

Translation AND **Translanguaging**

Investigating linguistic and
cultural transformations in
superdiverse wards in four UK cities

Leeds



Arts & Humanities
Research Council



Translation and
Translanguaging



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

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Foreword

Professor Charles Forsdick,
AHRC Theme Leadership Fellow
Translating Cultures



'Translating Cultures' is one of four thematic programmes currently supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). In a world increasingly characterised by transnational mobility and globalised connections, the theme foregrounds the importance of understanding communication within, between and across diverse contexts. 'Translating Cultures' addresses this challenge by studying the role of translation, understood in its broadest sense, in the sharing and interpretation of languages, values, beliefs, histories and narratives.

The theme currently includes a portfolio of over 100 grants, focused on key concepts such as multiculturalism and multilingualism. It explores the zones within, across and between which translation occurs, and encourages understanding of the role of those intermediaries who perform translation work. Central to this activity is a cluster of three large grants, of an unprecedented scope and scale for the AHRC, to which 'Translation and Translanguaging' (TLANG) belongs. In its study of four multilingual cities, this project has made an invaluable contribution to our theme. The emphasis on translanguaging has revealed the innovative modes and practices on which everyday translation depends; the focus on co-produced research with partners from museums, libraries, law, sport and business has shown the complex linguistic ecologies of contemporary British cities. The linguistic ethnographies of 'Translation and Translanguaging' provide a striking illustration of the dynamic, creative multilingualism of the UK, reminding us of the importance of languages in everyday life, and presenting linguistic diversity as a major resource and not an impediment to social cohesion. I welcome this report, and hope that it will inspire future work in collaboration with a wide range of community partners.

THE TLANG PROJECT

Professor Angela Creese,
Principal Investigator,
TLANG Project



The aim of the TLANG project is to understand how people communicate multilingually across diverse languages and cultures. We define ‘translation’ as the negotiation of meaning through different modes (spoken/written/visual/gestural), where speakers have different proficiencies in a range of languages and varieties. When speakers do not share a common language they may rely on translation by professionals, friends or family, or by digital means. Such practices occur in ‘translation zones’, and are at the cutting edge of translation and negotiation.

We view ‘cultures’ not as fixed sets of practices essential to ethnic groups, but rather as processes which change, and which may be negotiable. In multilingual communities speakers are not confined to using languages separately, but rather they ‘translanguage’ as they make meaning through whatever repertoires are available to them. If we are to develop the successful cities of the future it is crucial that we understand how people in superdiverse cities communicate across borders that might once have appeared prohibitive. In comprehensive, detailed accounts of interactions in four superdiverse cities, the TLANG project demonstrates how people communicate in everyday encounters with difference.

...THE TLANG PROJECT INVESTIGATES COMMUNICATION IN MULTILINGUAL CITIES FROM AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE.

The TLANG project investigates communication in multilingual cities from an interdisciplinary perspective. The project is a collaboration between academic researchers from a wide range of disciplines, nationally and internationally, including business, law, heritage, sports and exercise sciences, linguistics, social policy, and education. It is also a collaboration between academic researchers and networks of organisations whose user groups will benefit from outcomes of the research, including partners from museums, libraries, legal practice, sport, business, and the third sector.

Across the four cities we conducted ethnographic research in four phases. The phases were organised thematically, so that across the cities there was a common focus. The phases examined communication in sites related to business, heritage, sport, and legal advice. This shared gaze meant that the four research teams could meet together for collaborative analysis. Research sites have

included markets, corner shops, libraries, community arts, a karate club, a capoeira group, legal advice centres, and more. Linguistic ethnography is painstaking, labour-intensive work, as researchers observe and record the communicative practices of people going about their everyday lives. More than a million words of field notes have been written, hundreds of hours of audio-recordings transcribed, thousands of online and social media messages analysed, scores of interviews conducted. This report presents a summary of the findings of the research in one of the four cities.

More extensive reports are available on the TLANG website:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/tlang/publications/index.aspx

This report is highly relevant and timely as superdiverse cities are planned for the future, not only in the UK, but globally.

LEEDS

This book summarises the findings of the TLANG research project as it happened in Leeds. In line with the wider project, our Leeds-based research focused on the everyday communicative practices that take place on a daily basis in shops, enterprises, sports and community centres, business meetings, and at the school gate. We hope, therefore, that it is an informative record that does justice to the work we have done over the past four years, and the people we have worked with. We also hope that it resonates with you, as someone with an interest in communication, and with an interest in Leeds, and that it might prompt you to think and talk about your own experiences of everyday communication. Our research shows that people can and do communicate effectively across different languages, styles and varieties, and it explains the ways in which they do this. It also shows – on occasion – what can happen when communication is not possible, when it breaks down.



The Leeds case study investigated communication in multilingual, multicultural Leeds, mainly centring on the areas of Gipton and Harehills, Chapeltown, and Burley, but also in other spaces across the city. The research and findings across the four phases demonstrate the dynamic multilingual practices across work places and social spaces in the city, including in advocacy centres (in our Business & Enterprise theme), a start-up social enterprise (in our Heritage theme), a capoeira group and a basketball club (in our Sport theme), and a drop-in legal advice programme (in our Law theme). We worked closely with four multilingual people based in Leeds - our key participants - one on each theme. They shared with us their communicative practices in their workplaces, their social lives, and their homes. As a research team, we have a broad interest in understanding how communication takes place in these contexts, and in particular how this happens across Leeds for more recent arrivals to the city. Working with our key participants has given us valuable insights into how this happens.

Our main research question in the TLANG project was: how do people communicate across languages and cultures in superdiverse areas? To answer it we focused our attention on the concept of translanguaging. Translanguaging is a way of understanding multilingual communication which focuses on how people use the communicative resources they have to hand (in whatever language or variety that might be) to make meaning and to make themselves understood. We are interested in how communication evolves in cities and the role of migration in its evolution. We use the term superdiversity to describe rapid changes in migration and mobility in the UK.

In addition to the research focusing on language, we also collected visual data, including videos and photographs, with our research extending towards the visual landscapes of the Leeds. Our findings demonstrate the richness and complexity of everyday multilingualism in Leeds. The following sections summarise each of the four themes.

Phase 1:

TRANSLANGUAGING BUSINESS, PRECARIETY AND UNPREDICTABILITY

The business phase focused on spaces of advocacy and support for recent migrants in Leeds. We worked with Klára, whose business is to be a community interpreter and translator. Originally from the Czech Republic, Klára has lived in Leeds for over fifteen years. At the time of our observations, Klára's interpreting work took place mainly with Czech and Slovak speakers, many of whom had come to Leeds only recently. A high number identified as Roma. Gipton and Harehills is one of the areas of Leeds which has experienced an increased inflow of people from EU accession countries including Roma people from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, in recent years.

Klára's household is highly multilingual. In addition to Czech and Slovak, she speaks English and German, as well as some Panjabi. Her husband was born in India and moved to the UK as a child, continuing to speak Panjabi at home. In the home, Klára typically speaks to her children in Czech, while the children themselves tend to communicate with each other in English. These family-based multilingual practices are observed across modes – in spoken conversation and in SMS text messages.



Klára's work

Klára's day-to-day work varies greatly. At the time of our work together, she was interpreting for a group that aimed to provide recent migrants with access to services, including education and healthcare. Klára worked alongside advocates and representatives of agencies and third sector organisations to signpost services and to assist recent migrants with navigating work, education and living in the UK. We observed that, in addition to working across English, Czech and Slovak, Klára drew upon significantly more than her linguistic skills when interpreting, also using gesture and objects.

Central to her interpreting practice is empathy, and she made full use of her increasingly in-depth knowledge of Roma cultures. Migrant histories have a significant role to play in settling in a new country. Klára's experiences growing up in the Czech Republic give her valuable insights into how Roma people might have been treated before they moved to the UK, and her interpreting work developed her understanding considerably of the challenges people face when settling in a new country.

...THIS LADY USED TO WORK, SHE WORKED AND THEN HER JOB STOPPED, SO SHE WANTED TO SIGN ON, SHE STARTED TO SIGN AT THE JOB CENTRE, CLAIMING JOBBEEKERS' ALLOWANCE, THEN SHE RECEIVED P45 AND I DON'T KNOW WHETHER SHE SAID SHE HAD TO FILL IN SOME FORMS, SHE DID NOT KNOW HOW TO FILL IT IN PROPERLY, AND THEN JOBBEEKERS HAS BEEN STOPPED. SO SHE WOULD LIKE THE HELP.

Extract from Klára's interpreting



As well as looking at her workplace interaction, we also studied Klára at home with her family. The notion of communicative repertoire, the set of resources an individual has at their disposal with which to communicate, is central to our research. Our findings show how Klára drew from her full communicative repertoire when interpreting and in the home, moving fluidly across, through and beyond languages. We also focused on how social media is used in the workplace, at home, and across the work/home/social boundary, and how it can enable playfulness in language use.

Our observations with Klára gave us an insight into the precarious conditions of marginalised people working in low-paid positions. Many of Klára's clients needed but did not have access to English language classes, and a lack of access exacerbated their vulnerability in terms of housing and employment. The service providers themselves can also be vulnerable to funding cuts, and workers in this area experience precarity themselves. Low pay and precarious work are prevalent in migrant communities.

Key points

- Lack of access to opportunities to learn English can lead to recent migrants being vulnerable to exploitation when seeking housing and employment
- Service providers are vulnerable to funding restrictions and cuts, with workers in precarious employment
- Daily life for many people is about the business of precarity, of being poor
- The boundaries between work and home are blurred, particularly in contexts of self-employment and precarity
- Interpreters perform a highly skilled and necessary role in the integration of migrants in Leeds
- Multilingual homes are sites of linguistic creativity and playfulness

Phase 2:

HERITAGE WITH NO FIXED ABODE: CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR MIGRANT COMMUNITIES IN LEEDS

We stayed in Harehills for our second theme, and continued our research with Czech and Slovak Roma. The heritage phase focused on the early stages of an initiative. Our key participant, Monika, originally from Slovakia, was in the process of applying for funding to start a community interest company focusing on activities and support for recently arrived people from Eastern and Central Europe. Monika was working alongside her family members to establish a business that would provide activities for Roma people in Leeds, whom she referred to as 'my people', and also much-needed services, including advocacy.

Monika has two sons, both of primary school age, and is invested in developing her business from a personal perspective: to build a future for her family and to provide a positive role model for her children and for the wider community to which she belongs. Monika's perseverance and drive, in terms of her entrepreneurial project, were evident throughout the research.



Finding a space for heritage

At the time of observation, Monika was being supported by a number of organisations and agencies, specialising in migrant enterprise, including the city council. Monika's plans were developing within the framework of the city's migrant integration and enterprise strategy, supported by the city council's Migrant Access Project.

At the time that we were observing Monika, there was no cultural space or community centre for Roma communities in the area. By focusing on 'heritage', we began to understand more about the complexities of belonging and space for new arrivals. Monika was seeking not only to deliver activities for the local communities but also to find ways of establishing a physical location for her project.

Our work with Monika focused on the writing of a business proposal for these activities. We accompanied her as she attended meetings and received advice about what should be the focus of her initiative and how to put it all together.

M ale němohla som im provide every any kind of service what they looking for

[but I could not provide every any kind of service what they looking for]

J jo to je přesně vono

[yea that's exactly it]

M because of lack of money or how to say

Transcript extract: getting advice

Language, heritage and repertoire

Approaching Monika's activities from a sociolinguistic perspective enabled us to understand better how language and heritage could both be considered in terms of repertoire. We observed how the agencies working with Monika assisted her with navigating project and funding proposals. Translation took place between Slovak and English, and also between everyday language and the specialist discourse of funding. Across this process, Monika's repertoires were expanding. Her understanding was growing of the worlds she wanted to inhabit as was her understanding of the language(s) and discourse(s) she needed to use to fulfil her ambition.

Our findings centred on the ways in which Monika and her family constructed a heritage for the future, in dialogue with their surroundings. Monika became conversant in the discourse of the funding application and her business proposal for an advocacy service was later successful.



Key points:

- People who are adapting to life in a new home may not have a tangible heritage in place but are nonetheless compelled to strive and create a 'heritage for the future'
- Agencies providing services for migrant enterprise offer significant and valuable support for settlement
- The role of agencies and support workers in working with new migrants is crucial to the successful development of enterprise and to the provision of services
- Access to advocacy services is central to the needs of new migrants in the early stages of settlement in a new place
- Heritage can be an important way to think about integration: migrants create a 'bricolage' heritage, drawing on available resources in dialogue with their surroundings
- Support is needed to preserve heritage – tangible and intangible – in contexts of migration and displacement

Phase 3:

TRANSFORMATIONS THROUGH SPORT: CAPOEIRA AND BASKETBALL

For the theme of sport we worked with Tiago, a young man from Mozambique, who had moved to England five years earlier. Sport had always played a central shaping role in his life, and we looked at the role of two sports when he was growing up in Mozambique and also since his move to Leeds. His sports are capoeira and basketball.



...YOU NEED TO LEARN ABOUT THE CULTURE AND OBVIOUSLY THERE'S AFRICAN CULTURE AND THERE'S YOU KNOW SLAVERY AND YOU SING ABOUT QUILOMBOS AND YOU SING SOME SONGS IN YORUBA SO IT'S NOT JUST PORTUGUESE, IT'S A MIX, IT'S IT'S BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE WITH ALL ITS ROOTS IN AFRICA.

Sophie, capoeirista

Capoeira

Capoeira is simultaneously a sport, a dance and a musical performance. Its origins lie in the history of slavery in Brazil. Somewhere between 4 million and 8 million people were brought in slavery from Africa to work in the sugarcane plantations of Brazil where capoeira developed. Theories suggest that it began as a dance based on African war dances, or as a fight disguised as a dance to be used against the slave-owners. Today capoeira enjoys popularity in Brazil and worldwide, and we can find a capoeira school in all major European cities.

Capoeira is a game (jogo in Portuguese), and is played, not fought. The participants are arranged in a circle, or roda. Capoeira is played to energetic singing and clapping, and the playing of music on traditional instruments. Two capoeiristas fight each other using non-contact kicks. At the heart of capoeira is malandragem, or trickery; successful capoeiristas are adept at confusing the opponent by simulating a move and doing something else instead.

In Tiago's roda, in a community centre in Burley, there is always music to be heard, even when students are just practising isolated movements. Music determines the speed and characteristics of the game being played. Learning the rules, the moves, and the songs also entails learning the language of capoeira, which is closely intertwined with its particular culture.



The participants are from all over the world, and communication shifts fluidly between English, Portuguese and other shared languages. The Portuguese that is learned is closely oriented to capoeira and to Brazil generally.

Basketball

Tiago's basketball club is on the Chapeltown Road, and his team is made up mainly of Afro-Caribbeans, Africans and Eastern Europeans. Speech, normally central to communication, has less of a role in basketball. This is not to say that speech is not important in a game of basketball. Speech can play a crucial part in the organisation of activity in basketball, though it has its limitations in a game.

...I THINK WHEN PEOPLE SPEAK, PARTICULARLY ON DEFENCE, IT'S A LOT EASIER AS A TEAM TO HAVE THAT SUCCESS. ON OFFENSE, THERE'S LOTS OF DIFFERENT WAYS OF COMMUNICATING. YEAH, YOU CAN TALK, BUT IF YOU DO SAY WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO, THEN IT TELLS THE DEFENCE WHAT YOU'RE DOING. SO YOU USE EYE CONTACT. YOU CAN USE YOUR HANDS

Patrick, Tiago's basketball coach

Experts can often be heard coaching novice teammates during the course of a game. In coaching, issues of speaking and understanding come to the fore.



Sport in Tiago's life

Tiago finds a sense of belonging in the diasporic community of capoeira, and the discipline of the practice that enables him to feel settled and content. He still enjoys basketball, but basketball had an instrumental dimension for him – his family had wanted him to take up the sport so he could get a scholarship to an American university and hence secure his and his relatives' financial future.

Key points:

- Sport is integral to the cultural and social (as well as sporting) life of many in the city, and as such needs to be supported
- Language plays a role in communication, but communication does not depend only on language
- Sports clubs such as basketball and capoeira develop a shared activity and a sense of belonging among those involved
- Informal language learning during sport activity happens in multilingual contexts, and English might not always be the most important language to learn
- Engaging in sport activities with people from across our superdiverse community develops an open outlook in communication with others



Phase 4:

TRANSLANGUAGING LAW: AN IMMIGRATION LEGAL ADVICE DROP-IN SERVICE

We worked with Lucy, an immigration lawyer, who we observed and recorded in interaction with her clients at a free immigration law drop-in consultation service. Our work took place at a pivotal time: On 23 June 2016, during our fieldwork, the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union in the Brexit referendum. This event gave the content and tone of many of Lucy's interactions with her clients a very particular flavour.

Lucy's work

Lucy provides 'outreach' services at a charity in east Leeds, filling a gap in services which charities and other non-governmental agencies strive to fill.

...[THERE IS A] HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT THAT THAT MIGRANTS INTO THE UK FACE IN ALL CATEGORIES. [THIS] ISN'T JUST MY ASYLUM CLAIMS. IT'S EVERYBODY. MOST OF THE PROBLEMS PEOPLE FALL INTO COULD BE EASILY REMEDIED ... [IN THE] FIRST INSTANCE [IF] THEY HAD FREE RELIABLE IMMIGRATION ADVICE.

Interview with Lucy

Lucy's clients

Over 105 sessions with Lucy and her clients, we met nationals of over 30 different countries, reflecting Leeds' diversity. African nationals were present in the highest number of sessions, more than half of whom were Eritreans. Lucy specialises in supporting refugees whose claim for asylum has been rejected and assisting them in the process of appealing against the decision in the instances when they are not entitled to free legal support from the state. The clients who come to the drop-in sessions are not all in this position. Their queries are around British citizenship and the process of becoming a British citizen; getting a residency permit card (for European Economic Area nationals), a step towards citizenship for many; Indefinite Leave to Remain; asylum and travel documents.

Piecing together the puzzle

Our analysis examined the way Lucy matches the data she elicits from clients to a category of immigration law, putting the pieces of the puzzle together. This might involve working out which particular immigration pathway a client should follow, and can involve matching and mapping biographical information to a particular pathway.

...OK SO LAST TIME WE MET WE WERE TALKING ABOUT WHAT TYPE OF VISA YOU MIGHT WANT TO TRY AND APPLY FOR WEREN'T WE SO HOW CAN I HELP YOU TODAY

Transcript from an advice session:
Matching and mapping

Other strategies she uses involve explaining a procedure, eliciting stories from clients to support their claim, explaining complex legal terms in conversational English, engaging with informal interpreters who the clients might have brought along with them, and using Google Translate. There are significant asymmetries of knowledge between Lucy and her clients, and she works hard to flatten these, to render them more symmetrical.

**...SO WHAT I'M JUST DOING
HERE IS I'M WRITING OUT A
PERMISSION SO WHAT I WHAT
IT'S GOING TO SAY IS THAT
MUSIMBWA GIVES ME GIVES OUR
CHARITY PERMISSION TO GET
ALL THE OLD PAPERS FROM THE
OLD LAWYER BECAUSE I WE WILL
NEED THOSE TO HELP START THE
CASE TO PREPARE THE CASE**

Lucy, explaining a process to a client's
informal interpreter



Key points:

- Services such as Lucy's can create a space in which all voices can be heard
- Social justice is central to the type of service Lucy provides
- People in advice-giving roles need to learn how to make difficult (but powerful) institutional language accessible
- Drop-in free legal advice services fill a gap created by national government policy
- Informal interpreters and digital technology can do some of the job of interpreting but there is still a need for professional interpreters and translators



LOOKING FORWARD

SUMMARY

Across the four phases of the TLANG project in Leeds we observed multilingual practices and documented transnational experiences in business, heritage, sport and law settings. We also identified the role of particular individuals and services in providing key services and information to those who have recently arrived in Leeds: advocates, interpreters, business and enterprise advisors, lawyers and sports club coordinators. Multilingual and translingual practices are part of the everyday lives of our participants and those around them, and are major resources for them individually and for society as a whole. They contribute to settlement and belonging, and to the cultural vitality of our city, and as such need to be supported.

Research team

The TLANG project in Leeds is led by Professor Mike Baynham and Dr James Simpson, with Jolana Hanusova, Dr John Callaghan, Jessica Bradley and Dr Emilee Moore. We would like to thank our participants, their colleagues, friends and families and all our research sites for their generosity and support during this research. We would particularly like to thank Leeds City Council's Migrant Access Project, RETAS Leeds, CATCH & the ARK, Leeds Young Authors and St Vincent's Support Centre.

Looking forward

A number of further projects have led from the Leeds TLANG case study, including a series of arts-based initiatives by James Simpson and Jessica Bradley focusing on interaction in migration contexts and working with a range of participants, including children and young people.

- Migration and Home: Welcome in Utopia (Arts and Humanities Research Council, Connected Communities Utopias Festival, 2016)
- Migration and Settlement: Extending the Welcome (Leeds Social Sciences Institute, 2016-17)
- LangScape Curators (University of Leeds Educational Engagement Social Sciences Cluster, 2015-2017)

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further research findings and summaries of TLANG work in Leeds are in the Working Papers series on our website:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/tlang/index.aspx

- Baynham, M., Bradley, J., Callaghan, J., Hanusova, J. and Simpson, J. (2015). Translanguaging business: Unpredictability and precarity in superdiverse inner city Leeds. Working Papers in Translanguaging and Translation (WP. 4).
- Baynham, M., Bradley, J., Callaghan, J., Hanusova, J., Moore, E. & Simpson, J. (2016). Heritage With no fixed abode: Transforming cultural heritage for migrant communities in inner-city Leeds. Working Papers in Translanguaging and Translation (WP. 15).
- Baynham, M., Bradley, J., Callaghan, J., Hanusova, J., Moore, E. & Simpson, J. (2017). Transformations through sport: The case of capoeira and basketball (WP. 22).
- Baynham, M., Bradley, J., Callaghan, J., Hanusova, J., Moore, E. & Simpson, J. (2018). Translanguaging law: An immigration legal advice drop-in service (WP forthcoming).

Summaries of the case studies, by theme, are also in our Working Papers series on the website.

- Creese, A., Baynham, M., & Trehan, K. (2016). Language, Business and Superdiversity: An overview of four case studies. Working Papers in Translanguaging and Translation (WP. 1).
- Creese, A., Blackledge, A. & Robinson, M. (2017). Translanguaging: Heritage for the future (WP. 21).
- Creese, A., Zhu Hua, Li Wei & Thompson, J. (2017). Movement in the city: An overview of sports case studies (WP. 25).

A summary of the project and its relevance to adult ESOL is also available:

- Simpson, J. & Bradley, J. (2017). Communication in the contact zone: The TLANG project and ESOL (WP. 24).

For further information about the TLANG project in Leeds, please contact James Simpson at:

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INVESTIGATING LINGUISTIC TRANSFORMATIONS IN SUPER



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