational, legitimate accounting practices which are authoritatively backed up by a set of rules and regulations governing an institution” (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999, p. 15). The institutional discourse is noted for its grammatical complexity and jargons (Charrow, 1982; Redish, 1983, the phenomenon of demodalisation, Iedema, 2003a). It is often “abstract, analytic and euphemised” (Roberts, 2015, p.245). What makes it even more challenging is that ways of writing and talking differ across institutional settings (Mayr, 2008).

A high level of “institutional literacy” is required in navigating the system. These literacy skills include reading and writing such as form filling, record keeping, and deciphering assumptions from institutional documents. Hidden catches in incapacity application forms, welfare advertising leaflets and the UK inland revenue leaflets are unpicked in Sarangi & Slembrouck (1996). Cultural and institutional knowledge required from Pakistan migrants while filling visa applications is demonstrated in Capstick (2016). As Iorio discussed (2016, citing Kaestle, 1985), “the end goal of institutional literacy is not to maximise mutual intelligibility through creating a common and standardised set of reading and writing practices. Rather, the goal is often both to

reinforce institutional power structures and to provide a means by which these structures can be challenged”.

With built-in inaccessible institutional discourse and required high-level institutional literacy, institutional practice is more often bureaucratic and dehumanised than not. Bureaucracy, while it may have ‘technical superiority’ over other forms of organisation, is impersonal in its nature (Sarangi & Slembrouck, 1996). It involves bureaucrats ‘dehumanising’ the encounters through distancing themselves from clients, fitting clients into boxes in forms and rendering the process as matter-of-fact. Moreover, institutional encounters are laden with power asymmetry and forms of control. For Sarangi & Slembrouck (1996), borrowing Foucault’s words, bureaucratic practices are one of the core techniques of modern power, which is orientated towards the production of regimented, isolated, and self-policing subjects (p.5). When “unemployment benefit” becomes “jobseeker’s allowance”, for instance, the onus is on the benefit recipients to prove their eligibility by providing certified evidence of job seeking. The change of the label changes the perceptions. While some organisations have adopted a post-bureaucratic rhetoric (e.g. worker participation through self-managing work teams, horizontal and vertical information sharing, according to Heckscher & Donnellon, 1994) in recent years, they “retain traditional structural hierarchies, expert and specialisation boundaries, and procedures and processes whose intent is top-down control rather than bottom-up facilitation (Iedema, 2003a, p.2).

Given these challenges, navigating a complex system requires a high level of competence and dexterity. In the next sections, we shall focus on the roles of a social-legal advisor in supporting their clients as they face contexts like those characterised above.

## **9.2 Intersection of professional and institutional discourse**

Navigating clients through complex systems is one of the primary tasks facing organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureaus. However, the three-way relationship among advisors, clients and the system is not always clear-cut or transparent. There are many labels and metaphors which describe the roles played by advisors. Wadensjö’s discussion (1998) of concepts such as *intermediary*, *mediator*, and *gatekeeper* has bearing on our understanding of the roles of advisors. For Wadensjö, Goffman’s notion of “discrepant roles” of intermediaries (1990) is relevant in understanding how intermediary roles in social interactions could vary, depending on the relationship of individuals to groups involved. Individuals are given different access to “secrets”, which could be interpreted broadly as information or power, and therefore have “discrepant” roles in controlling the information in a given situation. Those who know “secrets” of two separate groups and facilitate the interaction between two sides are “go-between” or “mediator”, as opposed to other roles such as “non-person” which are merely present during performance. Wadensjö is keen to point out that discrepant roles do not just stop at this level – go-between or mediator roles exist in a couple of discrepant forms in Goffman’s definition. An example provided by Goffman (1990) is that the intermediary role taken by a “foreman” in communicating between workers and the management would be different from that of a chairperson of a formal meeting who regulates interactions. The existence of discrepant roles within roles of go-between or mediator is highly relevant to our project. A number of other studies cited by Wadensjö also scrutinise different roles and functions of intermediaries. For example, both Bailey (1969, cited in Wadensjö, 1998) and Paine (1971, cited in Wadensjö, 1998) differentiate the roles of broker from other intermediary roles such as middleman, pure messenger and go-between, as it carries a stronger mandate and takes more initiatives.

“Gatekeeper” is another term discussed in Wadensjo (1998). Several studies used this term to describe the encounters between counsellors and students in student counselling interviews (Erickson & Schultz, 1982), job interviews (Adelswärd, 1988), interviews between social workers and their clients (Cedersund, 1992, Sarangi & Slembrouck, 1996). What is in common in these kinds of encounters are the element of control exercised by the intermediary, whether this is to do with the flow of information, topics, services, or resources. While the outcome of these encounters often depends on the intermediary’s ability, time and willingness to see others’ perspectives, “there is a potential conflict between the service and the control aspects, which sometimes surfaces in dilemmas reported in the literature on institutional communication” (Wadensjo, 1998, p.69).

There are at least two points in the above discussion on the discrepant roles of intermediaries in terms of access to information, mandates and control which is significant to the study reported here. One is that roles can be discrepant and vary. The second is the myth of neutrality often associated with intermediaries. Gulliver (1979, cited in Wadensjo, 1998) stated that the idea that mediators, by definition, act impartially was more of a stereotype than a fact. He argued that mediators’ strategic roles and mandates existed and varied on a continuum, representing the range of strengths of intervention. If roles can be discrepant and neutrality is merely a belief, it remains to be investigated how advisers working in citizen advisor bureaus go about their roles and neutrality. In this chapter, we will focus on discrepant roles Renata plays in working with clients, and her skills of navigating the system.

The following analysis of advisory sessions between Renata and clients are primarily based on the fieldnotes by DJP and recordings during drop-in sessions on 21 March 2016. Drop-in sessions in the Centre are offered over a slot of 15 minutes. The recording of the first drop in session was transcribed.

### 9.3 Advising and translating the system

A couple arrives for advice on their tenancy contract and their deposit. They have been renting a studio flat for four months and decided to change their accommodation. Their agreement requires a six-week notice before moving out. And this is what they did. However, the landlord thought that four-month was not long enough and therefore they breached the agreement. He emailed them saying he would not give them the deposit back unless he found someone to move within 6 months of the date of receiving their notice. During the drop-in session, Renata explains how system works and advises on how to proceed.

The following transcript recorded the interaction between Renata and the clients (referred to as CF and CM) after they have given their consent to take part in the research. Renata is systematic and consistent in seeking clients’ consent for participation in our project by starting each session with the consent form.

Example 9.1 Safety deposit scheme (LonLawAud\_20160321\_Transcript)

TURN	TIME	WHO	ORIGINAL TEXT	TRANSLATION
1	14:17	CF	zrezygnowaliśmy z mieszkania złożyliśmy wypowiedzenie mieszkaliśmy tam 4 i pół miesiąca . i no sytuacja była po prostu taka że . musimy zmienić mieszkanie nie z powodu że to nam mieszkanie nie odpowiada że coś jest nie w porządku	we gave up the flat we put forward notice 4 and a half months we lived there . and the situation was simply that. We have to change the flat not because this flat isn't up to standards or something is wrong
2	14:31	R	uhum	uhum

3	14:34	CF	tylko po prostu to są no osobiste względy że po prostu znaleźliśmy coś innego i złożyliśmy wypowiedzenie tak jak było zapisane w umowie 6 tygodni . przy czym landlord nam powiedział że za krótko tam mieszkaliśmy . dla niego to nie było opłacalne i nie zwróci nam depozytu	it is simply this, personal matters that we found something else and we put the notice forward as it was written in the contract 6 weeks . part of it, landlord did tell us that we lived for too short period . for him it wasn't a good business and he would not return the deposit
4	14:48	CM	jak komuś komuś nie wynajmie po prostu [/unintel/	if he won't rent it to someone someone [/unintel/
5	14:49	CF	[jak komuś . jak kogoś innego nie znajdzie na nasze miejsce . w takim okresie czasu . eer no to nie zwróci nam depozytu gdzie wpłaciliśmy praktycznie 1100 funtów no i ... nam się wydaje że po prostu [w umowie	[if he won't . if he won't find someone else in our place . in this period of time. eer then so he won't give us the deposit back where we paid practically 1100 pounds and we ... we believe that it is simply [ in the agreement
6	14:04	R	[a gdzie jest wasz depozyt?	[and where is your deposit
7	15:07	CF	depozyt . [tutaj mamy taki er	deposit. [ here we have such
8	15:09	R	[jest w er .[tej depozyt	[is it eee. [this deposit
9	15:11	CF	[depozyt jest prawdopodobnie [w	[deposit is most likely [in
10	15:11	R	[my deposit scheme . tak?	[my deposit scheme . right?
11	15:12	CF	hmm . tak .. nie wiemy . właśnie co to są za za bardzo dokumenty ponieważ jesteśmy tu [od niedawna	hmm yes .. I don't know. exactly what are these very documents because we are here [ for a short time
12	15:17	R	[dostaliście to?	[did you receive it?
13		CF	tak to dostaliśmy	yes we did
14	15:20	R	a kiedy ta umowa była podpisana?	and when was the contract signed?
15	15:21	CF	czwartego . od czwartego listopada tam się wprowadził[iśmy	on the fourth. from the fourth of November we moved [in
16	15:26	R	[czwartego listopada kiedy to nowe prawo weszło od pierwszego /unintel/ ... czyli to wam dał . to oznacza tylko to jest to pismo z tego safety deposit scheme . to jest taka firma organizacja gdzie oni trzymają te depozyty tak jakby są organizacja niezależną tak że to NIE landlord ma je w kieszeni czy na swoim koncie tylko wpłacił to tam .	[fourth of November when did this new law come in from the first /unintel/ ... so he gave you. it means only this is the letter from this safety deposit scheme. this is such a company organisation where they keep the deposits as if they are an independent organisation so that NOT the landlord keeps the money in his pocket or on his account but he pays it in there (to this company)
17	16:05	CF	ah ok	ah ok
18	16:12	R	tylko to dostaliście? czy jeszcze dostaliście er powinniście dostać tam jakieś prescribe information to się nazywa . [prescribed information	is it all you received? or maybe you received er you should receive these prescribe information it is called. [prescribed information
19	16:23	CF	[to było tylko .to było za pośrednictwem agencji było podpisywane no to jedynie tu jakie [opłaty	[it was only . it was through agency it was signed so eventually here some [ payments
20	16:26	R	[a holding deposit to było na początku [pewnie nie?	[and holding deposit was it at the beginning [ surely wasn't it?
21	16:32	CM	[tak	[yes
22		CF	tak .uhum	yes. uhuh
23		CM	i tutaj w umowie ogólnie warunki były tak że depozyt tylko nie wraca za [zniszczenia nic	and in this agreement generally the condition was it does not return deposit for [damages nothing
24	16:39	CF	[za zniszczenia że to depozyt przecież obejmuje to jeśli byśmy coś w mieszkaniu tam zniszczyli uszkodzili tak ? .. tak jak w Polsce wynajmowaliśmy	[for damages that the deposits counts but if we have damaged broke down something, right? .. as we were renting back in Poland and ... and there was no

			prawda i ... i nie było nic mowy na to że na przykład że musimy minimalnie wynajmować nie wiem pół roku czy dotrzymać umowy do roku i w tym . od- będzie zwrócony depozyt ...	saying that we have to stay for minimum I don't know six months or to keep it up as a one year contract and in this . from- deposit will be refunded ...
25	17:10	R	before ... six with this notice . before the end of the contract {reading to herself}. jaka teraz jest . er wy jeszcze tam dalej mieszkanie?	before ... six with notice . before the end of the contract {reading to herself}. what is it now. err are you still living in there?
26	17:42	CF	tak mieszkamy bo złożyliśmy mu takie wypowiedzenie znaczy zanieśliśmy to najpierw do agencji a później zeskanowaliśmy no i wysłaliśmy to do niego na maila on {landlord} nam odpisał na tego maila . że przyjmuje to wypowiedzenie no ale jest kwestia tego że jeśli . w ciągu tych 6-u tygodni nie znajdzie nikogo . na nasze miejsce . no to wtedy nam nie odda depozytu	yes we are because we put a notice forward I mean we had taken it to the agency first and then we scanned it and sent it to him via email he {the landlord} return the mail to us . that he accepts the notice but there is a question of that . if within 6 weeks he will find no one . in our place . so then he won't return the deposit to us
27	18:09	R	wydaje mi się że powinien . musicie err- ale jak z angielskim . dajecie radę?	I reckon he should . you you must err- but how is your English . are you managing?
28	18:13	CF	no tak średnio {laughing} od niedawna jesteście w Londynie .no coś coś mówimy ale . to tak ...	well so so {laughing} we have arrived to London recently . well we can speak something . but that's it ...
29	18:23	R	czyli kiedy wy się chcecie wyprowadzić 18 kwietnia?	so when do you want to move out 18 <sup>th</sup> of April
30	18:24	CF	tak . osiemnastego byśmy zabrali swoje rzeczy	yes. 18 <sup>th</sup> we would take our stuff
31	18:29	R	no to mówię . ten depozyt jest w tej . tej deposit scheme . i oni go trzymają ..	so I am saying . this deposit is in this . this deposit scheme . and they are holding it
32	18:39	CF	no to . no w porządku rozumiemy tylko na jakiej podstawie on faktycznie może nam nie oddać tego depozytu?	that's it . all right, we understand but on what grounds he could actually refuse returning the deposit to us?
33	18:44	R	z tego co ja widzę to nie bardzo może . nie oddać . powinien oddać ... czy wy jak wpro- czy to jest furnished u-umeblowane?	from what I can see he cannot really just . not to give it back . he should give it back... when you were mov- is it furnished f-furnished?
34	18:53	CM	tak	yes
35	18:56	R	czy mieliście robioną jakąś taką tą . inspekcję na początku . inventory?	have you done this . the kind of . at the beginning inspection. inventory?
36	19:00	CM	znaczy on to odnawiał niby tam	II mean he has been renovating
37	19:03	CF	przed naszym wprowadzeniem się no to malował i jedną szafę wstawił	before we moved in he repainted it and brought one wardrobe
38	19:09	R	hm . a wyście robili swoje . może by /unintel/	hm. and you have been doing your own . maybe /unintel/
39	19:05	CF	znaczy mu nie robiliśmy tam swoich zdjęć jakoś chyba nie? . nie . raczej nie robiliśmy jak /.../	I mean we did not take any pictures did we? I don't think so? . no . I don't think we took /.../
40	19:23	R	czy on wam to dał na piśmie . że wam nie odda tego depozytu?	did he give you this in writing . that he won't return the deposit?
41	19:24	CM	nie na razie [tylko słownie	not for now [only verbally
42	19:24	CF	[w mailu . słownie no i mailu nam to napisał . że .w mailu to nam napisał że my zrywamy kontrakt ... że zrywamy no ale jest jasno zapisane że jest 6 tygodni [wypowiedzenie	[in the email. verbally and he wrote it in the email. that. in email he wrote that we break the terms of agreement... that we are breaking it but it is clearly written that it is 6 weeks [notice

43	19:37	R	jest jeszcze podkreślone i tym i- grubym [tłustym drukiem	it is also highlighted and this- bold [bold fonts
44	19:41	CF	[no dokładnie	[exactly that
45	19:42	R	tak the tenant may terminate . this agreement by giving at least 6 weeks notice in writing to the landlord before the end of the contract'	yes the tenant may terminate . this agreement by giving at least 6 weeks' notice in writing to the landlord before the end of the contract'
46	19:51	CF	czyli przed zakończeniem mamy prawo złożyć to wypowiedzenie ... no to w mailu nam jedynie napisał że zrywamy zerwaliśmy umowę	so before the end {of the contract} we have the right to give this notice ... so only in the email he wrote that we brake broke this agreement
47	20:04	R	no . wypowiedzenie jest zerwaniem umowy ale to	well yes . a notice itself it's a breaking of an agreement but this
...			...	...
48	21:36	R	dla was byłoby dobre żebyście przynajmniej sami zrobili z kimś nie wiem znajomym {the inventory}. kto by był powiedzmy waszym świadkiem . jego namawiać też na taką . ponieważ było to inventory robione na początku {of the tenancy}	it would be good for you so that you would do it yourselves {the inventory} maybe with someone who you know . who let's say would be your witness . and also convince him {the landlord} to do such a . cause such inventory was done at the beginning {of the tenancy}
49	20:29	CF	aha w ten sposób	aha this way
50		R	jak się wprowadzaliście to - żeby potem nie było [powiedziane że że było zalane mieszkanie na przykład	when you were moving in -well so that it wouldn't be then [said that that the flat was flooded for example
51	21:54	CF	[poprosić jego żeby przyjechał albo ktoś . albo na przykład ktoś z agencji tak żeby przyszedł . i potwierdził tak?	[to ask him to come over or someone else . or for example someone from the agency ok to come over . and to confirm right?
52	22:01	R	no ale kogoś po waszej stronie bo agencja to będzie raczej po jego {landlord's} stronie	well yes but someone who takes your side because the agency would likely take his {landlord's} side
53	22:05	CF	mamy znajomego który mieszka niedaleko	we have a colleague who lives not far away
54	22:09	R	przynajmniej . jak do niczego innego nie dojdzie to dla samych siebie zrobić zdjęcia w jakim stanie to mieszkanie zostawiacie	at least . in case that if none of it happens then simply just for yourselves to take pictures showing in what state you are leaving this flat

(CF: Female client; CM: male client; R: Renata; transcription conventions are in Appendix 1)

The interaction as presented above is quite typical of advisory sessions in EEAC. An advisory session usually contains three parts: information gathering, assessment and recommendation. Each advisory session opens with clients' statement of the "problem", followed by advisors' probing or information gathering. Then advisors would give their assessment of the situation, sometimes accompanied with further probing. An advisory session ends with some recommendations or suggestions from advisors. In the above interaction, Turns 1- 26 is the information gathering phase in which the clients provided an account of the "problem" while Renata probed. It starts with CF and CM's collaborative description of the situation and their justification for moving out (Turns 1-5). Renata's questioning in subsequent turns (Turns 6-26) were aimed to find facts and to keep the conversation on the right track. Instead of letting the clients continue their justification on why they wanted to move out (Turns 3-5) – something not directly relevant to the issues

concerned, she was interested in where the deposit was held (Turn 6), whether the clients received the document (Turn 12), when the contract was signed (Turn 14), etc. In between asking these questions, Renata explained the safety deposit scheme in Turn 16.

From Turns 27 up to 33, Renata stated her assessment of the situation –she thought the landlord should return the deposit. She was careful to frame her diagnosis of the problem as her personal opinion –perhaps trademarks of her professional way of speaking, by using “I reckon” (“wydaje mi się(, że<sup>3</sup>)... “ = “It seems to me (that)...”) in Turn 27, and as based on the information she was made aware of, “from what I can see” (z tego co ja widzę) in Turn 33. She asked about the clients’ English language skills while she was stating her assessment (How is your English. Are you managing? Turn 27). From the following turns, it was clear that she was thinking ahead about recommendations, i.e., things the couple could do to protect themselves.

Renata moved on to recommendations from the 2nd part of Turn 33 onwards. She asked whether the clients have done an inventory (Turn 35), whether they have decorated the flat themselves (Turn 38). She asked about whether the landlord had given anything in writing about keeping the deposit (Turn 40). There were some contradictions between CM’s and CF’s response. CM said that the landlord only did it verbally (Turn 41) while CF referred to an email in which the landlord informed them that they broke the contract (Turn 42). In the next few turns, Renata clarified the terms and conditions as stated in the agreement. She confirmed CF’s interpretation that the agreement only stated 6 weeks’ notice period by referring to the written document and the prominence of the relevant clause (“highlighted”, “bold fonts”) (Turn 43), showing her professional way of thinking –reliance on written agreement. To back up her confirmation, she read out the key clause concerned in the agreement in English (Turn 45) and confirmed again in Turn 47. She also clarified the clients’ understanding of what “the notice” is and that as a matter of fact, they actually DID terminate the agreement by giving the notice. She then returned to the topic of inventory and suggested that the clients should do it with a witness (Turn 48). CF took it on board and elaborated that she could ask someone from the agency (Turn 51). However, Renata, bringing in her understanding of the system, pointed out the potential bias of the agency (Turn 53). She then went on to another option of taking pictures when leaving the flat (Turn 54).

In the interaction above, Renata took on the role of advisor and problem-solver. She clarified the clients’ confusion about the deposit protection scheme and provided guidance on possible actions. She is professional in many ways: cautiously phrasing her assessment of the situation, showing her line of thinking and evidence from written agreement and gently keeping the conversation focused on the problem. She shared her understanding of the system, not only from a professional’s point of view (e.g. where things stand legally), but also as a helpful advisor who is on the side of her clients when she could.

Our fieldnotes and audio recordings on other occasions captured several intercultural moments in which cultural, linguistic or system differences become apparent and the onus is on Renata to translate the system. In the following fieldnotes written on 25/04/16, a client mistook an estimate in a welcome letter from an electricity company as an actual bill, probably due to his English proficiency.

- *He hands some electricity bills to Renata. They speak Polish. **It is not a bill but a welcome letter from the electricity company.** He says the charges to be paid are too high. **Renata looks at the paperwork and explains this is only a prognosis, not what was used.** She reads out: “the assumed annual consumption” and translates “*czyli za rok* [which mean per year]”. She fetches her mobile to calculate the rates and asks whether he wants to know the estimated charges per month or per week, and she follows his request. (DJP/25.04.16)*

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<sup>3</sup> There is always a coma before ‘że’ (conjunction, usually used to code in indirect speech) in written Polish

On another occasion, a client mixed up benefits (PIP) and a type of payment protection insurance (PPI). He showed R the text message he received re PPI, thinking that it was an official notice from DWP about PIP. MP was very considerate in her reply. Instead of saying outright that the text message had nothing to do with PIP, she chose her words very carefully to mitigate the face-threat, using hedges such as “well”, “rather” in her reply (Turn 2) and gave him a detailed explanation in a way accessible to the client (Turn 4).

TURN	TIME	WHO	TRANSCRIPT (source: LonLawAud_20160412)	TRANSLATION
1.	00:02:40	A	oni dzisiaj mi wysłali <b>message</b> . już pani pokazuje . co oni właśnie . z czym to jest związane . co chcą . gdzie był ten <b>message</b> ... o proszę . rano byłem w szpitalu i <b>message</b> właśnie od nich	today they have sent me a <b>message</b> . let me show you . what they were trying . what it refers to . what do they want . where was this <b>message</b> ... here it is . I was in a hospital in the morning and the <b>message</b> was right from them
2.	00:03:08	MP	uhum . <b>we have been trying to contact you regarding your PPI</b> . no to-n to raczej nie od nich . PPI to jest raczej <b>insurance</b> ..	uhum . <b>we were trying to contact you regarding your PPI</b> <sup>4</sup> . well n-no this is unlikely from them . PPI is rather an <b>insurance</b> ..
3.	00:03:21	A	co to jest?	what is it?
4.	00:03:24	MP	umm . to jest ten <b>insurance person</b> - nie pamiętam czego to jest skrót PPI to jest . . jak ludzie mieli ubezpieczenia na kontach czy coś tam . to co panu sprzedawały . <b>insurance</b> na zabezpieczenie konta czy tam coś . płatności z konta ...	umm . it is this <b>insurance person</b> - I don't remember what the abbreviation PPI stands for it's the .when people had insurances on their {bank} accounts or something . what they were selling . <b>insurance</b> to secure a bank account or something like that . payments from the account ...
5.	00:04:04	A	eer to ok . to nie jest z nimi nic wspólnego?	eer well then . it has nothing to do with them {PIP/DWP institution} ?
6.		MP	nie . nie	no . no

In another set of fieldnotes on 16/03/16, a client reflected on how her Polish practice of making an effort to dress decently did not fare well for her when she went and asked for help<sup>5</sup>.

- *Mrs A comments that in her Polish way of thinking one must make an effort and present themselves as well as possible, even if they are not well. Consequently, once heading for her appointment, she did the same trying to look tidy and composed whilst the statement then says: “well-presented”, suggesting she can look after herself and does not needing any help. She complains that she would have to look scruffy like a tramp for others to believe she struggles.* (DJP/16.03.16)

EEAC's role in translating the system is complicated by other factors. Some clients from Polish background speak fluent English. It appeared that some Citizens Advice centres tend to refer clients to EEAC as soon as they find out that they speak Polish – irrespective of whether they can speak good English or not. Some clients prefer to come to EEAC, probably because they believe that the centre's representation will add weight to their case compared to representing themselves (see the fieldnotes below on 18/03/16)

4 PPI – ‘Payment Protection Insurance is designed to cover loan or credit card payments if you cannot work, for example, if you become ill or lose your job.

Banks and other lenders sold PPI to their customers without fully explaining what it covered. In the worst case scenarios, the banks/lenders lied to customers by telling them it was a compulsory element of a loan, or they simply added it without the borrowers' consent' source:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/46Cy2PJRJzNp3GbCXxZKKG5/payment-protection-insurance-ppi>

5 The client's dilemma reminds us of the issue of “double bind” of sexual logics in rape trials in which rape victims could be portrayed as either too emotional or rational by the defence lawyers and lose the case in either way (Matoesian, 1995; Conley and O'Barr, 2005).

The man speaks particularly fluent English and I wondered why they needed to come to a Polish-speaking service. (...) I wasn't 100% clear of the full contents of their conversation, but I did feel that they could have dealt with it themselves. I felt that they came to EEAC because they believed that going through the centre would make it more formal/official which may help with their case. (LW/18.03.16)

#### 9.4 Multiple intermediary roles and skills

Renata often takes up different intermediary roles between her clients and other agencies and organisations, depending on her clients' needs. Below are the fieldnotes of drop-in sessions with the 2<sup>nd</sup> client and 4<sup>th</sup> client during the drop-in sessions on 21 March 2016. The fieldnotes are in the left column below and our commentaries are in the right column. Both clients have been to the centre before and they came to see Renata again to follow up their cases.

Fieldnotes 21 of March 2016 by DJP	Commentary
<p><b>Second Client (Mrs CF)</b></p> <p>The next client is disabled Mr An. He has one leg only and Renata is very friendly with him. She explains that he is always positively thinking. She asks if his advocate returned his call, he says she has not. Renata checks some documents and says that his welfare support has been stopped indeed. Another woman at the door asks Renata for a moment to come out to the corridor. I cannot see who she is, I only hear that she wishes Renata a very Happy Easter and thanks her for help. Renata comes back to the room with a colourful bag full of flowers and coffee and smiles to us slightly embarrassed.</p> <p>Renata checks Mr An's papers again and sees that the payment has been stopped on the basis of the tribunal decision. Renata remembers from the top of her head that the tribunal was on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February. She goes through some more documents she has brought from Mr An's file from the next door room<sup>1</sup>. She puts them all over the table and compares. She phones someone. She asks the person to get her in touch with a solicitor who was dealing with Mr An's case already<sup>2</sup>. Renata explains Mr An's situation; they talk about what should and what could be done to help him. Renata hears that the process is still 'ongoing'. She also informs the person on the phone that she will be on her annual leave until the 31<sup>st</sup> of March<sup>3</sup>.</p> <p>Renata explains to Mr An that the tribunal asked for statement of reason and they should have received it but the process takes up to 12 weeks and they will not be paying him any money until further decisions are made<sup>4</sup>. So he has to wait. She asks if he has put his documents forward for housing benefits<sup>5</sup>. He confirms. Renata says he needs to come back another time in the future because she cannot do anything more at the moment. They have to wait up to twelve weeks<sup>6</sup>. She takes Mr An to the door and she stops by the next door where her volunteer works and check the progress of their work.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keeping files and checking paper trails are a key element of navigating the system.</li> <li>2. Liaising with the client's solicitor.</li> <li>3. Planning and thinking ahead and communicative from others' perspectives.</li> <li>4. Relaying the gist of her discussion with the solicitor to the client and clarifying the situation.</li> <li>5. Looking into other areas of support available to the client.</li> <li>6. Clear guidance on the timing of next meeting with an explanation for the long wait.</li> </ol>
Fieldnotes 21 of March 2016 by DJP	Commentary
<p><b>Fourth client (Mrs CF)</b></p> <p>Mrs CF was here on Friday .... She is here alone today and brings some documents to Renata. They talk for a while to recap the</p>	

<p>story and Renata asks CF if her English is good enough to go through security questions. CF laughs and says yes. Renata asks whether CF's request for mandatory consideration was sent by post or through the centre. CF says the first by post, Renata interrupts asking why the first as there should only be one. She checks dates again and explains to CF that CF couldn't sent a request for a reconsideration before the decision was made<sup>1</sup>. It is the wrong document. Renata checks all dates and what happened when – then she looks at the client asking if the order of documents is chronological<sup>2</sup>. CF confirms.</p> <p>Renata phones the Job Centre on CF's behalf to find out why the JSA was stopped.</p> <p>Renata speaks to the advisor on behalf of CF whose payment was stopped and who hasn't requested a mandatory reconsideration. Renata explains there is no written reply yet and CM wants to know the reason<sup>3</sup>. The recorder is paused again, door closed and the phone is being passed to CF for some questions<sup>4</sup>. Renata gets it back when CF gets through it and she learns that the office has received CF's documents and they are being processed. She suggests she could chase it up and place a three-hour return call to update the client on her application<sup>5</sup>. Renata asks if it is possible to get a Polish interpreter for CF and the advisors confirms she will arrange it<sup>6</sup>.</p> <p>We sit in silence. CF is in her late 50s, wears military clothes and red lipstick. Renata asks for the name of the advisor for reference and notes it down<sup>7</sup>. When she finishes her phone conversation with the advisor she retells what she heard to CF<sup>8</sup>. She also underlines to CF that the main focus at the moment is to get the written reply sent to CF's home address so she could start changing her situation from there<sup>9</sup>. CF leaves cheerfully and wishes us a very happy Easter.</p> <p>We are agreed on more observations tomorrow too, so I know I will return to see more very soon. It was a very interesting day I feel Renata becomes slightly more relaxed with me but she is very busy getting with other work immediately.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Paying attention to details, active listening and thinking through the client's replies</li> <li>8. Being precise with the paperwork and the order of documents.</li> <li>9. Speaking to the job centre on the client's behalf</li> <li>10. Consideration for confidentiality</li> <li>11. Offering a practical solution to speed up the process.</li> <li>12. Being attentive to the client's language need and requiring a Polish interpreter for the client.</li> <li>13. Taking name down for accountability</li> <li>14. Relaying the message.</li> <li>15. Reminding the client of the priority</li> </ol>
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In the above two cases, Renata humanised the system and became a spokesperson for her clients while mediating with other agencies or key players. She was familiar and comfortable with how others in the system work. She played more of a liaising role with the client's solicitor and discussed "what should and what could be done to help him" with the 2<sup>nd</sup> client (Mr An). For the 4<sup>th</sup> client (Mrs CF), Renata was mediating with an unknown contact from a job centre. She took up more of an advocate role by pressing on the job centre to provide an update within three hours. She also requested an interpreter for the client and took down the name of the person from the Job centre as a reference. In both cases, Renata made effort to relay the messages or the key discussion point to the clients and ensured that they understood what needed to be done and when.

Working with documents or text and keeping records are an important component of Renata's work. She uses documents as intermediaries between her clients and other agencies. She checks through paperwork brought in by clients carefully and keeps files of clients' cases where necessary. She relies on paperwork in assessing clients' situation, produces paperwork and

records and sends new and further paperwork through the system as outcomes of advisory sessions. As Iedema (2003a) points out, records or documents are “boundary objects” (Wenger, 1998) that cross boundaries. They travel from offices of job centres to job seekers in the post, between landlords and tenants as emails, and from clients’ home to EEAC. They contain decisions, demands, forms, bills, appeals, doctor’s prognoses, etc. They are evidence of accountability, obligation and responsibility in the system.

## 9.5 Interpreting rules and regulations and operating within limits

In translating the system, Renata interprets rules and regulations for her clients. There are occasions that Renata could not help her clients beyond what she has offered, because clients do not comply with rules and regulations. The third client (referred to as Mr CM) in the drop-in sessions, who was apparently ordered to make weekly repayment for his debts, did not appeal against the decision within the required period and therefore, had little options but obeying the order. He came to the centre to seek help.

Fieldnotes 21 of March 2016 by DJP	Commentary
<p><b>Third case (Mr CM)</b></p> <p>Mr CM comes back to see Renata today. He was here on Friday explaining his situation about struggling with debts. He has very short hair, Puma bag, well ironed trousers and shirt. Renata asks for the documents; he gives her some documents which appear irrelevant. He has a bruise on his thumb, underneath his nail, which looks like it needs medical attention.</p> <p>Renata has a delicate posture, looks elegant and professional. She gets through the documents and cannot find any details about the debts. She suggests she will call ‘them’<sup>1</sup> to at least decrease his weekly repayment amount. Mr CM complains and tells Renata that in the first place ‘they’ should deal with the landlord who was receiving the payment and ask on what bases they ask him to pay for it instead of the landlord.</p> <p>Renata explains again that the only thing she could do at the moment is to decrease the amount of his repayment. He gets upset and says he doesn’t want it, he doesn’t care. He tells her it is not about the repayment and complains about injustice. He believes he should not be asked to pay for it at all. Renata kindly explains this would be then legal case and she couldn’t help him with it<sup>2</sup>. She repeatedly comes back to explaining he should have appealed within 13 months from the first decision and she reminds him that trying to appeal two years later is too late<sup>3</sup>. He starts being angry and tells that ‘they’ are ruthless and rude bandits.</p> <p>I don’t understand what he has done and what he hasn’t; whether he replied or he didn’t; what benefits he applied for and what benefits he didn’t. He says he has no answers from anyone and he knows nothing. Renata tries to find a letter with the decision as she seems to be helpless in this situation. They find one more letter showing the mentioned amount of money of about 1500, which was then claimed back from CM. Renata explains again that there is no way she could appeal after such long time and when he winds down tries to negotiate with him what she could do to help him and encourages him to try to reduce the weekly</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Aligning with each other through positioning and referring to the ‘faceless’, ‘nameless’ system/stakeholder in the system as ‘they’.</li> <li>2. Clarifying her responsibilities and distinguishes advising from legal service.</li> <li>3. Crystal-clear about the actions that can be taken to help with the client.</li> </ol>

<p>charge so that at least his life could become slightly easier<sup>4</sup>. He finally agrees but still shows disappointment. When Renata gets ready to make a phone call and to gather all necessary letters he looks at me and tells me about the bureaucracy and terrible administration in this country.</p> <p>I think I found the way to detach – I look at Renata when the client starts speaking to me. He automatically looks at her too. Renata phones the Job Centre and asks me to stop the recorder for the time of getting through the security questions<sup>5</sup>. She also closes the door. I move my head around as my neck is stiff after some time in front of the computer screen. The recorded beeps when paused. Mr CM says he sympathises with me and he knows back can hurt. I smile and look at Renata again. Renata speaks to the advisor and explains she phones on behalf of her client and that CM cannot speak English fluently therefore she would appreciate if the advisor spoke slowly and clearly when getting CM through security questions<sup>6</sup>. She passes the phone to CM and he tells the advisor his date of birth in English but he doesn't understand further questions. Renata takes over the phone and translates to CM he needs to tell the advisor what benefits he gets<sup>7</sup>. The phone comes back to CM, he answers. Renata listens, he looks at Renata who can also hear the advisor and shows CM the number on the letter as an answer to another question and he says the number.</p> <p>The phone comes back to Renata. She explains CM's situation and the advisor clarifies that the £22.00 are taken from him every other week. Renata changes the repayment plan for CM and from tomorrow 'they' will be taking £5.00 a week. CM thanks Renata but then he goes back to an article he says he read and tells her still doesn't understand why they take money from him and not from the other guy. Renata fills further forms <sup>8</sup> and again tells him that he should have done that two years ago, now it is too late. Renata knows that some letters must have been sent to him and probably missed but she tries to be gentle<sup>9</sup>. He gets his bag and he leaves.</p> <p>I tell Renata I admire her ability to deal with people in such calm and friendly manners when she knows they are likely to be wrong. The problem seems to be the fact that they do not necessarily understand they may be wrong.</p>	<p>4. Negotiating and clarifying the next step.</p> <p>5. Attentive to privacy and confidentiality issues.</p> <p>6. Managing language issues.</p> <p>7. Interpreting for her client.</p> <p>8. Form-filling</p> <p>9. Considerate and face-saving in her approach.</p>
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Working with an angry and disappointed client was not easy. Renata was clear about what she could do and where the limits were. At the same time, she was gentle and attentive to the client's face in dealing with him. Even if she realised that the client might have missed some written correspondence, she did not point it out to save his face. She found the best option and persuaded the client to agree to it. Cultural differences were evidently brought into the conversation. Here we see a case that the distinction was made between "us" and "they". The client, being upset and angry, talked about "they" (the system) being ruthless and rude bandits. He complained about bureaucracy and terrible administration in this country. In fact, it is not just the "system" that creates boundaries. The fact that the client did not want to work within the framework of the system also exacerbates the situation, whether the client admitted it or not. Renata chose not to respond and instead, she focused on the practical solution, i.e. reducing the

weekly payment for her client. While speaking on the client's behalf during the phone call with the job centre, she took up a role of interpreting and tried to bring the client into the negotiation. Thus, she became a ratified participant (Goffman, 1981) in the conversation.

## **10. Translanguaging as resemiotisation**

In the context we are working with, meetings between advisors and clients involve talking about problems and working with texts. With very little competence in institutional discourse, clients tend to provide their narratives in formats that are different from those recognised in institutional discourses. The advisors' roles are to translate clients' intimate narratives into institutionally relevant facts, to fit people into numbers, categories and boxes in forms and ultimately, to turn spoken words into writing. This way of working is a process of resemiotisation, where different semiotics including talk, writing, technology, etc, are chained together (Iedema, 2003a, p.50). A similar notion which has been researched in legal communication with a particular focus on regulatory text is intertextuality. Defined as the "the relational process by which texts relate to each other" (Rock, 2013, p. 80), intertextuality shows how texts travel in institutional settings (Rock, 2013) and how texts operate as organisational tools and instruments of control (Smith, 2005, 2006). While the "texts" in studies on intertextuality have been interpreted broadly as words that could be read, images that could be seen or sounds that could be heard (Smith, 2006), most of the studies focused on written texts. In this report, we use resemiotisation as an analytical means to understand translanguaging, the dynamic meaning-making process whereby multilingual speakers go beyond conventional divides between languages and modalities to act, to know and to be (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014). It helps us to understand "how semiotics are translated from one into the other as social processes unfold", and "why these semiotics (rather than others) are mobilised to do certain things at certain time" (Iedema, 2003b, p.29).

In this section, we explore translanguaging as a process of resemiotisation, using the data collected during an advisory session with a client, referred to as CL. The client came to follow up his previous meeting with Renata regarding his Personal Independent Payment (known as PIP, a benefit for people aged 16-64 with a long-term health condition or disability). It transpired during the conversation that the client was born in Russia. His father worked for the military and was posted to Lithuania when CL was young. He speaks Russian and Lithuanian equally well. When we asked him where he learned Polish, he said that he picked up his Polish while working on building sites in London. In the meeting, Renata tried to prepare an appeal for the client's PIP, which was previously denied. She needed to establish grounds for appeal and therefore probed the client's health according to the criteria and questions set for PIP.

### **10.1 Chains of multiple semiotics**

Multiple semiotics are brought together in the meeting. The fieldnotes selected below (on top of the transcription) was written by ZH, a research team member who does not speak Polish. Not knowing the language has focused ZH's attention from what was said to how something was said. Her fieldnotes recorded a number of semiotics mobilised in the meeting. There were body movements: pointing at back and knees; eye gaze; typing; moving the mouse, and writing and lines-breaking on the computer. The conversation paused when Renata was writing. We could hear a quiet phone call and a beeping sound next door. The virtual world and technology were brought into the conversation too. A Google search was carried out, a government website accessed, a file down-loaded and a form printed.

The selected transcripts recorded what has been said and by/to whom and how Renata shaped interaction around forms. It started off with Renata giving signposting in Turn 98 that a) she was writing down grounds to appeal and b) she was going to probe the client's problems with walking, a question on the PIP form where the applicant needs to declare their mobility issues. (The related questions for the PIP form are given in the box on the right.) She then broke down her problems into a number of specific questions. To make things easier for the client, she articulated her first question in the form of alternative questions, giving the client the option (Turn 100). When the client did not answer her question directly (Turn 101), Renata offered another option (lower back) in Turn 102. This time the client confirmed that it was spine and knees. Renata then confirmed that she understood where the pain was and narrowed down the problematic area. She then probed further and asked the client whether he could walk slowly (Turn 106). In the next turn, the client initiated a request for repair, not knowing what Renata meant by 'wolno' (freely or slowly). Renata offered an explanation and then moved onto the next question on the form, i.e. whether someone could walk short distance of 50 or 20 metres (Turn 110). During the conversation, she was translating the questions on the PIP form from English into Polish and into words and specific probing questions that would make sense to the client. She then resemiotised CL's verbal replies, along with his responses in other semiotics such as pointing and intonation, into written answers on the form.

R pointed at her back and said lower back. CL pointed at his knees. R kept writing. I could hear that someone spoke Polish (I think) in the next door very softly. The atmosphere was very clam, almost therapeutic. It was a phone call and it finished with a beep. R looked through the paperwork, as if she was checking a particular piece of information. CL's hands were resting in front of his body, just above his knees with thumbs touching as if he was holding something. He looked at R while she was composing the letter—I could see that she has highlighted a paragraph on the file. R moved her mouse and typed. Then C initiated a question... R did a search on google. Was she checking information? She was skimming through the website. She seemed to know where to look for information and started studying the information. She then continued with the letter. R was putting line breaks here and there. There was an exchange of tak. R: tak? With rising intonation. CL: tak with falling intonation. R continued to compose. (ZH/22.03.2017)

98	R	dobrze . ja tu dalej pisze w tych. erh . podstawach do apelacji . że ma Pan bardzo poważne kłopoty z chodzeniem .	well . I am writing down in these . erh . grounds to appeal . that You have serious problems with walking .
99	CL	tak	yes
100	R	czy tylko w biodrach czy też kręgosłup ?	is it only hips or your backbone too ?
101	CL	u mnie teraz no ja już nie znam	I don't know with me anymore
102	R	w dolnym tym kręgosłupie?	in the lower back ?
103	CL	no i spina boli i kolana bola	well and spina {probably from 'спинной /spinnai/ хребет' in Russian} hurts and knees hurt
104	R	i kolana bola . i biodra . rozumiem	and knees hurt . and hips . I understand
105	CL	tak tak	yes yes
106	R	.. lower back {she speaks to herself} ... i chodzi Pan wolno prawda?	.. lower back {she speaks to herself} ...and do you walk slowly?
107	CL	jak to 'wolno' ?	what do you mean 'freely'?
108	R	wolno . powoli	'slow' . 'slowly'
109	CL	tak	yes
110	R	... tak . co myśmy tu pisali .na co .odpowiadał mi Pan na to pytanie . ile Pan może przejść zanim Pan może . musi się zatrzymać . 20 - 50 metrów .	... yes . so what did we write in here . what for . you were answering to this question . how far can you walk before you need to stop . 20- 50 meters .
111	CL	tak . potem trochę poczekam ... i biodro u mnie постоянно boli . постоянно . to	yes . and then I'll wait a while ... and the hip continuously hurts . continuously . it -
112	R	non stop tak?	nonstop right ?
113	CL	tak i . jak куда idę to mnie też boli . no bo ja znam co mnie potrzebna tylko chodzić . ...	yes and . when I go somewhere it hurts to . because I know I only need (to) walk ...
114	R	ok a jak to było z tymi standing and sitting or combination of both ? .. też było że nie może Pan . że Pan najwyżej 10	ok and how was it with these standing and sitting or combination of both ? that you can sit like this without changing your

## Personal Independent form (P.16)

### About getting around

Only answer these questions if you are claiming under the special rules for terminally ill people.

You may be able to get the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment if you have difficulty moving or need help getting around.

Do you need someone else to plan any journey for you that you wish to take?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Sometimes ☐

Do you have difficulties following the route of a familiar journey?

For example, do you need

- another person with you
- an assistance dog, or
- aids, such as a white stick?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Sometimes ☐

Do you have difficulty walking short distances of up to 50 metres?

This is about the length of five buses.

Yes ☐

No ☐

Sometimes ☐

## 10.2 Calibrating

To resemiotise, advisors need to calibrate, i.e. to determine the relevance and accuracy of clients' narratives against the system.

### 10.2.1 Disambiguating

Renata is adept at untangling clients' often vague responses. She habitually repeats after clients, (double) checks what she hears and clarifies if meanings are not clear. In Example 10.1 below, an extract of the meeting with CL, Renata was trying to assess which type of diabetes the client had.

Example 10.1 "Diabetes and injections"

TURN	WHO	TRANSCRIPT (Source: LonLawAud_20160322)	TRANSLATION
30	R	a jeśli chodzi o cukrzycę . o <b>diabetes</b> to jest 2 czy 1? . czy Pan sobie sam wstrzykuje insulinę czy-	and what about diabetes . about <b>diabetes</b> is it 2 or 1? . do you inject insulin yourself or-
31	CL	tak	Yes
32	R	<b>sam Pan ma zastrzyki?</b>	<b>the injections yourself ?</b>
33	CL	tak . insulina i jeszcze //unintell/	yes . insulin and also //unintell/
34	R	<b>uhum . czy to jest ten stopień 2 czy 1 . diabetes?</b>	<b>uhum . is it the second or the first type . diabetes ?</b>
35	CL	drugi .	second .
36	R	<b>drugi</b>	<b>second</b>

(R: Renata; CL: client. Transcription conventions in Appendix 1)

Renata asked two questions in one turn (Turn 30), and received one answer "yes" (Turn 31). Although it seems obvious that it was an answer to the injection question, she re-checked and broke down the questions into two. She started with the question to which she thought the answer was given (Turn 32). After the client's confirmation (Turn 33), she returned to the first question from her (Turn 31). Once she got the answer (Turn 35) she repeated it after the client (Turn 36), probably both to confirm the answer and to demonstrate that she understood the client.

In another example (10.2), Renata was trying to find out whether the client has any medical appointments booked within the next 6 months, to avoid a potential clash with the tribunal hearing. She disambiguated the client's answers by reformulating the same question differently over the turns.

Example 10.2 "But you have a specific date?"

TURN	TICLE	WHO	TRANSCRIPT (Source: LonLawAud_20160322)	TRANSLATION
196	00:54:14	R	<b>teraz . czy ma Pan jakieś appointmenty lekarskie czy szpitalne w ciągu następnych 6 miesięcy takie że Pan zna daty?</b>	<b>now . do you have any doctor or hospital appointments during the next 6 months so you would know the dates?</b>
197		CL	dzisiaj było jedno-	there was one today -

198		R	nie . ale to w następnych sześciu miesiącach które by mniej więcej ewentualnie kolidowały z z datą rozprawy w trybunale . ma Pan jakieś tam za miesiąc za dwa . już daty ? nie.	no . in the next six months which could more le- potentially collide with with the date of the hearing in the tribunal . do you have anything next month or two . dates already ? now ?
199		CL	dzisiaj . był .// unintell// i ona powiedziała co //unintell/ z miesiąc będzie jeszcze	today . there was //unintell// and she said that //unintell// yet another month
200		R	ale nie ma Pan daty ?	but don't you have any date yet ?
201		CL	cztery <u>niedziele</u> ona powiedziała mnie . bo	four <u>Sundays</u> <sup>6</sup> she told me . because
202		R	no tak . ale nie Pan daty konkretnej? .	well yes . but you have a specific date ?
203		CL	Nie	no

In the above extended exchanges, Renata started with a more general question about medical appointments in the next six months (Turn 196). The client did not understand the purpose of her question and replied that he was having one on the day (Turn 197). Renata interrupted his answer and specified the time period (in the next six months) and explained why (Turn 198). The client said “today” again, but added more information about possible date in a month’s time (Turn 199). Renata continued to probe in Turn 200. Interestingly, the client recast his answer and said “four Sundays” instead of one month (Turn 201). In the next turn, Renata repeated her question, but added a word “specific” before the date and was successful this time—the client answered “no” in his reply.

### 10.2.2 Recasting through translation equivalents in different languages

The client used a mixture of Polish, Russian and English in his turns and showed a good understanding of Polish and some basic English. Renata sometimes carries out calibration by recasting key words into different languages, either Polish or English. In effect, she offers translation equivalents of the key words in question to check whether they are what the client intends.

Example 10.3. “Диабет or *diabetes*”

TURN	WHO	TRANSCRIPT (Source: LonLawAud_20160322)	TRANSLATION
6	R	ja zaczęłam powoli tutaj pisać ale w decyzji którą oni Panu tutaj dali . którą prosił o prze – o powtórne prze – rozpatrzenie . nie ma wyraźnie napisane na co Pan się skarży . czyli ja piszę w tych podstawach do apelu . do apelacji	I have slowly started but in the decision they made for you . which you were asking about – for reconsi - deration for reconsideration . there is no explicit explanation about what is your complaint about written there . so therefore I am writing in these grounds for appeal . for appealing

<sup>6</sup> ‘niedziela’ [Sunday] in Polish = ‘неделя’ /niedziela/[week] in Russian

7	CL	Tak	yes
8	R	..że Pan cierpi na chroniczny wie – bardzo duży ból bioder. nóg . stawów . dobrze myślę? . joints?	.. that you suffer from a chronic massi- great pain in hips . legs . joints . do I have it right? joints?
9	CL	Tak	yes
10	R	gdzie jeszcze co Pana boli? . na co Pan cierpi ?	where else does it hurt? what else do you suffer from?
11	CL	no <u>ещё</u> /jeszcze/ u mnie jest ta . jak to .	well I have <u>also</u> <sup>7</sup> this . how is this .
12	R	jak Pan chodzi to z czym gdzie Pan ma . gdzie głównie boli co Pan?	when you walk to what with where do you have . where mainly does it hurt?
13	CL	<u>u mnie</u> biodro	<u>well my</u> <sup>8</sup> hip
14	R	biodro czyli dobrze . chronic severe . hips. legs też tak?	hip so then ok . chronic .severe hips . legs too is that right?
15	CL	Tak	yes
16	R	i stawy . kolana?	and joint . knees?
17	CL	tak . kolana .. jeszcze mam . <u>диабет</u> <sup>9</sup> /diabet/	yes . knees . I also have <u>diabetes</u> <sup>9</sup>
18	R	diabetes tak?	diabetes . right?
19	CL	<u>диабет</u> <sup>9</sup> /diabet/ . i jeszcze astma ...	<u>diabetes</u> . and also asthma ....
20	R	czyli astma . to co Pan się męczy szybko?	so then asthma . then what do you get tired quickly?
21	CL	tak . ciężko oddychać ..	yes . and it's difficult to breathe ..

In Example 10.3, in Turn 8, Renata wanted to check where the pain was. She was going through the list: hips, legs and joints and then used the English equivalent, “joints” for the Polish word stawów. When the client disclosed further details about his health, using the Russian word “диабет” /diabet in Turn 17, Renata picked up on its phonetic similarity to the English word “diabetes” and recast the client’s reply into the English term for diabetes to confirm with the client in Turn 18. Interestingly, the client repeated the term in Russian as a means of confirmation.

### 10.2.3 Rephrasing ambiguous words

Occasionally, Renata rephrases problematic words in the same language.

Example 10.4 Slowly/freely means well?

TURN	WHO	TRANSCRIPT (Source: LonLawAud_20160322)	TRANSLATION
204	R	.. dobra . teraz . eer . interpreter . rozumiem że Pan będzie potrzebował . zamówię tłumacza .jaki język?	.. ok . now . eer . interpreter . I understand that you would need . I will book an interpreter . what language ?

7 ‘ещё’ /ie ʃ tʃ o/ [from Russian] -‘jeszcze’ /ie ʃ tʃ e/ [in Polish] -

8 nonstandard Polish grammar, probably from Russian

9 ‘диабет’ /diabet/ [in Russian] = ‘diabetes’ [in English] = ‘cukrzyca’ [in Polish]

205	CL	ruski albo litewski	Russian or Lithuanian
206	R	so Litewski czyli Lithuanian	so Lithuanian that is Lithuanian
207	CL	Lithuanian	Lithuanian
208	R	or Russian	or Russian
209	CL	tak	yes
210	R	i obydwu Pan będzie tak samo rozumiał? . bo musimy być tacy	and will you understand them both equally well . because we have to be
211	CL	ja wolno rozmawiam . ja wolna rozmawia na litewsk <sup>am</sup> i na rusk <sup>am</sup> to samo	I speak slowly/freely <sup>10</sup> . I speak slowly/freely in Lithuanian and in Russian <sup>11</sup> the same thing
212	R	'wolno' to znaczy dobrze?	'slowly/freely' means well?
213	CL	Tak	yes
214	R	czyli . it doesn't . to nie ma znaczenia dla Pana?	so . it doesn't . it doesn't matter to you ?
215	CL	nie ma . może-	doesn't matter . maybe -
216	R	всё равно	doesn't matter <sup>12</sup>
217	CL	всё равно {laughing}	doesn't matter {laughing}
218	R	o . to mi ze szkoły zostało jeszcze .. czyli albo Russian albo Lithuanian . a w jakiej kolejności? . czy Lithuanian pierwszy?	see . this is what I still remember from school .. so either Russian or Lithuanian . and in what order? is Lithuanian first?

In Example 10.4, Renata was discussing which language interpreter the client preferred. In Turn 211, the client wanted to say that he could speak both Lithuanian and Russian fluently. Instead of saying “swobodny” in Polish, meaning freely, he used “wolny” which could mean either slowly or freely. The ambiguity needed to be untangled. So Renata asked whether “wolno” meant “dobrze” (well) in Turn 212.

The discussion about the language proficiencies and the recasting of the phrase “it doesn't” in Polish (Turn 214) triggered a side exchange. Renata offered the Russian equivalent of the phrase in Turn 216. It was well received by the client who laughed, showing his appreciation of Renata's effort (Turn 217). Renata explained that the phrase was what she could remember from the school and (in)advertently brought the history and personal trajectories into the conversation. This was a rare moment of self-disclosure from Renata. She does not usually talk about herself in advisory meetings.

There was an incident of interactive repair, when Renata offered an equivalent in Polish at the client's prompt. In Example 10.5, the client asked what Renata meant by “wolno” in Turn 107. Renata explained it with another Polish word, *powoli*, meaning slowly.

Example 10.5 what do you mean freely?

TURN	TICLE	WHO	TRANSCRIPT (source: LonLawAud_20160322)	TRANSLATION
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10 'wolny' [slow and free] in Polish = grammar to speak a language agrees with different adverbs 'swobodny' [free, effortless]

11 -om ([litewskom [Lithuanian] and ruskom [Russian]) ending is from Russian grammar

12 wsjo rawno (всё равно) in Russian [doesn't matter]

103		CL	no i <u>spina</u> boli i kolana bola	well and <u>spina</u> <sup>13</sup> hurts and knees hurt
104		R	i kolana bola . i biodra . rozumiem	and knees hurt . and hips . I understand
105		CL	tak tak	yes yes
106	00:11:51	R	.. lower back {she speaks to herself} ... i chodzi Pan wolno prawda?	.. lower back {she speaks to herself} ...and do you walk slowly <sup>14</sup> ?
107		CL	jak to ‘wolno’ ?	what do you mean ‘freely’?
108		R	wolno . powoli	‘slow’ . ‘slowly’
109		CL	Tak	yes

The following example sees a combination of rephrasing in the same language and translation equivalent in a different language in Renata’s attempt to explain a word.

Example 10.6 “wzro – z eye sight. ze wzrokiem”

TURN	WHO	TRANSCRIPT (Source: LonLawAud_20160322)	TRANSLATION
50	R	czy ma Pan zakłócenia <b>wizji</b> też . z wzrokiem problemy jakieś	do you also have interruption of <b>vision</b> . some kind of problems with eye sight?
51	CL	czy wizy?	of visas?
52	R	wzro – z eye sight . ze wzrokiem .. z widzeniem .. czy ma Pan z oczami jakieś problemy ?	the sigh- with eye sight . with eye sight . with seeing .. do you have any problems with your eyes ?
53	CL	nie nie wszystko dobrze	no no everything is fine
54	R	Nie	no
55	CL	no jak czytać to ja nie widzę . o dalej . dobrze . u mnie jest w tych okularach	well when it comes to reading I don’t see . oh when further away . I’m good when in these glasses

Renata was aware of her speaker’s limited proficiency in Polish. When the client mistook her word “wizja” /vizya/ (meaning vision in English), as something to do with visa (wizy) (Turn 52), she provided the translation equivalent “eye sight” in English as well as rephrasing and elaboration in Polish, “wzrokiem”, (meaning eye-sight in English) and “widzeniem” (seeing in English) (Turn 53). It worked and the client confirmed that his vision was fine in his response.

### 10.3 Letting it pass and going with the flow

13 spina’- probably from ‘спинной /spinnai/ хребет’ in Russian (spine) – the spine/backbone

14 in Polish ‘wolny’ means both ‘free’ and ‘slow’ – hence the need for clarification from the client

Renata only carried out calibration when it was necessary. When the client's language mistakes did not impede understanding, she performed "letting it pass", a term proposed by Firth (1996), describing the practice of ignoring anomalies or ambiguities and focusing on content rather than form (a term proposed by Firth, 1996).

Example 10.7 "A passport is not needed"

TURN	WHO	TRANSCRIPT (Source: LonLawAud_20160322)	TRANSLATION
149	R	wysoki cukier . no i może mi się uda lepszą zrobić fotokopię . a tutaj co to jest jeszcze coś czego ja	high level of sugar . and maybe I will manage to make a better copy . and what is it here is it something else which I haven't -
150	CL	tu jest err	here is err
151	R	coś czego ja nie widziałam //uninte// {speak to herself .} .. tu jest jeszcze jakieś <i>degenerative changes</i> to może tutaj to damy ..	something I haven't seen //uninte// {speaks to herself} .. here is also something the <i>degenerative changes</i> thing so maybe we could add it here ...
152	CL	pierw chodził do //unintell//	first {I} was going to //unintell//
153	R	uhum	Uhum
154	CL	ona {doctor} <i>smotrej</i> jaki teraz <i>cukor</i> będzie	she {a doctor} will <i>look</i> now what the <i>sugar</i> is like
155	R	.. ok . dobra . czyli to odbije jeszcze . to	.. ok then . so I will copy also this . this
156	CL	to	this one
157	R	to może mi się uda bez tego załamania jeszcze	and maybe I could also do this one without the crease
158	CL	może być .. o tych . //unintell//	that's right .. about these . //unintell//
159	R	tego?	this one?
160	CL	tak	Yes
161	R	ale to to jest dobre . to się dobrze odbiło .. dobra to ja idę zrobić fotokopię	but this one is ok . this one is copied fine .. right then . so I will go to copy it
162	CL	teraz <i>passport</i> nie <i>potrzebna</i> ?	now <i>passport</i> is not <i>needed</i> ?
163	R	paszport nie potrzebny ...	a passport is not needed ...
164	R	ok . to są Pana oryginały .	ok . these are your original copies .
165	CL	uhum	uhum

In the example, Renata was discussing the client's health condition, going through the doctor's notes with the client and trying to resemiotise what she could gather into the appeal application. The conversation was mainly in Polish with occasional English terms and some Russian words. There were a couple of Polish/Russian-sounding words invented by the client. One is *smotrej* in Turn 154, which is probably from "смотреть" /smotret/ [to look/see] in Russian. The other is *cukor*, the target Polish word being "cukier", meaning sugar, in the same turn. Renata continued

the conversation. In a later turn (Turn 162), the client asked a question with an English term, passport, inserted into a predominantly Polish syntax. However, there was a mistake with the gender of the verb. Instead of using the masculine form “nie potrzebny”, he used the feminine form, “nie potrzebna”. Renata did not explicitly correct him. In her response (Turn 163), she recast the utterance in Polish completely, changing the passport into the Polish equivalent, “paszport” and used the correct masculine form.

In another example, the client used a Polish-sounding word for business card, wizytko (the correct Polish word is wizytówka). “Wizyt-” means visit in Polish, but the second part of the word is incorrect. Renata went with the flow in her recast in the following turn (Turn 280). She used a calque incorporating the client’s way of saying and inserting the word, kartkę, for card, and ended up with something like “visiting card”. The client seemed to understand and continued the conversation.

#### Example 10.8 Business card

TURN	WHO	TRANSCRIPT (Source: LonLawAud_20160322)	TRANSLATION
278	R	dobra . to jest to a to jest to	ok . this is this one and this
279	CL	i jeszcze może Wy <sup>15</sup> dajcie mi tą . <u>wizytko</u>	and maybe you also give me this . <u>wizytko</u> [business card] <sup>16</sup>
280	R	swoją kartkę wizytową	our business card <sup>17</sup>
281	CL	zadzwoń do was	I will call you
282	R	dobrze . dobrze	right . right

15 ‘Wy’ [plural ‘you’] obsolete in Polish – used to be used as a polite form – still used in Russian (?)

16 wizytko – an invented word intended to mean ‘wizytówka’ in Polish [business card] - {probably from ‘визитная карточка /vizitnaia kartot[ka/ }

17 ‘kartka wizytowa’ [wizytówka in PL] = ‘business card’ [in EN]- language calque

In this section, we explored how the advisor carried out the task of translating clients' intimate narratives into institutionally relevant facts, turning spoken words into boundary objects and fitting people into numbers, categories and boxes in forms. To achieve the task and mutual understanding, the advisor and the client mobilised a number of modes of semiotic resources ranging from digital technology to medical records, and from clients' narratives to body movements and eye gaze. To resemiotise, the advisor needs to calibrate information provided by the client and to determine their relevance and accuracy through recasting, rephrasing, breaking down the questions and letting it pass.

## 11. Summary and Conclusion

This study investigates intercultural moments in everyday multiculturalism in an institutional setting, specifically, how cultural and linguistic differences between people manifest themselves, how people live with, experience and negotiate these differences on the ground and what role translanguaging plays in these two processes. It is based on a four-month linguistic ethnography between March and June 2016 in a social-legal advice centre offering support to Eastern Europeans in the UK (known as EEAC), as part of the fourth phase of the TLANG project. The focus of the ethnography was to understand how the organisation, in particular, the key participant of the project, mediates between the legal and social welfare system in the UK and their clients.

The key participant, Renata, is a senior advisor in the Centre. Born and grown up in Warsaw, she came to London to learn English in 1981 and only found herself stranded in the UK when the Polish Martial Law was introduced. She speaks Polish as her first language and is highly proficient in English. She uses both languages in the workplace and at home. Our interviews and conversations during the data collection period created a space for talking about cultural and linguistic differences and about her intercultural and multilingual living. For her, Polish is the language “sucked in with one’s mother’s milk”; While English is always “kind of second one”, one must use it, in the same way as “Kali kill, Kali eat”, referring to a character, Kali, from a popular Polish novel who makes mistakes but achieves his goals. Professionally, she finds it easier to express certain phrases in English and believes that it does not make sense to translate them into Polish, as these technical terms have less to do with which languages they appear in, but more to do with one’s familiarity with subject matters.

Interpreting Renata’s narratives through the interplay of two worlds (the interactional context of the story and the story world in which the story takes place, De Fina (2016)) helps to understand her thinking (and some hesitation) when talking about Polishness vs Britishness, and here and there. For Renata, home is where her children were born, where she brought them up and simply where she is while off work, despite always being perceived as a “foreigner”.

As an organisation supporting migrants in the UK, EEAC is a product of changing political dynamics, the perennial debate about us vs. them and a self-funding financial model. The twists and turns in its existence and missions are reflected in its branding: it was founded as Polish Refugee Rights Group in the early 1980s, renamed as East European Advice Centre in 1987 and then changed into East European Resource Centre in July 2016 at the end of our observation period. It was initially set up as a charity to help Polish people who were stranded in Britain during the period of Martial Law in Poland and became a charity supporting Eastern Europeans in the UK several years later. It is currently repositioning itself as a resource centre, adding educational dimension to its existing main areas of work in advice, advocacy and awareness. Unexpectedly, EEAC also found itself speaking out for Polish communities in the media and

leading campaigns against hate crime since June 2016, the EU referendum, when Polish communities became the focus of tension and incidents of linguistic xenophobia escalated in the UK. The director of the organisation was frequently invited to appear in media. Her legitimacy of being a representative of hundreds and thousands of East Europeans was justified through her affiliation as director of EEAC. EEAC uses media and social media to fight hate crime, to support victims and to influence policy makers.

The nature of the work in EEAC requires a multilingual outlook in the workplace. Language audit by the research team shows an organically developed grass-roots approach to multilingual needs in the workplace. Specifically, Polish is perceived as the desired language of the workplace where and when the staff have choices, and English as the “*de facto*” working language with external organisations (e.g. the predominant presence of English on the website and on the social media). There are some attempts to use different languages to reach different communities (e.g. leaflets and social media posting). In reality, however, terms and phrases in English frequently occur in workplace interactions. While translation is perceived and used as a way of meeting language needs, it is also used to calibrate meaning and as a tool to demonstrate nuanced differences between different systems. Despite many examples of flexible multilingualism observed by the research team, languages are largely seen as discrete entities and there is a monolingual ideology which equates one language with one community/nation. Examples include: a) the website staff listing does not mention that languages other than the language of place of origins; b) different languages are presented either in parallel to, or separately from, each other in linguistic landscape and social media.

Renata, as a social-legal advisor, plays a range of discrepant roles in navigating clients through the system and making institutional discourse accessible. She translates the system and takes on different intermediary roles between her clients and other agencies, depending on her clients’ needs. In contrast with often bureaucratic and dehumanised nature of institutional practice, she “humanises” the system and often becomes a ratified participant in the conversation between her clients and other agencies. She gathers information from her clients, assesses the situation and makes recommendations as to what is next. She brings her professional skills and institutional literacy into advisory sessions. These include paying attention to details, active listening, protect clients’ confidentiality, addressing clients’ language needs, relaying messages, etc. She is considerate, attentive, clear, systematic, focused, empathetic and practical and at the same time, respectful of rules and regulations and firm about boundaries.

Above all, advisors’ role is to resemiotise, to work with multiple semiotics, to translate chains of multiple semiotics including clients’ narratives, body movements, internet, technology, etc, into writing and paperwork. Seeing the institutional practices as resemiotisation provides an additional dimension to the notion of translanguaging, in particular, how speakers go beyond conventional divide between languages and modalities and bring together different modalities. There is an emphasis on writing and on records or documents as “boundary objects” that cross boundaries (Wenger, 1998). They travel from offices of job centre to job seekers in post, between landlords and tenants as emails, and from clients’ home to EEAC. They contain decisions, demands, forms, bills, appeals, doctor’s prognosis, etc. They are evidence of accountability, obligation and responsibility in the system and thus often become aims and end products of advisory meetings.

To resemiotise, calibration is needed to determine the relevance and accuracy of clients’ narratives against the system. As evident in her interaction with a client, Renata uses a variety of

practices to calibrate, including disambiguating through recasting and repeating the client's replies using translation equivalents in different languages, rephrasing ambiguous words, and breaking down the questions. Renata also knows when to let it pass, to ignore anomalies and ambiguities and to go with flow. These different practices are brought together in the process of resemiotisation in the institutional setting. They are manifestations of how people live with, experience and negotiate cultural and linguistic difference on the ground.

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## Appendix 1 Transcription conventions

### Transcription conventions

<b>text -</b>	- unfinished word / phrase or interrupted
<b>/.../</b>	- omitted speech due to repetition and no adding data (natural restarts, repetitions, repeating a questions etc)
<b>/unintel/</b>	- unintelligible / inaudible speech
<b>[</b>	Interruption of another speaker
<b>[</b>	An overlap of speech
<b>[</b>	
<b>text-</b>	- unfinished word / thought
<b>TEXT</b>	- louder speech, emphasis
<b><i>Text</i></b>	- to highlight a feature, i.e.: diminutive form of address, humour etc
<b><u>Text</u></b>	- incorrect {difficult to translate} Polish grammar, probably due to Polish language being the client's L2/L3
<b>.</b>	- very short pause, usually when starting or finishing a thought or hesitation
<b>..</b>	- longer pause
<b>...</b>	- a long pause when stopping and thinking about an answer or collecting thought before answering etc
<b>{text}</b>	- added information to clarify the context of the speech, to describe a situation, to give further explanation so the input could be understood
<b>text</b>	English
<b>text</b>	Russian
<b>text</b>	Polish

## Appendix 2 List of Participants and Abbreviations

Abbreviations	
<b>ZH</b>	TLANG researcher
<b>LW</b>	TLANG researcher
<b>DJP</b>	TLANG researcher
<b>R</b>	Renata, the key participant from EEAC
<b>BD</b>	EEAC director
<b>DJ</b>	EEAC staff
<b>KZ</b>	EEAC staff
<b>EEAC</b>	East European Advice Centre
<b>EERC</b>	East European Resource Centre (the new name for EEAC)
<b>DWP</b>	Department of Work and Pension
<b>PIP</b>	Personal Independent Payment