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**Translation and Translanguaging**

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

# *Working Papers in Translanguaging and Translation*

## **Paper 5**

### **Translanguaging Business**

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## 1. Executive summary

**Research context and objective.** This report is based on our linguistic ethnographic investigations in a shop run by a Polish family in Newham, London, over a period of four months (September-December 2014) as the 1st phase of the larger project, *Translation and translanguaging: Investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse wards in four UK cities* (TLANG). The principal research objective here is to understand language, business and cultural practices in a local business run by a multilingual, migrant family.

**Key participants and site.** The family retail business under study is a Polish shop located in Newham owned by our key participants (E & T) who originally came from Poland in 1997. The shop sells almost exclusively Polish goods to customers of Polish or Eastern European backgrounds. Additional services provided by the shop include renting Polish DVDs, offering goods on credit and sending packages to Poland and in many ways, it serves as a community centre where people can ‘offload’. The shop also advertises on behalf of other Polish businesses, e.g., garage, and the Polish community, e.g., school.

**Data.** A range of data are collected by three researchers: field notes (over 60,000 words), interviews (1 hour and 18 minutes), audio recordings (45.5 hours), video recordings (2 hours), social media (279 messages) and linguistic landscaping (819 photos).

### The main findings.

a) How does the shop operate as an ‘ethnic’ family business? The shop is constructed into a transnational space through social practice and interactions of our key participants and others. Differences are observed between backstage interaction which is exclusively in Polish and frontstage interaction in which multiple languages and a range of semiotic resources are often resorted to with Polish as the desired language. Connectivity between transnational spaces is explored through the notion of ‘node’ whereby the KPs mediate and redistribute Polish goods, cultural practices and in general Polish ways of doing things.

b) What do the data tell us about the transnational experience of a migrant family? Connectivities with Poland are pervasive and on-going in all aspects of their work and family life. However, the Polish connectivities are entangled or interact with the local connectivities. The duality of connectivities often plays out in their interactions with (mixed) customer base, family language policy and planning as well as multilingual reality. Transnational experience heightened their (acute and developing) awareness of who they are, what Britishness is, how they fit in and if and when they go *back* to Poland.

c) What (new) insights does the investigation generate about multilingual practices in everyday life? Multilingual practices are characterised by resourcefulness and creativity in that a) the KPs

make use of a range of semiotic resources available creatively and collaboratively to communicate with others, and b) they are adept at adjusting their registers or repertoires according to audience and demonstrate an ability to manipulate the degree of formality and politeness to suit their communicative goal. The KPs have a bottom-up understanding of the role and status of several languages they use. Polish is their desired language of communication with their customers and they expect customers who have Polish roots to be good at Polish. However, they are also happy to go along with the customer's choice of language and curious about other languages and cultures. They are in general relaxed about the mix of languages in their language use; though probed in the interviews, they seem to be less aware of the extent of mixing in their interactions. What emerged through our investigation is a multilingual reality and translanguaging space where multiple languages are used and blended in some cases but in other cases, boundaries of languages are emphasised.

## 2. Introduction to the context

This report is based on our linguistic ethnographic investigations in a shop run by a Polish family in Newham, London, over a period of four months (September-December 2014) as the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the larger project, *Translation and translanguaging: Investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse wards in four UK cities* (TLANG). The principal research objective here is to understand language, business and cultural practices in a local business run by a multilingual, migrant family. Our analytic foci are three:

- a) How does the shop operate as an ‘ethnic’ family business? We are interested in the functions and purposes of the Polish shop, the role of family in the business, and its language practices at either backstage or frontstage, borrowing Goffman’s terms (1959).
- b) What do the data tell us about the transnational experience of a migrant family? In other words, how do our key participants (KPs) go about working and living as shop owners, Polish migrants living in London, and as a family bringing up a daughter of primary school age?
- c) Integrating a) and b) together, what (new) insights can be gained from the investigation or what new questions does it generate about multilingual practices in everyday life?

In Li Wei and Zhu Hua (2013a), we reviewed the new analytic emphasis in studies of immigrant/diasporic communities. There is a shift of interest from mobility to connectivity, and from victimization, deterritorialisation, uprooting and displacement of individuals and groups concerned to the ‘potentialities’ (a term used by Tsagarousianou, 2004, p.58, to refer to the various creative possibilities in both local and transnational contexts) in their transnational experience and the new space they are creating for themselves. This is the position we take in the present investigation, emphasising connectivities and potentials of the transnational experience of the family concerned.

In this report, we will start with a literature review in line with our analytic foci, followed by a section on research methods in which we describe the profile of our KPs, an overview of the data and reflections on issues and challenges in data collection. In the section that follows, we will present our main findings with examples organised under the three questions outlined above. The conclusion section includes a preliminary summary of our main findings and discusses the implications of our findings for understanding ethnic family business, new transnational experience and multilingual practices.

### 3. Literature review

#### 3.1. Space and node

To address the first analytical focus, we find two theoretical concepts useful in understanding connectivities and potentialities in the ethnic family business under study. They are *space* and *node*.

Space, as used in our study, is defined as a product and outcome of ‘social translation, transformation, and experience’ (Soja, 1989, p.80). It differs from ‘space *per se*, space as a contextual given and socially-based spatiality’ (ibid). With its emphasis on the constructive nature of social interactions, the notion of ‘space’ has proved to be an insightful analytical concept in understanding the relationship and interactions between migration, movement, and social actors who are involved and impacted upon, on the one hand; and place and context where these interactions and activities take place, on the other hand.

While a ‘place’ can be a country, a city, a street or a shop, associated with geographic location and material form, and serve as physical context for interactions, ‘space’ is constructed through “interaction between the human beings who occupy it and make reference to it” (Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain, 2013, p.16). It transcends the boundaries of the location, shifts away from a focus on physicality to conceptual and constructive meaning of social interactions. In migration studies, the term has been useful to describe the (new) experience of migrants. As migrants move from one place to another, the values, practices and social networks associated with their places of origin may travel with them: some may be kept, some may be adapted, and some may be transformed altogether. They may develop new values, practices and social networks in the new place of living. The outcome, as Jacquemet (2010, p. 51) points out, is “a constructed local space that is in effect quite transnational”. Elsewhere, the sense of living between two cultures has been further captured by spatiality terms, e.g., ‘liminality’ in Turner (1967) and ‘cultural marginality’ in Bennett (1993). The notion of space is therefore pertinent for our study when it comes to the question of transnational experience vs. Polishness and related interactional and multilingual practices (the notion of translanguaging space will be further discussed in Section 3.3.).

Transnational spaces are created and negotiated through the process of migration. But they do not exist in isolation. Connectivity between various spaces can be described with the notion of ‘node’, a term referring to either a connection or a redistribution point in communication networks, which has the capability to facilitate transmissions to other nodes. There have been a small number of studies examining the presence of ‘language node’ where a multilingual speaker finds herself acting as an intermediary between speakers of different languages. For example, Marschan, Welch & Welch, (1997), Marschan-Piekkari, Welch & Welch (1999), Feely & Harzing (2003), and Andersen & Rasmussen (2004) employ the notion of ‘node’ in examining language management in multinational

companies. These studies treat ‘language node’ as a grass-root solution to communication problems in the absence of sufficient institutional language capability or support. In Marschan, Welch & Welch (1997), the researchers identified several drawbacks of such informal arrangement. These include placing extra burden on those acting as language nodes as well as giving them (unexpected) power as communication gatekeepers, increased risk of miscommunication, and undermining the formal communication channel and the position of those without the right linguistic expertise. Elsewhere, Hewitt (2007) talks about bilingual workers as the ‘communicating node’ in the context of language shortfall and migrant economic survivals in Kurdish, Chinese and Polish migrant businesses. In these companies, a node is an important link in the communication structure: it faces inwards to the co-workers in the companies and outwards to the “English-speaking, official and mainstream world” (p.23). In this report, we further explore the notion of ‘node’ and examine the Polish shop as a node through which multi-layered connection, mediation or redistribution between past, present and future, between family and the society, between friends and customers, and between ‘homeland’ and ‘host country’ take place. We investigate how these connectivities take place through social and cultural practices.

### **3.2. Transnational experience and connectivities: ways of belonging and ways of being**

To understand the lives of the migrants, we need an analytic shift that entails letting go of methodological nationalism or the expectation that social life logically and automatically takes place within the nation-state framework (e.g. Li Wei & Zhu Hua, 2013a, 2013b). Instead, we need to locate migrants within their transnational experience and to emphasise the connectivities and continuities which may exist at many levels of relationships, practices and values and are brought together in transnational space and mediated and redistributed through various ‘nodes’. One’s transnational experience or identity does not entail a loss or cutting-off of contact with the individual’s country or culture of origin. Far from it, as Green and Power (2005) argue, it is enhanced by maintaining contacts with one’s roots and one’s awareness of one’s cultural heritage can be enhanced by the transnational experiences and interactions (see also van der Veer 1995; Shames 1997; Ong 1999; Ray 2003; Song 2003). In some cases, transnational relationship is strategically used to demarcate identity and manage differences (e.g. Butcher, 2009). Zontini (2004, p. 1114) further argues that transnationalism is useful in challenging the assumed linearity of the migration process as a one-way journey and acknowledging the “fluid relationships between two or more countries.” Using transnationalism as a starting point “forces us to reconsider our understanding of households and families based on the idea of coresidency and physical unity and to take into account the possibility of spatial separation” (Zontini, 2004, p. 1114). Recently, the term ‘translocality’ has been proposed to move away further from the inherent association with border-crossing that the term transnationalism

carries and to focus on the connectivities from local to local (for a review, see Greiner & Sakdapolrak, 2013).

Glick Schiller's definition of ways of being vs. ways of belonging (2004, 2010) is pertinent to further understanding transnational experience as a process of connectivities and continuities. According to Glick Schiller, 'ways of being' are the actual social relations and practices that individuals engage in rather than the identities associated with their actions. In contrast, 'ways of belonging' refers to practices that signal or enact identities which demonstrate a conscious connection to a particular group. Individuals who engage in transnational ways of being and ways of belonging take part in transnational practices, but also actively identify with groups that span space. Ways of belonging combine action and an awareness of the kind of identity that action signifies (see also Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). Other positions related to ethnicity and identity which are equally useful in understanding connectivities and continuities include the following:

- ethnicity is a dialectal interplay between similarity and difference; it is externalised in social interaction and the categorisation of others and internalised in personal self-identification (Jenkins, 2008);
- identities are a process and outcome of negotiation of alignment and misalignment between self-oriented and other-ascribed identities (Zhu Hua, 2014);
- identities can be brought-about in interactions and brought-along as a pre-existing repertoire of traits and attributes (Baynham, 2015); and
- Ethnicity as 'roOts' vs 'roUtes' (Harris & Rampton, 2003): the former takes the view of 'ethnicity-as-a-fixed-and-formative-inheritance' and the latter believes that ethnicity depends on one's 'strategic' emphasis and choice. The options are several (p.5): embracing and cultivating their ethno-cultural/linguistic legacy, trying to downplay and drop it as a category that is relevant to them, drawing attention to the different ethnicities of other people, taking on someone else's ethnicity, or creating a new one and developing hybrid and new ethnicities.

These perspectives bring out the dialectic, dynamic, discursive, emergent nature of ethnicity.

### **3.3. Multilingual practices**

A central focus of the larger project of which the present study is a part is on multilingual practices. There are many different, often loosely defined and under-theorized, terms and labels for describing various multilingual practices, for example, dynamic multilingualism (García, 2010), flexible multilingualism (Blackledge & Creese, 2010), heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1934/1981; Bailey, 2007, Creese & Blackledge, 2014), polylinguaging/polylingualism (Jorgensen, 2008), metrolingualism (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015), translingual practice (Canagarajah, 2013), translanguaging (García & Li Wei, 2014; Williams, 1994; Baker, 2001; Creese & Blackledge, 2010).



The tendency seems to be to emphasise the multilingual language user's capacity to create an apparently seamless flow between languages and language varieties to achieve effective and meaningful communication in everyday social interaction. In doing so, applied and socio-linguists have attempted to 'disinvent and reconstitute' (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007) languages from discrete systems to a range of historically rooted and ideologically laden semiotic resources, or repertoires.

In the meantime, there is a tension between promoting linguistic diversity by protecting the identity and integrity of individual languages, i.e., multilingualism, and recognizing and facilitating the fluidity of diversity and contact, i.e., what Li Wei (2014) called 'post-multilingualism'. Moreover, as Li Wei (2014) argues, the post-multilingualism challenge raises the issue of how one constructs and expresses one's cultural values through a language, or languages, which is/are traditionally associated with the Other/Others. However much applied and socio-linguists wish to redirect the analytical attention from languages as bounded systems, in ordinary people's minds there are such things as English, French, Polish, German, Spanish, Chinese and Arabic as separate sets of structures and they carry different symbolic meanings and values. It would be important, therefore, for us to understand a) how individuals make use of the semiotic resources available to them in creating meaning and effective communication in their everyday life; and b) when and why they evoke the imagined boundaries between languages.

Here the notion of 'translanguaging space' (Li Wei, 2011) is especially relevant. A translanguaging space is a space created by and for translanguaging practices, a space where multilingual individuals integrate social spaces (and thus 'language codes') that have been formerly practiced separately in different spaces by 'bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment, their attitude, belief and ideology, their cognitive and physical capacity into one coordinated and meaningful performance' (p. 1223). Such a space also has its own transformative power, because it is forever ongoing and combines and generates new identities, values and practices. It thus goes beyond hybridity theory and emphasizes the complexity of people's everyday spaces and multiple resources to make sense of the world (Garcia & Li Wei, 2014, pp. 24-25). Multilingual language users move between highly dynamic mixes of languages to salient marking of distinctiveness between them. For us as analysts, the task is to reveal how, when and why, as well as the consequences of such practices and the shifts between them.

The notion translanguaging as developed in Li Wei (2011) and Garcia & Li Wei (2014) embraces two other key concepts that are relevant to our present study, namely, 'creativity', an ability to follow or flout norms of practice and to push and break boundaries, and 'criticality', an ability to use evidence to question, to problematize and to express points of view. Multilingualism by the very nature of the phenomenon is a rich source of creativity and criticality, as it entails tension, conflict, competition, difference and change in a number of spheres, ranging from ideologies, policies, and practices to historical and current contents.

Moreover, translanguaging foregrounds different ways multilingual speakers employ, create and interpret different kinds of semiotic signs, amongst which language provides one, but only one, key source, to communicate across contexts and participants and perform their different subjectivities. Successful multilingual interactions have always been aided by multimodalities – gestures, objects, visual cues, touch, tone, sounds and other modes of communication besides words – and online and digital media afford new translanguaging spaces and resources for multilingual and multimodal communication.

## 4. Research Methods

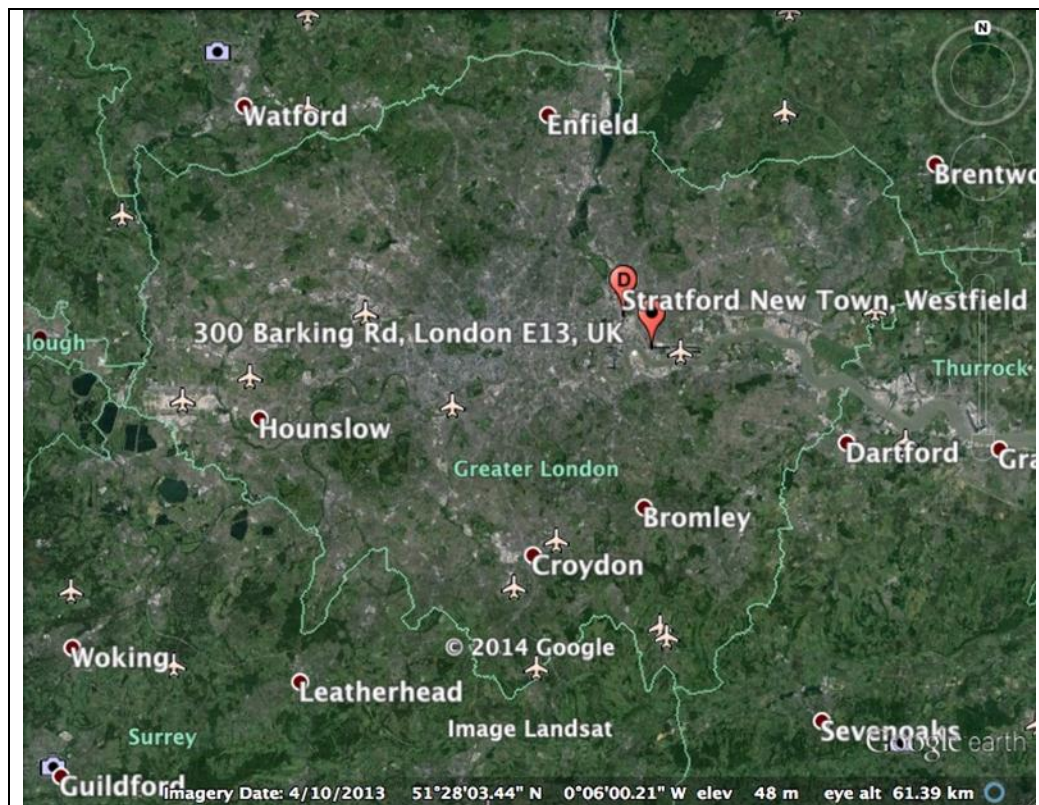
In line with the overall design of the project, our business case study is based on a linguistic ethnographic investigation of a shop run by a Polish family in Newham, London, over the period of four months (September-December 2014). The data were collected in 3 stages. Observations with field notes were carried out in the first 4-week period of data collection. This continued in the next 4-week period with audio (and some video) recordings of interactions in the shop (from 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014) as additional source of data. From the beginning of November, the KPs were instructed to record their interactions at home. Additionally, we conducted interviews with both KPs, collected social media data, and took photographs of the shop, its surrounding area and two other areas in Newham.

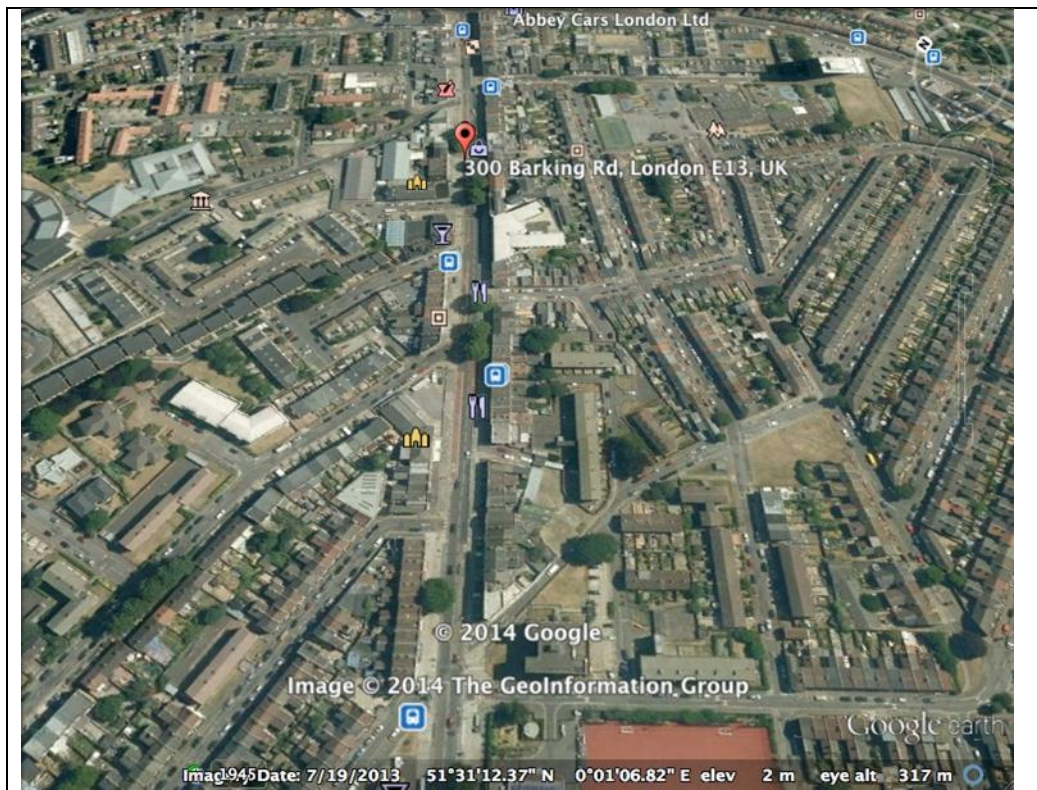
This section provides information about the research site and the profile of the KPs, and offers an overview of the data collected.

### 4.1. The site and KP profile

#### 4.1.1. Location

The London business KPs were E and T, owners of a Polish Shop, located on Barking Road in Newham (E13).





The area in which the shop is located is highly multicultural and the street itself, extending from Canning Town to East Ham, is characterised by a great variety of businesses and legacies. As ZH notes:

*[Location: Barking Road, Newham*

*Means/mode: observation*

*Context: Fieldnote describing the area in which the shop is located: a walk from Canning Town Underground station to the shop.*

*Source: fieldnote LonBusFn\_20140722\_ZH]*

- “The walkabout was interesting. The neighbourhood along Barking Road is more multicultural and diverse than the impression I had last time. There seems to be different clusters of buildings and shops along the street.

1) Coming off Canning town tube station (close to excel centre, one of the Olympic games venues), you see motorways and some touch of thoughts into the architecture (long bench, colours on the building, a huge sign next to electricity relay post (Welcome to Newham London). A bit of Olympics legacy there perhaps?

2) The next stretch of the street is some common high street shops (e.g.co-op).

3) Community link and Canning town library are the next ones. The buildings were old. They seem to be the public face of the area. But it was quiet. Not many people in and out. Not particularly welcoming.



4) The next part seems to have more local flavour. Lots of different grocery shops. Some call themselves supermarket – Nguyen supermarket (English, Chinese, Vietnamese food), Damla supermarket (Turkish, English, Greek & Mediterranean grocery); some food centre – Bargain Food Centre (Canning Town No. 1's) & Continent, with clear ethnic connection and identities. There are many shops who are promoting their ethnic connections and what kinds of shops they are. Quite a few African shops. (ZH, 22/07/14)

Multiculturalism is present and clearly visible through the variety of shops and businesses around our research site.

#### 4.1.2. The shop

The Polish shop has been operating in the area since 2007. The couple had three shops once, but now this is the only one they have left. The shop is open every day from 10am to 8pm, with either T or E selling by themselves.



#### 4.1.3. KP profiles

E and T arrived in the UK from their native Poland in 1997. They originally planned to stay for a few years, save some money and return to Poland, where they had bought a house (the type of Polish immigrants dubbed as *hamsters* in the report on the Polish Migrants in London by Eade, Drinkwater and Garapich (2007). *Hamsters* are 'migrants who treat their move as a one-off act to acquire enough capital to invest in Poland', tend to cluster in particular low-earning occupations and are often embedded in Polish networks. Indeed, E started helping in a pub kitchen and then worked as a cleaner

while T worked as a builder. Like many other Polish migrants in the UK, a few years later the couple decided to stay and look for ways in which they can make more money and work for themselves (changing their immigrant category to *stayers*). They used their savings to open a Polish shop in Leyton, another shop in Forest Gate a few years later and, finally, their third shop in Plaistow/Newham. At the beginning the couple used their own car to drive to Poland and buy goods for sale. Later they bought two vans and employed E's brother as a driver. In the recent years, as Polish produce became more easily available in the UK, E and T started sourcing from one of the few Polish goods suppliers in the south of England.

At home, KPs speak Polish and have mainly Polish friends. They also have a 10-year-old daughter Z (whom the shop names after), who attends a local Catholic school and a Polish Saturday school in Ilford.

As far as languages are concerned, E and T learnt English mainly after arriving in the UK. E attended some classes, but never prioritised her learning over the business. She did not find it necessary due to the nature of her work, which – especially at the early stages – involved communicating exclusively with Polish people. Their English at the time of observation, despite limited in vocabulary, is functional and they seem to be at ease with it. As most Poles of their generation, E and T were taught Russian at school. However, E reported that she has forgotten most of her Russian and T said that he only found Russian useful after he moved to the UK (more in data analysis section). T also learnt German to a relatively high level (he took his Matura<sup>1</sup> in German). According to her father, Z prefers to speak English even to her Polish friends and sometimes uses English in conversations with her parents when she can't find a word in Polish.

#### **4.1.4. Business model**

As for their business model, the shop resembles other Polish shops in London in that it offers a wide range of services apart from selling goods. They send goods back to Poland. The shop also sells and rents Polish DVDs, offers regular customers a possibility to acquire goods on credit and serves as a place to talk, as evidenced in E's comment captured in the field note below:

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face, observation*

*Context: E talks about her relationship with her customers and about the Polish need to offload.*

*Source: fieldnote #004]*

- I asked E about her contact with her customers and said that it looked like they were friends. She said that she was friendly to them and tried to get to know them. She said they told her more than when they go to confession and she would have a lot to gossip about. I asked why she thought people were so open with her and she said that

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<sup>1</sup> High-school-exit exam which Polish students must pass in order to be able to apply for higher education courses in Poland and elsewhere.

she didn't think it had anything to do with her specifically, but that "Polak potrzebuje się wygadać." [A Pole needs to offload.] She said she had had employees in the shop in the past and it was the same with them. (AL, 5/9/14)

The business has a strong ongoing connection to Poland and the wider Polish business community. The suppliers are purely Polish and employ Polish delivery drivers and sales representatives. They also work with Polish bakeries and facilitate sending packages to Poland through the company that delivers Polish newspapers and magazines to the shop. T and E preferred to work with Polish people: they employed Polish sales assistants in the past and E's brother worked for them as a delivery driver. The family has a significant input and presence in the shop. When E and T's daughter was small, she spent hours in the shop and E's family visits the shop when they are over from Poland.

The shop also serves a caring function, similar to that of a community centre. The owners provide help, both financial and moral, to people in need, including homeless, disabled people and alcohol addicts. Both E and T often give food for free to these people, offers clothing that she has lying around the shop and gives small amounts of money to them.

## 4.2. Overview of data

There is a range of data types: field notes, interviews, audio recordings, video recordings, social media and linguistic landscaping. Table 1 offers an overview.

**Table 1. Overview of data collected in the London business case study**

Type of data	Number	Length
<b>Field notes</b>	28	62,841 words + 56 photos
<b>Interviews</b>	2	1h 18m 53s (18,699 words)
<b>Audio(subtotal)</b>	56	45h 24m 47s
Audio workplace	27	32h 52m 47s
Audio Home	29	12h 32m 00s
<b>Video (subtotal)</b>	14	2h 7m 36s
Video Workplace	6	1h 31m 52s
Video Home	8	0h 35m 44s
<b>Social media *</b>	94 screen shots (279 msg)	--
SMS	27 (125)	
Viber	14 (79)	
Facebook msngr	14 (64)	

Twitter	1 (2)	
Email	1 (1)	
Skype	2 (8)	
Facebook	35 + comnts	
<b>Linguistic landscaping</b>	819	--

(\* Note: the first figure is the number of screen shots and the figure in brackets the number of messages in the sample.)

#### **4.2.1. Audio and video data**

Workplace recordings were collected only on observation days with KPs wearing mics for an audio recorder. While both KPs were aware they could switch the audio recorder on and off as they saw fit, in most cases they just left the recorder on throughout the observation and reported that they tended to forget that they were wearing it. On a few occasions, AL also wore an audio recorder as a back-up. Video recording was done by AL.

The collection of home recordings was preceded by Practitioner Research Programme training and the KPs were given clear instructions as to the type and quantity of data they were expected to collect. They were instructed to only record in the presence of people who consent to be recorded and to collect around 5x30 mins of recordings a week. The home recordings were recorded in a few settings, the most popular of which is the family dinnertime or in the car. At dinnertime, the family talk about their day and the day's events in the world, Z's homework and school and there is a regular focus on the family dog Pluto. Another setting in which recordings take place is the family car, where recordings are made usually in the morning when T drops Z to school or when the family are driving together. On a few occasions there was another boy of Polish heritage from Z's school in the car. He's the son of the family's friends. The boy is of the same age as Z.

#### **4.2.2. Social media**

Both E and T have iPhones on a contract and laptops (MacAir 11'' for E and a Windows laptop for T). Their daughter owns an iPad, which she uses to communicate with others, watch programs/films/clips, and read. At home, they have a landline phone and (a reportedly unreliable) Talktalk broadband connection. E reports regularly reading the news on the Polish news portal tvn24.pl and using the londynek.net portal when she has a flat or house to rent out. Interestingly, although mentioned as one of the most popular social networking sites for Polish people, both in Poland and elsewhere (cf., Komito & Bates 2009), Nasza Klasa (nk.pl) is not among websites that E uses for keeping in touch with friends and family. Instead, she uses Facebook, where she has 254



friends (over 240 of them are Polish people who live either in Poland, the UK, or elsewhere) and occasionally posts some photos.

The social media sample was collected only from E throughout the data collection period. E was taking screenshots of her social media communication on her iPhone and emailing them to AL, who anonymised and processed the files.

#### **4.2.3. Interviews**

The interviews conducted in Polish by AL with E on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2014 and with T on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The interview questions concerned KPs' backgrounds, the history of their business, business practice, the area and customers, the future of the shop, communicative practices in the shop (spoken and written language use), the use of technology, relationship with customers and the future vision for the shop and KPs' future more generally.

#### **4.2.4. Linguistic landscaping**

Between July and December, 2014, pictures were taken during our field trips to the shop. Our foci were two: 1) to capture the linguistic landscape in the shop and its immediate surrounding areas as part of our ethnographic fieldwork, and 2) to explore how multilingual and multicultural the area is. The linguistic landscaping approach on the whole during the period was exploratory, complementary and 'in the background'. We very much followed our (linguistic or semiotic) instincts and captured whatever caught our eyes.

### **4.3. The relationship between the researcher and the researched**

In a small and narrow place like that of the shop, the researchers' presence was very visible, evident in some of the field notes (e.g., KPs' justification of our presence in the shop and the customers' reactions to the presence of researchers in the shop). These reactions ranged from questions about our role, to assumptions, and finally – with time – validation of our presence with a smile and inclusion in interactions (mainly in the case of AL, who not only spent most time in the shop, but also shared the customers' cultural and linguistic background).

One of the issues facing the team was the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Long hours spent in the shop, which wasn't always busy, led to frequent conversations between the KPs and the researchers. As the research progressed, we noticed developing relationships between us and KPs, relationships which were different in the case of each of the researchers. Due to her shared linguistic and cultural background with the KPs, AL found herself very 'involved' in the field site: providing translations, explaining, pointing to the location of products, shelving delivery, and providing information about orders placed. She was also sometimes invited into conversations of the KPs with customers. ZH & LW were aware that they were 'visible' outsiders in the shop during their

field visits. They were also aware that they were taking up the KP's time and attention perhaps because E & T felt that ZH and LW were AL's supervisors and it was not polite to leave us alone (ZH noted in her field note that E & T refer to LW and ZH as 'boss').

The conversation between ZH/LW and E/T was often protracted and sometimes evolved around Polishness vs. Chineseness. In the following example, ZH, T and AL are having a discussion about instant noodle on the shelf. Produced by a Polish company, the noodle is packaged with Chinese characters, in an apparent attempt to emphasise exoticness.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face, observation*

*Context: ZH noticed some Chinese writing on products in the shop and is talking to T and AL about them.*

*Source: fieldnote #027]*

- I think this is when we started talking about stuff in the shop with Chinese characters on it. I noticed that there were some noodles with Chinese characters. I showed them to T. He asked whether we have it in China. I hesitated, but decided to tell T and Agnieszka that actually golden curry as indicated on the packages are not strictly speaking Chinese. They laughed. ... Agnieszka explained that they refer to this kind of soup as Chinese soup in Poland (this is certainly worth further exploration). (ZH, 31/10/14)

The narratives and (sometimes thrown-away) comments provide an opportunity for some explicit discussion about our KPs' perspectives on Polishness or Chineseness and therefore are included in our analysis.

## **5. Main findings**

In this section, data are analysed and discussed in relation to three analytical foci as explained in Introduction. We start with the question of how the shop operates as an ‘ethnic’ family business (5.1), followed by the transnational experience of a migrant family (5.2). In the last section (5.3), we focus on multilingual practices.

### **5.1. Ethnic retail business**

#### **5.1.1. Polish retail business as a transnational space**

We argue that space is constructed through social transformation and experience. As such, it transcends the boundaries of geographical location and emerges through social interactions and practices. Although space does not have a geographic location or a material form, places can be transformed into space through those who live or interact in them. In our case study, it is our Key Participants and their practices which turn the Polish shop into a transnational space. In this section, we explore how a place, the boundaries of which are clearly marked, is transformed into a transnational space with both Polish and local connectivities.

##### **5.1.1.1. External boundaries: the Polish and local connections**

The boundary of the Polish shop is clearly marked by means of semiotic resources in the signage and shop window (Fig 1). The connection with the owners’ home country and family is evident in the story behind the sign. Firstly, the shop is named after the owners’ daughter and carries a numeral value “3”, the sequential order of shops opened by the couple. Rather than use different names for their shops, the owners chose to maintain this connection, despite the fact that their other two shops have since closed.

Secondly, the sign was ordered in Poland and brought into the UK when E and T had goods delivered from Poland by an employee. This decision was motivated by financial reasons but it didn’t work out very well as - T is very conscious of this fact - there is a spelling mistake in the word ‘delikatessen’.

Although the sign uses both Polish and English text, the prominence of Polish is evident in its font size and placement: “POLSKI SKLEP xxx” is written in a font that is around twice as big as the English part and placed above the English. There are also Polish flags on both sides of the sign.



*Figure 1: Shop exterior*

The exterior of the shop also displays local connections and indexes permeability of commercialisation. Advertisements of Lycamobile (T and E were paid to have them displayed on the shop window), are in English ('Call the world for less'). The presence of these advertisements marks the site as one of many similarly 'decorated' shops along the street. The adverts vary, but the message is the same: you can call home for less. Apart from Lycamobile adverts, the shop window hosts a range of customer notifications and adverts. These change from day to day or week to week, depending on how long the customers paid for. On 4<sup>th</sup> July 2014, when AL first photographed the shop, the "mosaic" of adverts looked like in Figure 2.



Figure 2: The “mosaic” of adverts on the shop front on 4th July 2014

Different languages feature in a range of formats in this shop window: there are hand-written notices in Polish and in English, printed notices or leaflets in Polish or English, and a business card of a hair salon. The content of the ads is in line with the ‘community centre’ function of the shop: transport to the airport, rooms to let, goods to sell, a Polish Saturday school and English lessons as well as an English leaflet in which help with financial situation is offered. The target audience is therefore people who are on the move in a number of ways: moving house (looking for rooms to rent and needing to transport their large items) or travelling to other countries with families (transport to the airport – the advert specifically mentions the availability of ‘foteliki dla dzieci’ - child seats). It is at the shop that some advertise and others look for information and connect to others, who can offer them services and help needed. In the context of migration it is often temporary solutions they are after as they aren’t settled into their London reality yet. The shop serves as a stable point of contact and a go-to space for those who look for connection with what they know, be it their culture, people who speak their language or reliable services. The temporality in the context of migration is evident in this advert in Polish which offers room for rent in Forest Gate (Fig 3). The property is owned by E

and T and they use the shop window to advertise their properties. As E states, they have never used an agent to advertise their rental portfolio. The shop serves as a point in which the different businesses that E and T run merge and where connections are made between them (see the notion of shop as a node discussed in Section 5.1.2). Although they are placed next to each other, nearly all of the adverts we have observed are in one language (either English or Polish) only and are not multilingual in themselves. This may be the result of a combination of the target audience (as in Fig 3, E and T only want Polish tenants), the literacy of advertiser, and the lack of awareness of, or skills for, multilingual adverts.

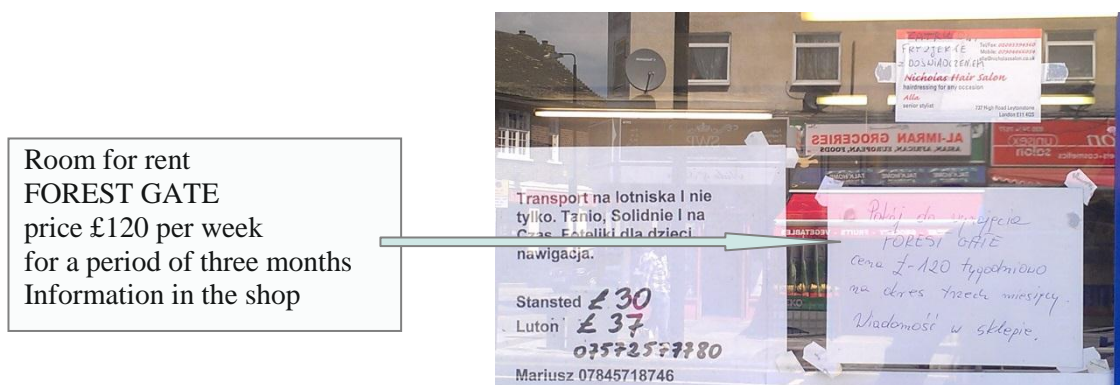


Figure 3: Examples of adverts in the shop window on 4th July 2014

During data collection, we noticed a change in the Lycamobile adverts. There was a large Lycamobile poster on the bottom half of the door which targeted the Polish customers directly (Polish language, Polish flag, price to call Poland) (Fig 4). The Polish-focused poster was later replaced by a new one targeting five European countries (offer of Monthly Eastern 1000 package). The names of countries are written in the relevant languages and the poster features relevant flags as well. The rest of the poster is in English. The mobile phone provider may have adjusted their marketing strategy according to the varied, multilingual customer base for the shop.





Figure 4: Front door on 4th July 2014 Figure 5: Advert on the front door on 22nd January 2015

### 5.1.1.2. Polish-oriented space

The interior of the shop is clearly oriented more towards Polish customers and marked as a Polish space where the decision is the owners'. What is sold is almost entirely Polish and in Polish. There are no labels on shelves and in most cases no English wording on the packaging (Fig 6). Yet, the use and presence of English is visible in safety notices and regulations, those that are created and imposed in a top-down manner (Figs 7 and 8). It is also present in the form of texts brought to the shop by other organisations (in a fashion similar to that of Lycamobile representatives), as in Figure 9.



Figure 6: Shop interior - shelves

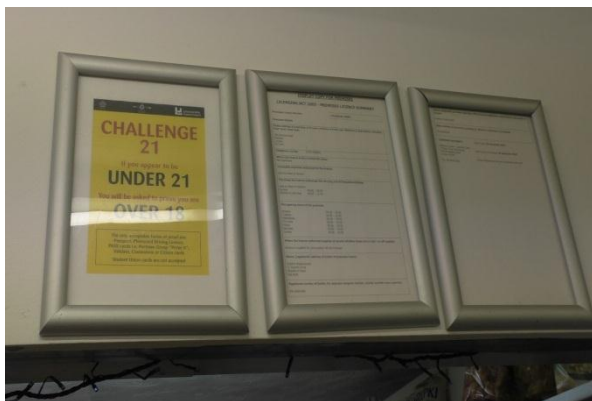


Figure 7: Shop interior - shelves



Figure 8: Shop interior - notices





*Figure 9: Shop interior: charity fundraising containers*

Traces of languages other than English could be found in the packaging of the products reflecting the effort both to localise and to index 'foreignness' and 'authenticity' in branding. For example, the Chinese characters 'instant' and the 'English' word 'curry' appear on the packaging of instant noodles (Figure 11) (there is no Polish equivalent of the word 'curry'). The English words 'Big-active' appear on the packaging of drinks. The Chinese character 'green tea' appears on the packaging of flavoured green tea (Fig 10).



*Figure 10: Shop interior: foreign branding in product packaging*



*Figure 11: Foreign branding in food packaging*

Since the shop sells Polish goods and deals with Polish suppliers, Polish features on cardboard boxes that are left in front of the shop after each delivery, but also in the ad hoc notes made on goods to facilitate deliveries as in Figure 12, where a note made on a batch of dry goods (in yellow packaging) indicated to the delivery driver the destination of the order and the day of delivery (czw., being the short form of *czwartek* = Thursday). This element of the linguistic landscape of the inside of the shop was ephemeral, after delivery was shelved, the text was gone. It shows the connection of the business to Poland and Polish business network in which the business operates.



*Figure 12: Shop interior – ad hoc notes on delivery items*

### 5.1.1.3. Communicating business and blurred boundaries between work and family life

Business is not conducted on site only. Both E and T in their interviews spoke about the use of social media (Facebook, texting) with customers about the availability of products or their orders. This kind of communication, which could be initiated and responded to anytime and anywhere, further extends the retail business beyond its physical location. It connects different types of relationships across different physical locations and temporal points and blurs the division between work and family life.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face interview*

*Context: T talks about E's relationship with customers and their business model.*

*Source: interview transcript, LonBusInt\_20150115\_TW\_003]*

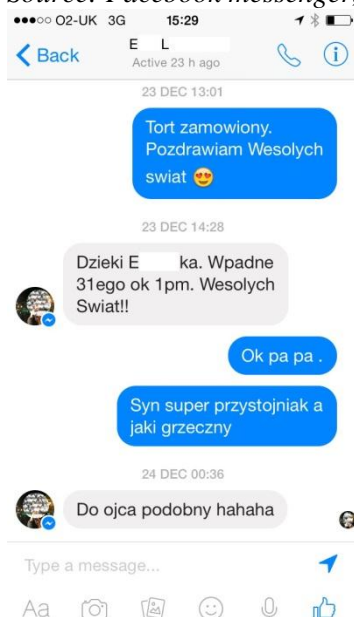
- if someone wants to ask for example whether this or that is available in the shop they sent her (E) a question on Face[book] or she also has number exchanged with many people so they ask through text-messages as well (...) you know we had carp before Christmas so people who don't live here anymore but did their shopping here in the past sent her a text leave some carp for me because I will come because I want to buy from you because they know that we've got good ones that we've always had good fish

Examples of this practice are common in the social media data. In the following example, E responds to a customer's query about a birthday cake. A combination of transactional and relational talk such as shown in this example is a common feature in E's communication.

*[Means/mode: Facebook messenger*

*Context: E is responding to a customer's request to order a birthday cake for her. The customer and E know each other outside the shop context.*

*Source: Facebook messenger, LonBusSM\_20141223\_FBMSG\_039]*



E: Cake ordered. Greetings Merry Christmas [visual]

EL: Thanks E\_\_\_\_-NOM.DIM. I'll pop in 31th around 1pm. Merry Christmas!!

E: Ok bye bye .

E: Son super handsome and what a good [boy]

EL: Resembles his father hahaha

(LonBusSM\_20141223\_FBMSG\_039)

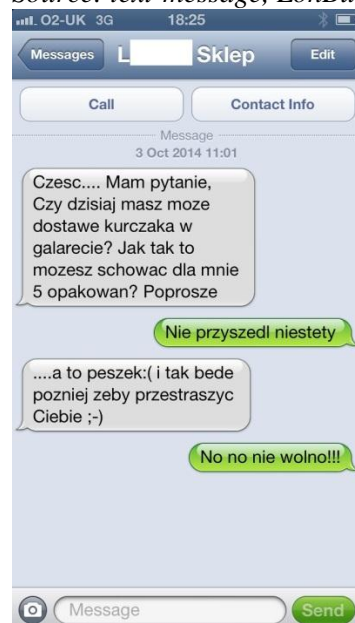
In the following example, the contact is saved in E's contact list as 'L\_\_\_ Sklep' = 'L\_\_\_ Shop' (The full name of the contact is anonymised here). There are no diacritics used, due to the fact that E's iPhone does not support Polish alphabet, although the male name in question starts with an 'Ł' and the person is coded with respect to the context in which E knows him – through the shop. Indeed, E sometimes saves contacts' numbers with a description as to what context she knows them in. For example, the person who rents E's house is saved in her phone as 'J\_\_\_ Lokator' (= 'J\_\_\_ Tenant') and customers have the word 'Sklep' (= 'shop') added to their name. The same concerns some family members. Z is saved on E's phone as 'Z\_\_\_ Moja Corka' (= 'Z\_\_\_ My Daughter') and her father as 'Tato Komorka' (= 'Dad Mobile').

In the example, the customer uses the word 'poproszę' (please) rather than the word 'proszę' in his request to mark the message as a service request. The word 'poprosić' carries the meaning of 'to ask someone to do something' or on service encounters 'Poproszę [product name]' = 'Can I have [product name]'. Following E's response, he uses a diminutive form of the word 'pech' (shame-DIM), a form that is not common in Polish and indicates familiarity and play frame. His playful tone is further emphasized by the use of emoticons in the message.

[Means/mode: text-message]

Context: A text-message from a customer who asks whether a particular product is in stock. The man often comes into the shop and frightens E for fun.

Source: text-message, LonBusSM\_20141003\_SMS\_005]



[Name of contact]

L: Hi.... I have a question, have you got a delivery of chicken in jelly today by any chance? If so then can you put away 5 boxes? Please

E: It hasn't come unfortunately

L: ....what a shame-DIM:( i will be there later anyway to scare you ;-)

E: Oi oi not allowed!!!

(LonBusSM\_20141003\_SMS\_005)

E blends her private and work life as she carries her private mobile phone with her everywhere and customers can contact her at any time with requests. E finds this kind of communication on demand somewhat interferes with her family life, as she feels obliged to reply to the customers even if she is not at work.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face interview*

*Context: E is talking about her attitude to the fact that their work and home lives have blended and that her customers contact her through social media with business-related queries.*

*Source: interview transcript, LonBusInt\_20141219\_EW\_007]*

- it's starting to bother me already because often (...) I'm somewhere with Z for example and someone is writing to me order a cake for me because I have to have it for tomorrow so I you know during some sort of Z's school assembly you know um have to write or phone somewhere mm despite the fact that I'm not at work at that time because you know because I feel obliged towards the customer

Another reason for the blurry boundaries between work and family life is that the owners are a wife and husband team and high level of coordination is needed from them about work and family life. They take turns to man the shop and split duties (such as picking up their daughter from school, attending parent meetings, collecting goods, ordering, etc.) between them. Because they are rarely both present in the shop at the same time, E & T need to keep each other informed as well as consult each other frequently. So it is not a surprise that they catch up regarding the shop at home (as E reported in the interview below) or text each other frequently during the day.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face interview*

*Context: E is talking about how their work and home lives blend due to the nature of their family-run business.*

*Source: interview transcript, LonBusInt\_20141219\_EW\_007]*

- we meet very often in the evening at um dinnertime and if T was at work he tells you know what this or that person came today and asked to say hi to you (...) or for example how much whether there is bread left or how much cold meat there is or that order needs to be placed tomorrow or bread needs to be cancelled/de-ordered or there is a note order 16 more rolls (cough) so we communicate um (3) regarding work very often because it's inevitable

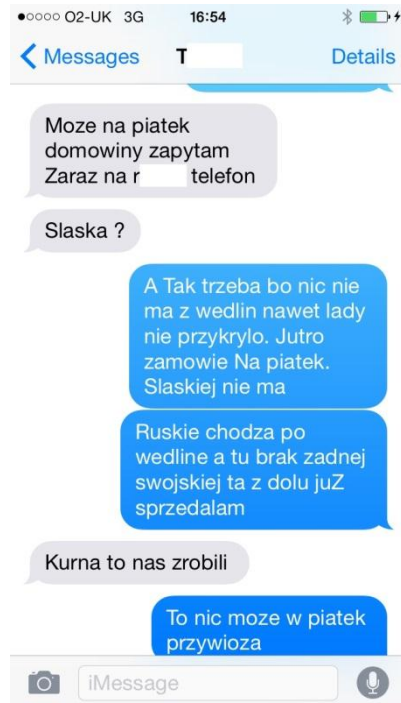
E & T exchange text-messages frequently about the business, including updates about stock availability and future orders, T and E communicate about arranging to pick up their daughter from school, bringing food home from the shop (either for the family to eat or for their daughter to take to school the following day) or about the day's events. In the following text message, they are talking about stock level for sausages.



[Means/mode: text-message]

Context: E is in the shop while T is at home. E and T talk about their stock levels and the need to order more sausage.

Source: text-message, LonBusSM\_no-date\_SMS\_056]



T: Maybe we'll order more for Friday. I'll ask on r\_\_\_\_'s phone in a moment

T: Ślaska-NOM/ACC ? (ślaska is a type of sausage)

E: Ah yes we need some because there are no cold meats it hasn't even covered the counter. I'll order For Friday tomorrow. There is no ślaska-GEN

E: Russians are coming for cold meat and there isn't any no farmers [sausage] I've already sold the one from underneath

T: Damn, they've screwed us over

E: Not to worry maybe they'll bring some on Friday

#### 5.1.1.4. Backstage interaction: Polish exclusiveness

Back vs. front stage are the terms used by Goffman (1959) to distinguish what is or is not visible to the audience in his discussion about the impact of audience presence on behaviour. Here, we use the same set of terms to distinguish between communication with customers who come to buy goods, pop in for directions, ask for change or borrow a pen, etc. (frontstage interaction) and communication with suppliers, delivery drivers, pest control officers, family, etc. (backstage interaction). There are differences in roles and expectations between the two types: in frontstage interactions, E & T are service providers and are obliged to accommodate customers' needs and meet demands, while in backstage interactions, E & T are the customers themselves and can make their own choices as to who they will be working with and how.

A vast majority of backstage communication takes place in Polish. This has to do with the KPs' business network which includes mainly Polish people and Polish companies. Both sales representatives and delivery drivers who the team observed in the shop were always Polish and communicated with T and E in Polish.

The few instances where English is used in backstage communication include communication with the representative of Lycamobile who comes every other week to swap some of the sim cards stocked in store and the pest control man whose services E and T use.

We have previously commented on the relationship between researcher and the researched in Section 4.3. Reflecting back on the nature of her communication with E and T, AL believes that hers became part of the backstage interaction, as she got to know E and T better and took on various roles of helping out in the shop. There are moments when she moves out of the role of researcher and ‘helper’ of the shop into a customer and these moments are signalled by her walking to the till. The same ‘walking to the till’ is present in both ZH and LW when they do shopping at the end of observations.

#### 5.1.1.5. Frontstage interaction: Multiple languages with Polish as the desired language

While E & T use Polish almost exclusively for their backstage interaction, multiple languages are used with Polish as the desired language for frontstage interaction. AL has observed that Eastern European customers often attempt to speak Polish in the shop or feel embarrassed if their Polish is not very good. This is evident in some early field notes:

*[Means/mode: observation*

*Context: E is serving a Ukrainian customer, who speaks very quietly and later apologises for his poor command of Polish.*

*Source: fieldnote #004]*

- “The customer paid and said “Do widzenia. Przepraszam.” [Good bye. I’m sorry.]. E asked “Za co ty przepraszasz?” [What are you apologising for?] He said that he was sorry that he’d been speaking so quietly but he was trying to cover up for not speaking Polish well.” (AL, 5/09/14).

With customers who speak little or no Polish, both the KPs and their customers tend to use a range of linguistic or semiotic repertoires including gestures to complete transactions. In the example below, Polish, English and Russian were used in a business transaction. There were also some instances in which language choice is ambiguous due to similarities. .

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: E is serving a Russian speaker in the shop.*

*Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141024\_EW\_001]*

C	Здравствуйте!	<b>Hello!</b>
E	Здравствуйте!	<b>Hello!</b>
C	Мне нужно у вас (inaudible) Так. Ну давай кусочек (11) Тего. (till)	<b>I need you</b> (inaudible). Yes. <b>Let’s have a piece of</b> (11) This. (till)
E	Która?	Which one?
C	Tego.	Of this one.
E	Tą?	This?
C	Może {tak tez bo to tak} (?)	Maybe {like this because it’s so} (?)
E	Też taki sam кусочек?	Also <b>a piece</b> like that?

C	Ehh да по/по кусочку tak tak.	Uh <b>yes a piece each</b> yes yes.
E	Dobra. (12, till)	Ok. (12, till)
E	Uhum. (till)	Uhum. (till)
C	I/И здесь такого мясочка кусочек.	<b>And here a piece of this meat.</b>
E	Tego?	This one?
C	Tak. Tego. Tego.	Yes. This one. This one.
E	(laughing) Boczek. Bacon.	(laughing) Bacon. <i>Bacon.</i>
C	Bacon. Tak. Bacon.	<i>Bacon.</i> Yes. <i>Bacon.</i>
E	I to wszystko?	Is that all?
C	Wszystko.	That's all.
E	Dobra. (3, bagging, till) I dwa/два сопок два/два. (3) Sześć osiemdziesiąt cztery będzie. (5, bagging) Sześć osiem cztery, sześć osiemdziesiąt pięć. Sześć dziewięćdziesiąt. (4)	Ok. (3, bagging, till) And <b>two-forty-two</b> . (3) It will be six eighty-four. (5) Six eight four, six eighty five. Six ninety. (4)
E	Спасибо.	<b>Thank you.</b>
C	Спасибо.	<b>Thank you.</b>

[Note on transcription conventions: in translation Russian original is represented in **bold**, English in *italics*, Polish in regular script and ambiguous language is underlined. Words in { } represent researcher's best guess, the length of pauses between utterances are indicated in number.]

In the example, both the opening and closing are in Russian, the customer's native language. However, the rest of the conversation uses a mix of Polish, English, and Russian (which are at times impossible to tell apart). E adopts the role of a teacher at some point as she attempts to teach the customer the Polish word for the product she was buying (boczek = bacon). She marks or hedges her teaching with a gentle laughter and follows the word boczek with its English equivalent. However, the customer only picks up the English word and repeats it as if she is trying to confirm that she indeed wants bacon. It could be either the case that she misunderstands E's intention or the case she deliberately resists her teaching. Nonetheless, she herself uses some Polish words without E's prompting in the conversation. This excerpt suggests that, while the shop is open to customers of all language backgrounds, there is encouragement from the owners to speak some Polish, if at all possible. The customers seem to adopt this practice and, if they have any knowledge of Polish (as is sometimes the case with Ukrainian or Lithuanian speakers), they use it in the shop.

[Location: the Polish shop, Newham

Means/mode: face-to-face

Context: T is serving a Lithuanian man who used to work in Poland and can speak some Polish.

Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20140929\_TW\_001, 01:51:11]

C	dzień dobry	good afternoon
T	hej (2) Karmi?	hi (2) Karmi?
C	nie (.) do moje przyjaciele	no (.) to my friends
T	Mhm	uhum
C	nie nie ja nie jestem Polak nie jestem z Polski	no no I'm not Polish I'm not from Poland
T	no ja widzę właśnie	I can see that actually
C	(laughs)	(laughs)
T	bardzo dobrze Ukraina?	very good Ukraine?
C	nie Litwa	no Lithuania



T	Litwa? tak dobrze mówisz po polsku? (.) jednego jednego	Lithuania? And you speak Polish so well? (.) one one
C	kiedyś tam był uu w dziewięćdziesięćdziesiąt siódmy ósmy rok	in the past I was there ooh <sup>2</sup> in year nine- ninety seven eight
T	Mhm	uhum
C	przywozili z Polski do nas (inaudible) tutaj wszystko szyje w tym (.) nie wiem jak po polski (3) {tak wa meter} gdzie szyje wszystko nie wiem	[we] brought from Poland to ours (inaudible) here sews everything in that (.) I don't know how in Polish (3) {has a measure tape} where they sew everything I don't know
T	materiały	fabrics/textiles
C	materiały przywozili takie z nas zwozili dla dzieciaków {po prostu} nie wszystko	fabrics/textiles [we] brought from us brought for the kids {simply} not everything
T	Handel	trade
C	przewodnikom pracował	I worked as a guide
T	acha (inaudible)	uhum (inaudible)
C	miałem wtedy uuu pięćdziesiąt (inaudible) pięćdziesiąt rubel w dzień	I had woo fifty (inaudible) fifty rubbles a day
T	mhm to dobre?	uhum that's good?
C	dobre było	it was good
T	tak? (laughs)	was it? (laughs)
C	teraz (inaudible)	now (inaudible)
T	teraz nie ma?	now there isn't?
C	no to też do Warszawy jeździł to tych samych przyjacieli	well I also went to Warsaw to the same friends
T	no?	yeah?
C	ah (2) a gdzie byli? na weekend? (2) zakryte było?	ah (2) and where were you? For the weekend? (2) it was closed?
T	mm na weekend?	mm for the weekend?
C	no (inaudible)	yeah (inaudible)
T	nie było zakryte	it wasn't closed
C	(inaudible) było zakryte	(inaudible) it was closed
T	kiedy?	when?
C	zamknuto nie wiem dwie niedzieli temu?	closed I don't know two weeks ago?
T	ah dwie niedzieli temu a to wakacje były wakacje	ah two weeks ago ah it was holiday holiday
C	dla was holiday na wakacje	for you holiday for holiday
T	holiday wakacje	holiday holiday
C	dobre?	good?
T	dobre dobre (laughs) w Polsce	good good (laughs) in Poland
C	na razie	see you later
T	Heja	bye

In the above conversation both parties work collaboratively to construct commonalities and to negotiate meaning, a feature of lingua franca communication. The customer, a Lithuanian, explains that he is not Polish very early on in the conversation. T comments on his use of Polish and the customer explains his connection to Poland. In the Polish used by the customer, some words are

<sup>2</sup> The interjection in Polish indicates that the speaker is trying to recall something, but at the same time shows that it was a long time ago.

blended with Russian morphology and there is some switching (It's difficult to reliably mark switching in this transcript as quite a few utterances involve blending or incorrect use of Polish and Russian. For example, the customer says "nie wiem jak po polski". In Polish, the sentence would read "nie wiem jak (to jest) po polsku" and the Russian equivalent is "по-польски" (po pol'ski). Another example is "przewodnikom pracował", which blends Polish vocabulary (przewodnik = guide and to work = pracować) with Russian grammar). The customer seems to be relying on the similarities between these two languages to convey meaning and emphasize his connection to Poland at the same time. When he cannot think of a word for textiles/fabrics, he signals for help by saying 'I do not know'. His signal is picked up by T who in turn supplies the word. The customer repeats it after T and completes the repair sequence. The customer also seems to be quite linguistically aware when he asks T about the shop closure. C first uses the word 'zakryte' and then corrects himself to 'zamknuto'. Both words carry the same meaning, but the latter is more similar to the Polish equivalent 'zamknięte'. T accommodates the customer's Polish proficiency by simplifying his utterances and using short phrases and sometimes just one word utterances. He also goes along with the customers' topics, acknowledging (yeah?), using laughter now and then, and readily forgoing his question (now there isn't) when it is not responded to.

There are times when the KPs (in particular T) show genuine interest in their customers' background and are keen to learn, as in the example below. It seems to be T's habit to try and guess the customers' origin based on the language they use. The team observed that quite frequently in the shop and T seemed to be proud of having the ability to recognise speakers of other languages.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: T serves a non-English-speaking Slovak customer who came to buy washing powder for the launderette next door. The customer also buys Polish wafers – Góralki which are the same as Slovak ones - Horalky.*

*Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20140929\_TW\_001]*

C	{Hello}	{Hello}
T	Hello.	Hello.
C	Um môžem sa pýtať máte tu prací prášok (inaudible)?	Um <u>can I ask if you have washing powder here (inaudible)?</u>
T	(inaudible) Co takiego?	(inaudible) What is it?
C	Um prášok na pranie.	Um <u>powder for washing.</u>
T	Proszek na pranie. Tak, mamy proszek na pranie. Tu, o!	Powder <u>for washing.</u> Yes, we have powder <u>for washing.</u> Here we are!
C	O!	Oh!
T	Prášok, o! (to C:) Slovak?	Prášok, oh! (to C:) <i>Slovak?</i>
C	Tak, tak.	<b>Yes, yes.</b>
T	Slovak. Prášok. Na pranie. Four forty-eight. Goral- Horalky Horalky. Four eighty-seven (laughs).	<i>Slovak. <u>Prášok. Na pranie. Four forty-eight. Goral- Horalky Horalky. Four eighty-seven (laughs).</u></i>

C	Te polskie.	The Polish ones.
T	Te polskie Horalky, waszych waszych już teraz nie ma, ale Horalky. Dobre, dobre, też dobre.	The Polish <u>Horalky</u> , yours yours don't exist anymore, but <u>Horalky</u> . Good, good, also good.
C2	Thank you.	<i>Thank you.</i>
T	Thank you.	<i>Thank you.</i>
C	d'akujem.	<u>d'akujem.</u>
T	Dziękuję. Bye. Prášok.	Dziękuję. Bye. <u>Prášok.</u>
LW	Prášok?	<u>Prášok?</u>
T	Prášok.	<u>Prášok.</u>

[Note on transcription conventions: in translation, Polish in regular script, English in *italics*, Slovak is underlined, and text which would be Polish or Slovak is represented in **bold**.]

In the exchange, T did not get the customers' question which was rendered in Slovak in the first place. He asked for clarification in Polish and the customer who apparently understood his question in Polish replied with the type of the product she was looking for in Slovak. T picked up the customer's choice of words and pronunciation and asked whether he was a Slovak. T also picked up on the linguistic similarity between Slovak and Polish and first used the Polish equivalent 'proszek' and added 'na pranie' – words that sound Polish and exist in the Polish language, but whose grammar is Slovak (in Polish 'proszek do prania'). T then repeated the Slovak word 'prášok' several times in the rest of the exchange as if he was trying to remember it as a new word (his repetition was noticed by LW who was observing). He then discovered that the customer was buying Góraliki, a Polish wafers and switched to the Slovak equivalent (Horalky) immediately, an act showing his expertise on food (which will be discussed in Section 5.1.2.2) and specialised vocabulary and language.

### 5.1.2. Polish shop as a node

The shop is a Polish "node" which mediates and redistributes goods and practices, be it in passing of concrete material forms such as food, packages, or in the form of information exchange such as food recipes, childcare advice or just in general, socialising into ways of doing things. An explicit example in which the shop serves to redistribute knowledge and connect different aspects of E and T's business could be seen in the way that the shop owners use the shop window to attract customers for their rental properties business (discussed in section 5.1.1.1). Other forms in which the shop takes on a function of a node are cultural mediation and a space characterised by a blend of business and the private lives of KPs.

#### 5.1.2.1. Festivals

As cultural nodes, the KPs provide a connection with what is Polish and associated with Poland. This is represented both in the goods sold by the shop and in interactions with customers and researchers. KPs, and T in particular, adopted a role of expert when it comes to Poland and Polish language and attempted to socialise the other into Polish culture and language.

During observations, researchers were seated very close to the counter (and the KPs) and often engaged in conversations with KPs if the shop was not busy. The conversations differed between the time when only AL observed the KPs and the time when either ZH or LW were also present. During AL's observations the topics of conversations ranged from small talk to properties to family matters. There were also instances when AL and the KP engaged in talk about Poland, Polish people, and comparing life in the UK to the one they remembered from Poland. On the other hand, when either ZH or LW was present, conversations focused on Chinese and Polish cultures and customs as well as the nature of the business and KPs' business practice. The field note below is an account of T and ZH's exchange of information about festivals.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face, observation*

*Context: quiet time in the shop. AL (Polish) and ZH (Chinese) are talking to T (Polish) about celebrating Halloween and All Saints' Day*

*Source: fieldnote #027]*

- Tom said in a semi-joking manner that they had bought sweets and things for Halloween and he hoped that Sophia would be better later in the day. Otherwise she would miss out all the fun stuff. So starting from there, we had some discussion about whether people celebrate Halloween in Poland. Not really, and if they do, it is not a big thing. That was the answer. Agnieszka mentioned All saints day and said that in Poland people do celebrate all saints day though. Everyone goes back to their family and visit cemeteries and stay there by midnight with candles. It was immediately after the Halloween. Tom searched on his phone and showed me a picture of a gathering around a tomb with lots of candles at night. I noticed that the website was in Polish. I mentioned that in China, there is a similar festival, but it is in the daytime and it is called tomb sweeping day. People go and visit the burial places of their family members and bring food and wine and sometimes burn the paper money. Quite interesting similarities and differences. I told them the area I live in London does not 'do' Halloween at all. It is very quiet this time of the year. Tom seemed to be surprised. I looked around the shop to see anything special for Halloween, but no decorations or display of special goods. This shop does not 'do' Halloween either, I was thinking to myself. Tom also mentioned Roma's way of celebrating All Saints Day. Apparently, they brought food to the tomb and had a feast there themselves. (ZH, 31/10/14)

The observation took place on 31<sup>st</sup> October (Halloween). ZH noticed that there were no Halloween decorations in the shop and asked T about it. This triggered a conversation about the fact that Halloween is not very popular in Poland, although it is gaining popularity under the influence of the media. T and AL jointly explained to ZH, who was at that time the cultural 'Other', that in Poland All Saints Day (1<sup>st</sup> November) is extremely important. T was very keen to explain how it is celebrated and

provided a lot of information. ZH offered some information about the way Chinese people show respect to their deceased in response. Throughout the conversation, as well as on other occasions where T took on the role of an expert on the Polish culture/customs, T spoke in (very basic) English and every now and again consulted AL, either to ask for a word he was unsure about in English or to share some side comments. These side comments were often in Polish, as in the case of a question he asked AL towards the end of this exchange: '[to AL] wiesz o Cyganach że na grobach jedzą piją śpiewają tańczą przy swoich grobach?' / [to AL] do you know about the Gypsies that they eat drink sing dance at their tombs?/. There is genuine interest expressed by both sides and evaluative comments are made towards the end, where both T and ZH state that what preceded was 'very interesting'. The use of collective pronouns (we vs. they) in the conversation is also noticeable. All participants in the conversation used 'we' to refer to the Polish and Chinese people signalling their orientation to ethnicity. There were also occasions when 'they' was used in ZH's turns (as if detaching herself from the category of Chinese) and in T's turns when he talked about Polish Roma, which clearly marks the distinction between Polish and Polish Roma people and T's dissociation from the latter group.

### 5.1.2.2 Food

Such 'socialising the other', or cultural mediation, was performed also in the context of food and drink, seen as emblems of Polishness. T often adopted the role of an expert as he redistributed knowledge about food items or recipes. For example, the researchers were curious about different types of Polish food and were introduced to some by the KPs. In the following excerpt, T introduces ZH to lard.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: T is shelving deliver. He shows ZH a large jar of lard and recommends it for ZH's husband. Seeing that ZH is unfamiliar and not keen on the product, both T and AL give her information about it.*

*Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141031\_TW\_001, 52:00]*

T	that's good your husband will love it	
ZH	what's this	
T	fat	
AL	lard	
ZH	fatter? lard?	
T	fat	
ZH	oh (laughs)	
T	your husband will love it	
ZH	meat at the bottom	
T	meat at the bottom that's the fat	
AL	this is nice with really freshly baked bread	
ZH	...	
AL	instead of butter you just	
T	spread /ˈspred/ it over the bread	

AL	it works when you have a meal in the mountains its works	
ZH	it works then yeah	
AL	thick slice of bread and just that on top that's it	
T	[to AL] ... ale jaki wielki słoik nie?	[to AL] but what a massive jar isn't it?
AL	no te są też takie podobne	yeah these are also similar
T	to są bardziej konserwa mięsna to jest bardziej wiesz to nie jest podobne do tego	these are more like canned meat this is more you know it isn't like this one
AL	też tak wygląda	it looks like that
T	to jest co innego no tak wyglądają ale to jest generalnie	it's something different it looks like that but it is generally
AL	mięsiwo	meat
T	więcej mięsna tam jest wiesz	there is more meat there you know
AL	...	...

Food epitomises the KPs' connection to Poland: to what they remember from the past and what for them is quintessentially Polish. There is a lot of nostalgia about Polish food, its flavour and authenticity, as evident in T's talks. When discussing his vision or potential of the shop in the interview, T asks AL whether she remembers the type of roast chicken he was thinking of introducing in the shop. He then compares the Polish ones to those that one can get in the UK.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face interview*

*Context: T talks about his ideas for the future of the shop. He wants to sell roast chicken like the one he remembers from Poland. He checks whether AL remembers these chickens as well.*

*Source: interview transcript, LonBusInt\_20150115\_TW\_002]*

T: I don't know if you remember from Poland these roasted chickens

A: yeah I know [what you mean]

T: [so golden-brown] so juicy

A: yes yes yes

T: you'd go and eat half a chicken wouldn't you

T: you can buy a chicken like that in Tesco for example you can buy but they aren't good (...) I don't know if you've ever had one but they are so dry (.) tiny and ours do you remember the Polish ones

A: yeah

T: so juicy drip- such with brown skin

A: mm

### 5.1.2.3. Cultural expertise and knowledge

T likes to demonstrate his expertise and knowledge when it comes to Polish current affairs and popular culture as well. On a number of occasions when he and AL were in the shop by themselves, he initiated discussions about Polish films (the KPs have Polish TV at home), politics, and other matters. His natural choice of language was Polish. If ZH or LW were in the shop as well, T would sometimes speak to AL in Polish but then offer translations into English for ZH and LW's benefit.

[Location: the Polish shop, Newham

Means/mode: face-to-face

Context: After serving a customer, T makes comments about his resemblance to a famous Polish director Roman Polański, first to AL in Polish and then to ZH in English as well.

Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141031\_TW\_001]

T	gość mi Polańskiego przypomina zauważyłaś ( ) nie	the guy reminds me of Polański have you noticed ( ) isn't it
AL	no może	yeah maybe
T	this guy this guy look similar like Roman Polański	<i>this guy this guy look similar like Roman Polański</i>
ZH	who's he	<i>who's he</i>
T	Roman Polański you don't know Polański? Roman Polański Polish film director	<i>Roman Polański you don't know Polański? Roman Polański Polish film director</i>
ZH	might be the president of Poland no I don't really know	<i>might be the president of Poland no I don't really know</i>
T	yeah he look similar similar similar mam gdzieś zdjęcia czekaj Polańskiego bo go w Krakowie przesłuchiwali był w Polsce I show you (T searches for photos on his phone/internet) hm? Nie podobny? Nie? Is similar yeah?	<i>yeah he look similar similar similar I've got photos somewhere wait of Polański because he was interrogated in Kraków he was in Poland I show you (T searches for photos on his phone/internet) hm? Isn't he similar? No? Is similar yeah?</i>

[note on transcription: in the translation, Polish in regular script; English in *italics*]

T's intra-turn language switching as well as his audience awareness are also evident in this excerpt, along with the expert role he adopts in informing ZH about who Polański is and AL about Polański's recent trip to Poland and interrogation by the Polish. In the further part of this recording, T informs AL and ZH about Polański's ban on travelling to the US and the murder of his first wife. T often supports his narratives with images or information that he finds on his mobile phone as he is telling the story.

## 5.2. Transnational experience: Polish and local connectivities

In this section, we focus on the transnational experience of our KPs. We are interested in how their Polish and local connectivities play out or interplay with each other in their everyday life.

### 5.2.1. Ongoing connection to Poland

E and T live in what they describe as a Polish world/bubble in the UK. They work with Polish suppliers and mainly Polish customers, most of their customers are Polish, and they rent flats out to Polish people. There is a frequent contact with Polish people and Poland, for example, when preparing flats for rent, E and T had a family member come from Poland to help re-decorate them and they brought some of the furniture and fittings for their own family home from Poland. Poland is within reach: E has conversations with her father via Skype (on her mobile phone) while she is in the shop and they used to do deliveries for the shop themselves (driving a van to Poland). This point is well illustrated in the following excerpt from the fieldnotes.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: E talks about her social network in the UK.*

*Source: fieldnote #004]*

- E said that her whole life in the UK was in Polish, their friends were Polish, mostly people who came from S\_\_\_ (where E and T are from) and that she mainly used Polish at work as well. (AL, 5/9/14).

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: T is talking about Polish people's skills compared to English people when it comes to refurbishing and redecorating properties.*

*Source: fieldnote #005]*

- We then spoke about them using the help of other Polish people they know with decorating their house. T said that Polish people can do everything (electricity, plumbing, decorating, etc.) and with English people you need to book a separate specialist for every job. (AL, 8/9/14)

Interaction in social media involves an exchange of messages between two physical locations. Moores (2004) proposed that, instead of treating such communication as devoid of the sense of place (a view represented by Meyrowitz, 1985), it would be useful to consider it as involving multiple places. According to this view, people who communicate through social media are located both in their physical location and context and in the context created by electronically mediated exchange that they are part of. Being physically located at the shop, E is at the same time exposed to a background communicative “noise” of her home life and her family’s constant “ambient virtual co-presence” (Ito et al. 2005, p. 264).

Not limited to the immediate family life, E’s ambient virtual presence extends to communication with some friends, including those who live in Poland, as in LonBusSM\_20141107\_VIB\_015, where Fr updates E that she has just come back from her English class and having received no response for around an hour, questions E’s whereabouts. E’s response is immediate at this stage and indicates that E was getting on with her everyday life (having dinner with the family). The background “noise” needs to be attended to and E feels obliged to justify her lack of response.

*[Means/mode: Viber*

*Context: E is in an ongoing conversation with a friend in Poland about the day.*

*Source: Viber, LonBusSM\_20141107\_VIB\_015]*





Fr: I've just come back from [my] English [class]

Fr: [visual]

Fr: Where have you gone<sup>3</sup>???

E: Nowhere we're having dinner and what's up with you<sup>4</sup> ?

E: [visual]

### 5.2.2. Local and Polish connectivities in interactions with customers

Local and Polish connectivities often interplay with each other in the KP's interactions with customers. Occasionally, E & T engage in banter about Polish food with their customers as well as researchers in the shop. The banter often plays on cultural stereotypes about Polish people. One of the examples is their drinking habit. We have joked about vodka as Polish water and about highlanders' tea - a drink sold in Poland which claims to have a 'hint of alcohol' but may knock people off. In T's interaction with customers, banter can sometimes become a subtle or explicit promotion of a particular product. In the following example, T was engaged with a group of customers who came in and bought a lot of alcohol and meat. Halfway through the transaction, T began to promote gherkins (which he adores and has made a special effort to order them directly from Poland and to collect them in a car himself): how the water inside the gherkin jar is good for hang-overs. It quickly turned into banter about the magic brought by the gherkins ('new lease of life') and a cocktail recipe involving gherkin water. Just before the customers were going to leave, T asked them whether they wanted to buy sweets ('prepare sweets for the kids'). The mention of sweets was not a coincident. It was triggered by the local connectivities: it was Halloween on the day. T explored the business opportunity through Polish banter and the local context.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham]*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

<sup>3</sup> 'Polazłaś' is informal and implies going somewhere slowly, unwillingly.

<sup>4</sup> The use of capital letter in address forms (pronouns) to show respect.

*Context: T is serving three customers who are planning a barbecue for that afternoon and are buying a lot of alcohol and meat.*

*Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141031\_TW\_001, 01:54:00]*

	(...)	(...)
T	coś jeszcze?	anything else?
C6	wszystko	that's all
T	ogórca na zagrychę	gherkin <sup>5</sup> for a snack <sup>6</sup>
C3+C	mamy	we have some
T	macie ogórca?	you have gherkin
C	ale jak będą te te to trzeba nam	but when you have these these we need you to
T	proszę? Te dobre	pardon? The good ones
C	zostawić	keep
	(inaudible)	(inaudible)
T	to sobie weźcie od razu	take some right now
T	woda jest boska z nich	the water from them is great
C	no	yeah
T	jeszcze jak zimna z lodówki	especially when it's cold from the fridge
C	tak tak	yes yes
T	to normalnie	it's simply
C	pyszne ale pomogło od razu	delicious but it helped straight away
T	tak?	yes?
C	no	yeah
T	stawia na nogi?	gives a new lease of life?
C	(inaudible)	(inaudible)
?	... a próbowaliście zrobić drinka z tej wody po ogórkach?	... and have you tried to make a cocktail from this gherkin water
	(everyone laughs)	(everyone laughs)
?	jak na kaca jest takie dobre to	if it's so good for hangover then
	(T laughs)	(T laughs)
?	...klin ogórki	...hair of the dog gherkins
C3	dobra chodźcie ferajna	...right let's go gang
T	no to do miłego	see you then
?	(inaudible)	(inaudible)
T	cukierków naszykujcie dla dzieci	prepare sweets for the kids
C3	a właśnie	oh yes
T	aaa widzisz jeszcze cukierki sprzedam	ahh you see I'll sell sweets still
	(...)	(...)
C3	a weź zobacz ile ja twojej żonie tutaj jestem krewny dobra?	and check how much I owe your wife here ok?
T	jak co?	what?
C3	zobacz ile ja twojej żonie tutaj jestem krewny	check how much I owe your wife
T	dwanaście	twelve

<sup>5</sup> Ogórec, normally ogórek. Word most likely influenced by the Russian word орыпец (=cucumber)

<sup>6</sup> The Polish word 'zagrycha' is used in the context of snacking with vodka.

### 5.2.3. Talking about Polishness

The KPs talk about their sense of belonging and perceived differences between Polish vs. non-Polish. In the following example from AL's fieldnote, the customer compares the experience of returning Polish migrants as 'a fish out of water'. E agrees and talks about the need to visit everyone in their social network.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face, observation*

*Context: E talks to a customer about the way Polish people living in London feel when going back to Poland.*

*Source: fieldnote #003]*

- They exchanged a few sentences about going on holiday to Poland and whether they felt like coming back to the UK towards the end. The customer said "Człowiek się nieswojo czuje już w Polsce" [One feels a bit like a fish out of water in Poland now]. E seemed to agree "Wiesz jak to jest. Każdego trzeba odwiedzić... 'I co, ze mną się nie napijesz?'" [You know how it is. You need to visit everyone... 'What? You won't have a drink with me?']. (AL, 3/9/14)

At dinnertime, E and T often talk about the events on the day (including Polish politics, which E keeps up to date with) and matters relevant to them in the UK. In one of these conversations, E told T about an article about migrants in London that she read that day. Through the article, E came to realise with some surprise that less than 50 percent of the 'white British' people were born in the UK. E was clearly interested in the question of identity and authenticity. While the entire conversation was mainly in Polish, the terms 'white British' and 'British' were rendered in English, as if the nationality concerned had an exclusive relationship with the English language. E also referred to 'white British' as 'they' and further declared that 'many are like us', showing her developing positioning as one of 'white British' herself --the whole family have recently received their British passports.

*[Location: KPs' home*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: E is telling T about an article about ethnic groups in London that she had read that day.*

*Source: home audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141112\_EW\_HM\_001, 10:52]*

E	dzisiaj na BBC czytałam ciekawą taką taki zrobili sondaż w jakiej części Londynu jaka grupa etniczna mieszka	I read on BBC today an interesting such they did a survey which ethnic group lives in which part of London
T	no?	yeah?
E	mm (3)	mm (3)
Z	{ale on słodko je}	{he is so cute when he eats}
E	kto wiesz z tych white British ile jest urodzonych poza tylko chyba 40%	who you know from these white British how many were born probably only 40%

T	Gdzie	where
E	white British którzy wiesz wszystkie się w formularzach piszą że są white British ale już jak się zapytasz em	white British who you know all in all forms write that they are write British but when you ask um
T	dokładnie	exactly
E	nie już jak się zapytasz miejsce urodzenia to już jest poza Anglią czyli wiesz tacy wiesz wiele takich jak my nie white British	no when you ask about their place of birth then it's outside England so you know these kind you know many are like us aren't they white British
T	No	yeah
E	mm tylko 40% też jest no i wiesz dzielnice w której dzielnicy wiesz jakie grupy etniczne zamieszkują	mm only 40% also are and you know boroughs in which borough which ethnic groups live
	(...)	(...)
E	ileś tysięcy em /azjan/ to British nie	however many um /azyan/ are British, aren't they
T	Azjatów?	Asians?
E	Mhm	uhum
T	co?	what?
E	(5) Azjatów	(5) Asians

### 5.3. Multilingual practices

Whilst multilingual practices run through the themes of ethnic retail business and transnational experience, we have a large amount of examples that demonstrate their significance in everyday life. The KPs demonstrate great resourcefulness and creativity in the use of semiotic systems and awareness of the importance of linguistic choices and language status. This section first discusses their communicative creativity and resourcefulness, then language choice and status and finally the KPs skill at adapting to their communicative partners.

#### 5.3.1. Resourcefulness and creativity

Resourcefulness and creativity characterise the KPs' language practice. Both KPs seem to have some idea and opinions about how "language" is used in their shop. One of the things they both mention is the use of gestures to aid understanding with customers with whom they don't share a common language. For E, language in this kind of business is of little significance, as she commented in the interview.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face interview*

*Context: E is answering the question about the use of language in the shop.*

*Source interview transcript, LonBusInt\_20141219\_EW\_005]*

- we know that a customer who enters is coming to get something and if we can't communicate if I can't understand or the customer can't understand something we will point with a finger

so language honestly speaking you know in this kind of um (2) business is of very little significance because if I don't know what 'sopocka'<sup>7</sup> is how to say that in English a customer can show me that he wants this and the other way around

Resourcefulness and creativity are also present in social media, as in the following example where visual elements are added in the comments under a Halloween related post:

*[Means/mode: Facebook wall post]*

*Context: A Facebook friend posted Halloween wishes on E's Wall.*

*Source: E's Facebook, LonBusSM\_20141031\_FB\_065]*



I wish everybody *HAPPY HALLOWEEN* [visual] – [visual] *feeling excited with E\_\_ and 30 others.*

(LonBusSM\_20141031\_FB\_065)

The comments list is populated with images, either pasted from elsewhere or in the form of emoticons or stickers made available by Facebook. While the form of wishes remains the same, in one of the posts, Polish phonetic spelling was used: 'Hapi Hapi Halolin'.

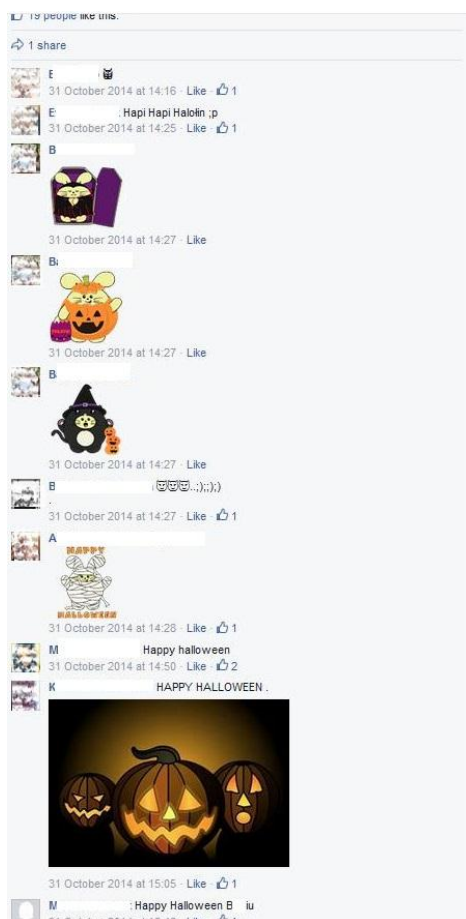
*[Means/mode: Facebook wall post (comments)]*

*Context: Friends are leaving comments to a Halloween-related post on E's Wall.*

*Source: Facebook post comments, LonBusSM\_20141031\_FB\_066]*

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<sup>7</sup> A type of Polish cold meat.



(LonBusSM\_20141031\_FB\_066)

There is an example of collaborative creative multilingual practices in the data. In the following example, T plays on the double meaning of the Polish word ‘pszczołka’, which means ‘little bee’. It is also the name of a type of fireworks called ‘helicopter’ in English. This type of firework, with a core and two paper wings on the sides, resembles the insect and hence the name. As they were setting up fireworks, T used the onomatopoeic word ‘bzyk’, which imitates the buzzing of an insect, as a noun (‘I also have buzz buzz’). The word was picked up by two of the children in very different ways. A, a five year old, started singing the word repeatedly, while W, 10, used the word in a sentence in the same grammatical form as T – a noun (‘that buzz buzz’). The context of play enables the group to play with the word in a number of different ways, including a grammatical appropriation and a shift into singing.

[Location: KPs’ home

Means/mode: face-to-face

Context: KPs have their friends (a family with two children: A and W) over for Guy Fawkes Night, T is in charge of fireworks and introduces the children to their different types.

Source: home audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141105\_EW\_HM\_003, 49:10]

T	o czekajcie mam pszczołkę	oh wait I’ve got a helicopter <sup>8</sup>
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<sup>8</sup> The name in Polish translates as ‘little bee’ (f)

A	oh jej	oh yay
T	o mam pszczołkę jeszcze	oh I have also a helicopter
W	co to pszczołka	what is a helicopter
A	co to pszczołka	what is a helicopter
T	aaa bzyk bzyk	ahh <b>buzz buzz</b> <sup>9</sup>
A	co to pszczołka	what is a helicopter
T	bzyk bzyk	<b>buzz buzz</b>
W	a co ona robi	and what does it do
T	a zobaczysz chcesz potrzymać w ręku	ah you'll see do you want to hold it in your hand
W	nie!	no!
T	(laughs)	(laughs)
K	(inaudible)	(inaudible)
T	jeszcze mam bzyk bzyk co tu jeszcze wujek wylosuje	I also have <b>buzz buzz</b> what else will uncle draw [from the bag]
A	(singing) bzyk bzyk bzyk bzyk	(singing) <b>buzz buzz buzz buzz</b>
W	ale gdzie je się kładzie	and where do you put them
A	(singing) bzyk bzyk bzyk bzyk bzyk bzyk	(singing) <b>buzz buzz buzz buzz buzz buzz</b>
W	odsuńcie się odsuńcie się	move away move away
A	ale ja chcę	but I want
...	...teraz	...now
W	tą bzyk bzyk	that <sup>10</sup> <b>buzz buzz</b>
Z	acha no to no jest ok	uhum it's ok then

### 5.3.2. Different repertoires, different listeners.

The KPs are adept at adjusting their registers or repertoires according to audience. When there are children in the shop, E regularly addresses them (using address terms, such as ‘gwiazdko’ = ‘star-DIM) and hands them lollipops as gifts. She sometimes uses baby talk in these situations, as noted in AL’s fieldnotes: “While passing sliced cold meat to the customer, E said to the customer “płose cie baldzo” [Here you are (in baby-talk)] and then added, directing her gaze at the baby “Cześć, gwiazdko, jak ty gaworzysz ślicznie!” [Hi, Star, oh how nicely you babble!] (in an animated voice). (AL, 16/09/2014).

E uses baby talk (otherwise known as motherese, referring to the kind of speech style when mothers speak to children characterised by exaggerated pitch and simplified syntax) when she addresses dogs including their family pet, Pluto. On one occasion a customer entered the shop with her dog. E greeted the dog with exaggerated intonation. E showed her affection for the dog by adding diminutive suffix to vocatives. The baby talk was contrasted with transactional talk between E and the customer, in which polite form is used.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham  
Means/mode: face-to-face*

<sup>9</sup> Sound made by bees.

<sup>10</sup> Feminine gender indicated

*Context: A customer brought a dog (Emil) into the shop. E is interacting with the dog and the customer.*

*Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141107\_EW\_001, 01:02:00]*

C	Emiluś	Emil-DIM
E	<u>ceść</u> Emiluś	<u>hi-BT</u> <sup>11</sup> Emil-DIM
C	on już za mną patrzy dobra niech pani da tylko skosztować gdzieś	he's already looking after me ok give me [some] just to try somewhere
E	ile ich dać (2) cztery pięć? cześć cześć Emilku	how many shall I give [you] (2) four five? hi hi Emil-DIM.VOC
C	no niech pani mi da tak z sześć	give me around six <sup>12</sup>
E	[to the dog] Emil no jaki ty jesteś śliczny chłopiec zobacz (inaudible) jakiego mam pieska [to C] ile dać cztery pięć bo ja tak pytam ale	Emil what a good boy you are look (inaudible) what a dog-DIM I have [to C] how many shall I give [you] four five because I'm asking but
C	no niech mi pani da tak z pięć	give me around five then
E	pięć	five

(Note on transcription: examples of baby talk are underlined in the translation).

Diminutive forms are common in E and T's speech when addressing customers in the shop and talking about purchased goods:

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham]*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: T is selling sliced cold meat. He has sliced more than the customer asked for*

*Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141013\_TW\_001]*

T	16 deko się nacięło pani	I've sliced 16 dkg for you
C	no dobra	that's ok
T	może być?	is that ok?
C	niech będzie	that's fine
T	dobra szyneczka się nie zmarnuje	it's good ham-DIM it won't go to waste

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham]*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: E is serving a customer who had a stroke*

*Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141107\_EW\_001]*

E	już dwie sekundeczki dać kabanosika tak?	just two seconds-DIM shall I give you kabanos-DIM yes? ok\
C	(non-language sounds)	(non-language sounds)
E	nie kabanosika? sera? dobra\ salami? dobra\ cztery plasterki? dobra\	not kabanos-DIM? cheese? ok\ salami cheese? ok\ four slices? ok\

(Note on transcription: '\`' indicated falling intonation of a statement)

Apart from food items, diminutive forms are also used for other words, such as 'piąteczek' (Friday-DIM), 'pudełeczko' (box-DIM), or 'sznureczek' (string-DIM).

A need for employing a range of registers depending on the context and interactants' status is identified in E's text-message exchange with her parish priest (LonBusSM\_20141011\_SMS\_006). E and T are Catholics and their daughter attends a Catholic school, there is, however, a certain tension

<sup>11</sup> The first instance of the greeting is in baby talk and it's followed by regularly pronounced greeting afterwards.

<sup>12</sup> In the original the polite form is used.



between this particular priest and his parishioners. E needed to contact the priest in order to obtain forms for her daughter's application for a Catholic secondary school. In an earlier message, E greeted the priest with the word "Witam" (=hello), which the priest identified as an inappropriate greeting and clearly positioned himself as a Catholic priest in a later part of his text-message to E. E continued the metalinguistic communication, adopting a defensive and mildly sarcastic tone.

[Participants: E, FrG

Context: FrG is a priest at E's parish. E had texted him to arrange a meeting about E's application to a Catholic school. E greeted FrG with 'Witam' in a previous message]

Ps	Social media example (SMS)	Standard writing diacritics)	Polish (with	Translation
FrG		„Witam” cóż to za pozdrowienie. Szanowna Pani E__-VOC jeśli jesteście praktykującymi katolikami, zapisanymi do naszej wspólnoty, to zapraszam jutro po Mszy Świętej do biura. Szczęść Boże ks G__		“Witam” what kind of greeting is that. Dear Ms E__-VOC if you are practising Catholics and members of Our community, come tomorrow after the Holy Mass to the office. God bless fr G__
E		„Witam” to zwrot grzecznościowy. Chciałam krótko zwięzle i na temat. Proszę o wybaczenie prostej kobiecie tego strasznego błędu jaki popełniła. Wszyscy jesteśmy tylko ludźmi. Dziękuję za informację do zobaczenia po Mszy Świętej w „biurze”.		“Witam” is a polite expression. I wanted [it] short and to the point. Please forgive a simple woman this horrific mistake she has made. We are all only human. Thank you for the information see you after the Holy Mass in “the office”.  (LonBusSM_20141011_SMS_006)

### 5.3.4. Language choice and language status

Earlier in Section 5.1.1.5, we have discussed frontstage interactions in which a range of linguistic repertoires are employed to negotiate meaning and to complete the transactional task. While E & T accommodate customers' linguistic choices and proficiency levels in Polish, there are also times when they make it clear that Polish is the desired language, as in the case of E teaching a customer the Polish word for 'bacon' (discussed earlier). T does not shy away from making his expectation of Polish known among customers, particularly those who he thinks *should* know some Polish, who have some connection to Poland and can be expected to have some knowledge of the language. In the

extract below, T is talking to a teenage girl whose mother is Polish and father English. T knows her and her background. The customer is the one who initiates the interaction.

[Location: the Polish shop, Newham

Means/mode: face-to-face

Context: T serves a half-Polish girl who is unable to speak Polish well. T and AL are encouraging her to repeat Polish tongue-twisters.

Source: workplace audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141013\_TW\_001, 01: 50:55]

C	mama chce coś, ale nie wiem co chce to zadzwonię to niej no i powie ci dobrze?	mum wants something but I don't know what she wants so I'll phone her and she will tell you ok?
T	a nie powtórzysz nawet? co to mogło być? jak się nazywa? drożdże?	and can't you even repeat? what could it have been what's it called? Yeast?
C	nie	no
T	chrząszcz	beetle
C	nie	no
T	chrząszcz brzmi w trzcinie	a beetle buzzes in the reeds <sup>13</sup>
C	nie	no
T	nie powtórzysz?	can't you repeat?
	(C laughs)	(C laughs)
T	Słabo u ciebie z tym polskim (2) co to mogło być (2) szynka	your Polish is poor (2) what could it have been (2) ham?
AL	chrzan	horseradish
C	/kszan/	/kszan/ <sup>14</sup>
T	o	oh
	(C laughs)	(C laughs)
C	[on the phone] mama no powiedz tam panu dobrze	[on the phone] mum tell the man well then
T	[on the phone] no dzień dobry	[on the phone] hello there
M	no dzień dobry ja chciałam kosteczki em rosółki w kostkach z kury	well hello I wanted cubes-DIM um chicken stock cubes
T	dobra no	ok then
M	Winiary no czy	Winiary <sup>15</sup> or
T	no mała paczka czy duża paczka	a small packet or a big packet
M	malutka malutka paczka	tiny tiny packet
T	dobra	ok
M	(inaudible)	(inaudible)

<sup>13</sup> Chrząszcz (*beetle, chafer*) by Jan Brzechwa is a poem famous for being one of the hardest-to-pronounce texts in Polish literature, and may cause problems even for adult, native Polish speakers.

Polish original	Phonetic transcription	English translation
W Szczepieszynie chrząszcz brzmi w trzcinie	[fʃtʂɛbʒɛʃɪɲɛ xʂɔũʃtʂ bʒmi ftʂtʂɪɲɛ]	In the town of Szczepieszyn a beetle buzzes in the reeds
I Szczepieszyn z tego słynie.	[iʃtʂɛbʒɛʃɪn stɛgɔ swiɲɛ]	And Szczepieszyn is famous for it.
Wół go pyta: „Panie chrząszczu,	[vuw gɔ pɪta panɛ xʂɔũʃtʂu]	An ox asks him: “Mister beetle,
Po cóż pan tak brzęczy w gąszczu?”	[pɔ tʂuʂ pan tak bʒɛntʂi vɡɔũʃtʂu]	What are you buzzing for in the bushes?”

The first line “W Szczepieszynie chrząszcz brzmi w trzcinie” (*In Szczepieszyn a beetle buzzes in the reed*) is a well-known Polish tongue-twister.

<sup>14</sup> C imitates the Polish pronunciation of ‘chrzan’ but replaces the /h/ sound with the /k/ sound.

<sup>15</sup> Company name

T	tylko jedna tak	only one yeah
M	tak tak poprosze	yes yes please
T	no dobra dobra	ok ok then
C	[to M:] bye	[to M:] <i>bye</i>
T	nic sie nie znasz rosołki z kury miały być (2) rosołki (3) (T hums) (4) nic nie słuchasz	you don't know anything it was supposed to be chicken stock cubes (2) stock cubes (3) (T hums)
C	co mama mówi	(4) you're not listening to what your mum says
	no nie	no
	(till)	(till)

(Note on transcription: Polish text is translated in regular script and English in *italics*.)

It's evident that T considers it important for the customer, who has half-Polish background, to be able to say things in Polish, or at least repeat what she hears. Attempting to put her on the spot, T said the word 'drożdże' (=yeast) as a suggestion of what her mother may have wanted. Interestingly, T chooses a word that is difficult to pronounce for non-Polish speakers and continues with testing the customer's ability to pronounce Polish sounds by mentioning words and phrases from a very famous Polish tongue twister. AL joins in with another suggestion of a word that is difficult to pronounce, too. Throughout the exchange, T positions himself as policing the Polish language and negatively evaluates the child's language use and the child herself as well.

E & T's expectations concerning the language ability of Polish children is clear: Polish children should speak Polish. This expectation also applies to their daughter. However, in practice, they seem to be quite relaxed about this with Z's use of Polish or English as the examples in Section 5.3.5 illustrate. It emerged from the interview data that for KPs, certain languages have higher status than others and are expected to be used in certain context. In her interview, E refers to the fact that this country's language is English and therefore believes that notices should be in English, but makes an exception for notices that would be, in her opinion, of interest to a particular group of customers only. She explains why she put out the advert for carp in Polish only.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face interview*

*Context: E talks about language choice in notices in the shop.*

*Source: interview transcript, LonBusInt\_20141219\_EW\_005]*

- E: this country's language is English so the language [of written notices] is English um potentially if um I'm offering something to let's say only Polish customers then I write for example order for carp um then I write only in Polish

A: uhum

E: because I don't know an English person who would eat carp meat for example

A: so then you think that simply the people who would be interested will understand and if someone can't understand that means they wouldn't be interested

E: maybe that's not right but that's what I think because it should indeed be written in two languages this carp order notice but I know that in the English tradition there is no eating carp on Christmas Eve so I wrote this notice somehow without thinking only in one language

Both T and E went to school when learning Russian as a foreign language was compulsory. Before moving to the UK, T hadn't studied English and he hasn't attended any courses in the UK either. T studied German in Poland and took an exam (Matura, the Polish high-school exit exam) in it, which suggests that his knowledge of German is (or was at the time) good. T thinks that, in terms of customers, Romanian and Hungarian people could potentially know German. He uses German sometimes when the family go skiing in Germany or Austria, but T says he has never used German in the shop. He does, however, use Russian sometimes. In the following excerpt from the interview, T commented that Russian was not his hobby, but it turned out to be useful in London.

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face interview*

*Context: T talks about his education in and his use of the Russian language.*

*Source: interview transcript, LonBusInt\_20150115\_TW\_003]*

A: and do you ever use Russian

T: yes Russian yes

A: did you study [it] in Poland

T: yes I also studied [it] (laugh)

A: so we all learnt it, didn't we

T: I also learnt it wasn't my hobby (laugh) but

A: but it has proven useful

T: now it's proving useful years later I thought that that I would never use it and it turns out that you are finding Russian useful in London and I you know already a long time ago in high school told um that you know my teacher not to torment me with Russian because I wasn't going to take matura in Russian because I was taking German

### **5.3.5. Attitude towards language mixing**

It was observed that while communicating in Polish, some of the customers and the KPs use some English words in their conversations. These were usually thematically influenced and included words related to education in the relatively frequent conversations that E had with other mothers in the shop (e.g., in LonBusAud\_20140903\_EW\_002 the following words in English were used in a single conversation with a customer: sixth form, secondary, uniformy – with a plural ending in Polish). Another theme that attracted code switching was property. Words used in English included property (stress on the penultimate syllable in E's speech), mortgage (sometimes declined as 'mortgage'u'), flaciki ('flats' in a diminutive and with Polish morphology). The last example shows also the use of diminutives in the language as spoken in the shop. It was a frequent practice for both the customers and the KPs to use diminutives of words that relate to food.

While both E and T acknowledge that there is a range of languages used in the shop to communicate with customers of various cultural and language backgrounds, T himself is quite conscious of his own use of language and tries not to mix languages when he speaks. However, he is aware of the fact that certain English words have entered the Polish language and adopted “Polish-ised” forms. He said,

*[Location: the Polish shop, Newham*

*Means/mode: face-to-face interview*

*Context: T talks about his attitude to mixing languages.*

*Source: interview transcript, LonBusInt\_20150115\_TW\_003]*

- I’m trying not to mix (.) languages when I talk to a Pole I speak Polish however there are many such words like I said that we’ve made this English language Polish a bit and we throw [words] in (...) for example when I talk to um a sales rep and I’m asking him about the thing that means ‘faktura’ in Polish you know and in English it’s ‘invoice’ and it’s easier for me to say invoice now

In the same interview, when he was asked whether he used Polish grammar with these English words, T initially said he didn’t change the grammatical form of these words, but then admitted that he would modify the English word according to Polish cases.

- A: and do you decline these English words or leave them in this basic form

T: ‘invoice’ in the basic one [usually]

A: [and if] you need two (.) will you say ‘invoice-pl.PL’<sup>16</sup> or not

(2)

T: yeah I’ll say ‘invoice-pl.PL’ yes I will say [that] yes I decline them yes I decline them in Polish (laugh) *great isn’t it/*

He gave some examples of the language mixing by other people.

- so we’re going to this ‘job’ we will soon have ‘break-GEN’ and (laugh) we’ll drink ‘kafe’ and so you you know and on top of that there are f- swearwords

When he was asked whether he was aware that he uses the English word ‘flat’ with Polish morphology, T reacted with surprise as he said he didn’t even realise and then explained

- you see it’s easier for me to say um ‘flat.pl.PL’ than in Polish it would take ‘mieszkania jedno- lub dwu’ lub trzypokojowe’<sup>17</sup> isn’t it (...) it would be such a long sentence and you say ‘flat-pl.PL’ and everyone knows what it’s about

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<sup>16</sup> The form used consists of the singular English word ‘invoice’ and a Polish ending to mark plural forms –y.

<sup>17</sup> The phrase T used to illustrate the length of the English translation has been left in Polish. The meaning is ‘one- or two- or three-bedroom flats’.

T believes avoiding this type of mixing is beyond his control and is clear that inserting these words is not on purpose. T also pointed out that all his acquaintances/friends insert these English words such as ‘insurance’ in the same way.

- you see this can’t be avoided even if you were controlling yourself you can’t avoid it someone can accuse you later of (.) inserting these words on purpose or something but it’s not on purpose (...) it’s already a bit beyond my control (.) it’s entered my language already and to co- common [usage]

...

‘insurance’<sup>18</sup> we don’t s- we don’t say ‘ubezpieczenie’<sup>19</sup> have you got ‘insurance’ for your car or have have you found ins- have you found ‘insurance’ for the car we say among friends (...) I don’t know why you know these are certain words it’s difficult to pinpoint which ones but (.) there really are quite a few but these are not all for example

He reports that when he goes to Poland, he doesn’t have any problems and does not insert any English words.

- if I was in Poland and if I was speaking to a Polish person I wouldn’t say ‘flat’ (.) there I would um I wouldn’t say (Source: interview transcript, LonBusInt\_20150115\_TW\_004)

The KPs’ ambivalent attitude towards language boundaries is picked up in a home recording. In the transcript, E and Z are talking about what will happen when E’s father’s dog (Czaruś, also King Charles cavalier) meets Pluto at Christmas. As Pluto lives with the KPs in the UK and Czaruś lives with E’s family in Poland, the question of the different languages in which the dogs might bark is raised by E: Czaruś will be barking in Polish, while Pluto in English. The comments, which may sound hilarious, show E’s awareness of language boundaries and the prediction of potential communicative difficulties between those who speak different languages.

*[Location: KPs’ home*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: E, Z and Pluto are in the family kitchen. E and Z talk about the impending Christmas visit of E’s parents and their dog Czaruś – a King Charles Cavalier – the same breed as KPs’s dog Pluto. E’s parents and their dog live in Poland.*

*Source: home audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141111\_EW\_HM\_002]*

E	king charles cavalier przyjedzie polski (2) tak? On będzie z Polski będzie po polsku mówił będzie szczekał po polsku jak wy się dogadacie? (2) hm? Jak wy się dogadacie razem nie gryź mamy (laughs)	Polish King Charles Cavalier will come (2) won’t he? He will be from Poland he will be speaking in Polish barking in Polish how are you going to communicate? (2) Huh? How will you communicate with each other don’t bite [your] mum (laughs)
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<sup>18</sup> ‘Insurance’ in English pronounced with a strong accent.

<sup>19</sup> Word intentionally left in Polish in this language-focused comment.

Z	(laughs)	(laughs)
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Code-switching is also frequent in home recordings. The main language used by E, T and Z at home is Polish. There are numerous cases in which individual words in English are inserted into conversations. This practice is most visible in Z's speech, but is not absent from E and T's speech either. Many of the words refer to material covered at school, as in recording LonBusAud\_20141202\_EW\_HM\_003, where Z is doing her maths homework with E and consistently uses English words related to her homework. In LonBusAud\_20141201\_EW\_HM\_001, in the same homework context Z refers to a maths formula "cztery over six dwa over three" (four *over six two over three*). In another example, English words are used with reference to the school as the institution and the school system. The following transcript is an example of such use:

*[Location: KPs' car on the way to Z's school*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: Z is talking to T about her new responsibilities as house captain. T asks about Z's friend, G and her responsibilities too.*

*Source: home audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141119\_EW\_HM\_001]*

T	G___ jakie ma zadanie	what task does G___ have
Z	G___ nie jest house captain	G___ isn't a house captain
T	a nie jest nie będzie już pomagala	and isn't she won't she be helping anymore
Z	nie ona jest school council ona nie jest house captain council nic z tym nie robią	no she is school council she isn't a house captain council aren't doing anything with it

At times, Z's use of English seems to pass without attracting attention, as in LonBusAud\_20141112\_EW\_HM\_001, 5:54, where Z is asking her mum to prepare a 'box' that she needs for school. E uses the same word in English and neither provides a Polish equivalent.

*[Location: KPs' home*

*Means/mode: face-to-face*

*Context: Z reminds E of materials that she needs for school*

*Source: home audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141112\_EW\_HM\_001, 5:54]*

Z	Mamo	mum-VOC
E	Mhm	Uhum
Z	ale co z tym boxem	but what about that <i>box</i> -INSTR
E	do piątku masz zanieść	you're supposed to bring it by Friday, aren't you
Z	Mhm	Uhum
E	jutro mama ci przygotowuje	mum will prepare it for you tomorrow
Z	ok to ma być shoebox	ok it's supposed to be a <i>shoebox</i>
E	shoebox (.) a nie może być inny box	<i>shoebox</i> (.) and can't it be a different <i>box</i>
Z	em może być ale nie żeby nie był taki za bardzo większy od shoeboxu	um it can be but not so that it's not too much bigger than a <i>shoebox</i> -GEN
E	nie może być większy niż shoebox	it can't be bigger than a <i>shoebox</i>

Z	Mhm	uhum
E	musi być w ogóle box nie może być reklamówka	doesn't have to be a <i>box</i> at all can't it be a carrier bag
Z	em nie może być reklamówka em musi być box	um it can't be a carrier bag it has to be a <i>box</i>
E	Hm	hm
Z	jak niektóre dzieci zrobiły takie małe parcels wie mama takie	when some children made such small <i>parcels</i> mum knows such
E	i to było za małe	and that was too small
Z	nie to nie że zrobiły takie wie mama takie	no it no that they made mum knows such
E	Mhm	uhum
Z	Mm	mm
E	Jakie	what kind
Z	wie mama te tak em wsadzili trochę rzeczy a później po prostu wrapping paper za- za- ten	mum knows these so that um they put some things in and then simply <i>wrapping paper</i> wra-wra you know
E	Acha	uhum
Z	ale że tu było takie płaskie tu było płaskie a nie	but that it was flat here it was flat here and not
E	acha rozumiem	uhum I understand
Z	{wrapping}	{ <i>wrapping</i> }
E	wrapping paper	<i>wrapping paper</i>

Z's English-Polish code-switching, although generally accepted in the house, is at times a topic of discussions. In the example below, E makes fun of Z's poor knowledge of days of the week in Polish and brings up Z's Polishness as a reason why Z should know the Polish names of days of the week. Her potentially face-threatening tell-off was hedged by the laughter and the teasing in the following sequence. When Z's difficulty recalling the days of the week in Polish becomes apparent, she attempts to list all the days she can recall, but ends up only recalling the words for Monday (=poniedziałek), Friday (=piątek), Saturday (=sobota), and Sunday (=niedziela).

[Location: KPs' home

Means/mode: face-to-face

Context: dinnertime conversation. Z is negotiating with T when she will do her homework

Source: home audio recording, LonBusAud\_20141111\_EW\_HM\_001, 05:58]

Z	a jaki jest jutro dzień tygodnia	what day of the week is it tomorrow
E	środa już jest jutro	tomorrow it's already Wednesday
Z	po angielsku?	in English?
E	Wednesday	Wednesday
Z	to tato mogę jutro dokończyć pracę domową?	so dad can I finish homework tomorrow?
E	[po angielsku] (laughs)	[in English] (laughs)
T	[oj dzidzia dzidzia]	[oh baby baby]
E	(laughs) twoje dziecko nie wie jak jest środa po ang- jaki to dzień tygodnia po polsku	(laughs) your child doesn't know how to say 'środa' in Eng- what day of the week is it in Polish



T	dzisiaj zrobiłabyś tę pracę i by był spokój żeby już tylko przepisać	but you'd do the homework and you'd be done with it so that there's only copying left
Z	poniedziałek piątek	'poniedziałek', 'piątek'
E	jaki [piątek!]	what ['piątek']!
Z	[sobota]	['sobota']
E	Ty słyszysz? (laughs)	can you hear it? (laughs)
Z	niedziela	'niedziela'
E	piątek (.) Polka! (laughs)	'piątek' (.) a Polish girl! (laughs)
Z	tylko tyle znam	that's all I know
E	jaki to jest po angielsku (laughs) to się nagrywa? Bo to dobre będzie bym nagrała	what is it in English (laughs) is it getting recorded? Because it would be good I'd record it
T	nie już nie masz dużo no przecież	no you don't have much anymore
Z	a mogę jutro	and can I [do it] tomorrow
E	Możesz	you can
Z	Ah	ah

## 6. Summary and Conclusion

Following three research analytical foci outlined in Introduction, we first explore how the shop operates as an 'ethnic' family business and examine how the shop, the boundaries of which are clearly marked and physically located in a multicultural neighbourhood, is constructed as a transnational space through social practice and interactions of our key participants and others. The main findings are summarised below.

- a) The external boundaries of the shop are clearly marked with various semiotic resources (e.g., the shop name and sign, the mosaic of adverts in the windows and on the door and the Lycamobile logo and colour scheme). These resources separate the shop from its neighbouring areas and serve as reminder of the connections with Poland, the European Continent (especially Eastern Europe) and the local.
- b) Within the shop, there is a clear orientation towards Polishness: what is sold is almost entirely Polish and packaged and imported from Poland. Despite this, traces of languages other than Polish found their ways onto the shelves of the shop as a marker of exoticness and authenticity. Safety notices and regulations in English are visible.
- c) Business activities are not confined to the shop's four walls. The family business and the wife and husband team require coordination and communication on the go from both KPs, no matter whether they are at work, at home or elsewhere. Their readiness to communicate with their customers personally through social media further extends the retail business beyond its physical location. The mediated connection between different types of relationships across different physical locations and temporal points, however, makes it impossible to separate work from family life.
- d) Differences are observed between backstage and frontstage interaction. For backstage interaction in which the KPs can make decisions as to who they work with and how, a vast majority of communication takes place in Polish. For frontstage interaction which involves customers, multiple languages and a range of semiotic repertoires are often resorted to with a preference for Polish as the language of communication. Examples of the blended use of multiple languages, subtle socialisation of the key Polish words, collaborative and cooperative nature of Polish as *Lingua Franca* and the KPs' linguistic curiosity are provided.
- e) Connectivity between transnational spaces is explored through the notion of 'node' whereby the KPs mediate and redistribute Polish goods, cultural practices and, in general, Polish ways of doing things. The KPs adopt an expert position, and are willing to get involved in the discussion when it comes to matters related to Poland, the Polish language, festivals, food, and celebrities. Their sense of pride and eagerness in passing on their knowledge about all things Polish are evident.

Secondly, we examine how the KP's Polish and local connectivities play out or interplay with each other in their transnational experience. The main findings are presented below.

- f) Transnational experience or identity does not entail a loss or cutting-off of contact with the individual's country or culture of origin. Far from it, it is enhanced by the contacts with one's

roots. In our KPs' case, connectivities with Poland are pervasive and on-going in all aspects of their work and family life. Poland is not only within reach, but it is also their first port of call in their work and family matters. They work with Polish suppliers and sell almost exclusively Polish goods. They rent their flats to Polish tenants and T finds odd jobs through his Polish contacts. Communication with immediate families, friends and contacts in Poland is ambient, constant and fast.

- g) The Polish connectivities, however, are entangled with the local connectivities. E & T's customers are a mixture of mostly Polish customers with some East European customers, a fact reflecting the multicultural nature of the local area. Their daughter goes to a local Catholic school while attending a Polish school during the weekend. By doing so, they are trying to normalise and mainstream their daughter's education as a girl born and grown up in London while trying to maintain her linguistic and cultural roots. An example of how the dual connectivities play out in an interaction with customers is provided. The duality indeed reflects how migrants such as our KPs engage in ways of being and ways of belonging simultaneously. While they desire and feel comfortable in connecting with their Polishness, they engage and go along with their present ways of being as owners of a Polish shop in London and as parents of a bilingual child.
- h) Examples in which the KPs talk about their sense of belonging and perceived differences between Polish vs. non-Polish show that transnational experience heightened their (acute and developing) awareness of who they are, what Britishness is and how they fit in if and when they go *back* to Poland. These examples also confirm many facets of ethnicity: it is a dialectal interplay between similarities and differences; between externalised categorisation of others and internalised personal self-identification.

Thirdly and finally, we focus on multilingual practices in everyday life.

- i) Resourcefulness and creativity characterise the language practices among the KPs and their interactants. The examples illustrate how individuals make use of a range of semiotic resources available creatively and collaboratively to communicate with others. In face-to-face communication, semiotic resources other than the conventional form of language, such as gestures, are employed to facilitate communication and in the context of business transaction, compensate the lack of linguistic sharedness. In social media communication, spelling mistakes are tolerated, diacritics are omitted, boundaries of languages are flouted, and stickers, pictures and emoticons are enlisted.
- j) The KPs are adept at adjusting their registers or repertoires according to audience. They use diminutive forms to show affection and adjust their speech style with young children and sometimes extend baby talk to pets. Also evident in the examples is their metalinguistic awareness and ability to manipulate the degree of formality and politeness to suit their communicative goal.
- k) While E & T accommodate customers' linguistic choices and proficiency level in Polish, there are also times when they make it clear that Polish is desired, which reveals another layer of their way of doing Polishness. In the case of a young customer who is half Polish and half English, T pressed on her using the Polish language and negatively, in a half-direct and half-playful manner, evaluated the child's language use. They are also pragmatic about this. In a conversation involving their daughter, E explicitly expressed her surprise, with some

amusement, that Z, a 'Polish girl', did not know how to say 'środa' (Wednesday) in Polish and went on subsequently teaching Z some Polish words. However, the telling off was done gently and the interaction was amicable.

- l) The KPs have a bottom-up understanding of the role and status of several languages they use. They believe that notices should be given in English since it is the language of the country, but Polish could be used when notices are of interest to Polish customers only. For them, Russian, which they learned in Poland, 'is not a hobby', but proved useful in London.
- m) While the KPs have certain expectations regarding the use of Polish among their customers who have Polish connections, they are in general relaxed about the mix of languages in their language use. There are a significant number of English words in their interactions with their Polish friends, customers and at home. When probed during the interview, our KPs seem to have an ambivalent attitude to mixing languages: on the one hand, T said that he was trying not to mix languages; on the other hand, he accepted that it was easier to use certain English words and avoiding mixing is beyond his control. When he was asked whether he mixes Polish grammar with English words, his first reaction was no, but he then admitted that he did modify the English words.

What emerged from these observed multilingual practices and attitudes (frontstage and backstage interactions in the shop, social media connectivities with different relationships across different physical locations and temporality, family language planning, Polish as the desired language, English as the country's language, Russian as useful in London but not a hobby, etc.) is a multilingual reality and a dynamic, flexible and creative translanguaging space. Multilingual language users move between highly dynamic mixes of languages to salient marking of distinctiveness between them. Furthermore, boundaries of languages are not fixed and indicating discrete/closed systems, but as something which can be reinforced when deemed desired. Behind all these there is a duality of connectivities with their places of origins and the local which results in new transnational or translocal experience.

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