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## 2. Negative translanguaging space: Mobility and immobility in inner-city Leeds

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### Introduction

In this chapter we aim to provide an understanding of how multilingual individuals navigate institutional and policy discourses, in our case discourses around social entrepreneurship. We do so through a study which follows the production of a business plan for a social enterprise, or community interest company, the aim of which is to secure funding for heritage-related activities in Leeds, UK, for Eastern and Central European communities, in particular those who identify as Roma.

Our work draws on the notion of *translanguaging*, the fluid multilingualism characteristic of interaction in the world's superdiverse urban areas (García & Li Wei, 2014). Ricardo Otheguy and colleagues define translanguaging as how a speaker might potentially use their 'full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages' (2015:283). In this chapter we adhere to this definition while also noting that translanguaging operates across wider societal discourses and bureaucratic borders, and not solely linguistic ones (Baynham et al. 2015; cf Jakobson 1959). Our concern is with how multilingual communication is enabled, disabled or constrained across languages and discourses, and within and between different spaces. To address this concern we deploy the concept of *translanguaging space*, originating in the work of Ofelia García (2009) and developed by Li Wei (2011) and García & Li Wei (2014), and extend it by introducing its antithesis, *negative translanguaging space*.

This chapter is grounded in an aspect of a linguistic ethnographic study located in Harehills, an inner-city suburb of the city of Leeds, in the north of England (see Baynham et al., 2016), part of a large project on urban multilingualism being carried out in four UK cities, the Translation and Translanguaging project, henceforth referred to as *TLang*<sup>1</sup>. The TLang study overall asks how communication occurs, stalls and is contested, as different histories and experiences are brought

together in new migration contexts. Following Mary Louise Pratt (1991) we regard these contexts as multilayered *contact zones* of languages, cultures and discourses. The focus of the analysis in this chapter is talk around a business plan being developed in Leeds by one of our key participants, Monika, a young woman originally from Slovakia. In itself the business plan comprises a contact zone of superdiverse practices, a temporally-dynamic locus where multiple social actors bring together their different experiences, concerns and motives, and their own trajectories.

After this introduction we describe more fully the study on which we are basing this chapter, outlining the business plan and the circumstances of its production. We contextualise this by describing it as an exemplar of social entrepreneurship and the commodification of identity, as it occurs in a superdiverse city characterised by mobility. In the section that follows, we set out our theoretical framework. We do this firstly in terms of translanguaging and translanguaging space(s): we explain how Roman Jakobson's theory of interlingual, intralingual and intersemiotic translation (1959) informs our understandings of translanguaging, and develop the notion of *negative* translanguaging space. This is a space where translanguaging is not enabled, which can emerge at the nexus of geographical and socioeconomic mobility. We also describe how Zygmunt Bauman's notions of the artist in exile (2000), and the productive affordances of exile, provide a useful basis for theorising Monika's situation. We then introduce data from our fieldwork, and present analyses utilising these frameworks. We conclude by explaining how an examination of translanguaging practices across discursive and bureaucratic borders can contribute to understandings of communication and of inequalities in superdiverse cities.

## **Context**

The geographical setting for our study is Harehills, a superdiverse inner-city suburb of Leeds, UK. Harehills lies a mile or so to the north-east of the city centre and is the entry point to the city for many new migrants, to the extent that it is referred to by some as (landlocked) Leeds' 'port'. The area, 'a bustling place, its main roads full of traffic, its pavements of people' (Callaghan, 2015:2), has a rich history of migration, with rural-urban migration accompanied by Irish settlement in the mid-nineteenth century, and by waves of Jewish migration in the late nineteenth century from Russia and Eastern Europe (Callaghan, 2015; Baynham et al., 2015; Baynham et al., 2016). Post-World War Two, migration to Harehills further diversified, and by the time of

the 2011 census people of over 80 different national backgrounds were residing in the red-brick terraces in the narrow streets. This diversity initially attracted us to Harehills, as a place of ‘extraordinary and translocal connectivity’ (Amin, 2006:1009) for our TLang research.

### ***Social entrepreneurship and the commodification of heritage***

Our key participant and the applicant for the business grant is Monika, who moved from Slovakia to the UK in 2005 and who at the time of the study is living in Leeds with her two primary school-age children. Monika is in the process of developing an initiative that in some way relates to her cultural heritage, as a person who usually self-identifies as Roma, and as someone who migrated to the UK as an adult.

The TLang team in Leeds worked with Monika over six months in 2015. TLang researchers John Callaghan and Jolana Hanusova observed Monika at work and in her home and social environments, producing 22 sets of fieldnotes. After the first five weeks of observation the team began audio-recording Monika in her work and social spaces, and she began recording herself at home. In all, 37 hours of audio recordings were made. In addition, the team carried out ten interviews with Monika, her family, her advisors, co-workers and other stakeholders, collected Facebook and other social media data from her computer and mobile phone, and conducted a linguistic landscape study, comprising over 4000 photographs of her home, neighbourhood and work environments, in addition to further observation and interviews. Details of our methodology are described in full in Baynham et al. (2016). In that publication we have described Monika’s plans as attempts to ‘build a heritage for the future, to take what is important and pass it on’ (ibid, 2016: 17; see also Blackledge & Simpson, forthcoming). Her business plan is being put together in order to transform her available cultural capital into something that will both preserve and consolidate her heritage and also make her a living. She hopes to use her business initiative to safeguard and to transmit to others that which is important to her and to them – her heritage, and to secure a better life for her children, now and in the future.

Monika has been identified by local council and third sector organisations as someone who can act as a link between them and the Eastern and Central European Roma people in Leeds. Parmi, a local council advisor explains in an interview conducted for the TLang Project: *Because every*

*service knows about problems with engaging with this community and we need a lot more Monikas who speak the language and know about services.* Monika is being mentored and her plan overseen by local council officers and enterprise and small business advisors, who are supporting her as she develops her activities. Monika already has a thickening network around her, her work and her ideas. It is not that she has simply decided to become entrepreneurial. Entrepreneurship and even an ambassadorial role are presented to her by her mentors as ways of bringing her ideas into fruition. This move to self-entrepreneurship relates to the broader socio-political landscape of 2015, the year we collected our data. Monika's activities are part of what Emma Dowling & David Harvie (2014: 870) describe as 'the political economy of the Big Society,' which seeks to create sites of social reproduction – in the case of Monika, her plans to set up activities and cultural spaces for the Roma people in Leeds – for profit. This is within the context of a shift from state intervention in the home and the community to a model which is profit-making. This, Dowling & Harvie explain, increases the 'financialisation of daily life', which in turn seeks to resolve 'the capitalist accumulation crisis, the crisis of social reproduction and the fiscal crisis of the state' (2014: 871). We can consider Monika's position within the context of the post-Accession pre-Brexit eastern and central European settlement in Harehills. Her business plan can illustrate how people in such communities in the contemporary neo-liberal era are supposed to become 'service providers', serving and also aiming to 'empower' those same communities. Jane Wills describes this tendency as 'the ambition to engage with local communities' (2012:115) on the part of governments: an example from the UK is the Localism Bill of 2010, of which an aim was to devolve power and decision-making to local authorities and to pass 'significant new rights direct to communities and individuals, making it easier for them to get things done and achieve their ambitions for the place where they live' (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011:8). Within this ideology it is not the case that – in Margaret Thatcher's terms – 'there's no such thing as society.' Rather, there is 'an intense belief in the importance of society and the social, and the need to harness its potential' in service of the social economy (Dowling & Harvie 2014: 872), within the discourse of facilitating engagement and action. There is also an incentive to develop what Nigel Thrift describes as 'romantic US-led individualism' (2001:419), and with it the ambition to provide for one's community while making a living (and a profit). The aspects of the social that Monika is encouraged to harness are also central to her sense of heritage and her sense of self (Baynham et al. 2016). Hence her

experience is entirely consistent with the commodification of identity that is characteristic of late capitalism (Heller 2010; Heller et al. 2014). Those supporting Monika certainly recognise that her ideas around heritage have the potential to be a catalyst for the production of the business plan, which might eventually lead to profit, and therefore to a means for Monika to earn a living.

Our analysis takes a sociolinguistic perspective on the socio-political context, enabling new understandings of how ‘language emerges as a key site of possibility/impossibility’ (Del Percio et al., forthcoming: 2). Alfonso Del Percio and colleagues argue that languaging, and in our case *translanguaging*, within a larger socio-political system is a useful prism through which to understand more about the inequalities inherent when people navigate their lives and negotiate their livelihoods. These are brought into particularly sharp relief in the contact zones of today’s superdiverse urban spaces.

### ***Mobility and the superdiverse city***

*Superdiversity*, first coined by Stephen Vertovec as a description of the ‘diversification of diversity’ (2006:3), aims to capture the sense of mass, rapid and unpredictable movement of people which characterises the current age. The concept of superdiversity, therefore, supercedes multiculturalism: for Jan Blommaert and Ben Rampton (2011) it also reduces the predictability of sociocultural features, making it a useful analytical frame for sociolinguistic research into multilingual spaces. Superdiversity is, according to Blommaert, a ‘space of synthesis, a point of convergence, or a nexus of developments long underway’ (2015: 2). Critics of superdiversity as a useful sociolinguistic concept question whether the characteristics of migration are only newly unpredictable (Reyes 2014). Wider-ranging critiques of sociolinguistic research within a superdiversity framework draw attention to its ‘eurocentric worldview’ (Piller, 2015), its status in terms of ‘sloganicisation’ (Pavlenko, 2016) and its ‘unexamined normative assumptions about language’ (Flores and Lewis, 2016).

To the extent that we wish to engage with sociolinguistic debates around superdiversity in this chapter, we posit that as a descriptive term it enables certain things. For our research into translanguaging practices in inner-city Leeds, superdiversity allows us to conceptualise the fluidity and mobility of our key participants and associated actors in our study. A lens of superdiversity allows us also to consider superdiverse practices to which we might otherwise not

have attended (Simpson 2016), and to reconsider established understandings of language use and meaning-making. As Blommaert explains:

It is the perspective that enables us not just to analyze the messy contemporary stuff, but also to re-analyze and re-interpret more conventional and older data; now questioning the fundamental assumptions (almost inevitably language-ideological in character) previously used in analysis.

(Blommaert 2015:4)

Moreover it affords us an acceptance of uncertainty, of movement, and of mobility. Mobility is evident in the geographical movement of people, in the dislocation and relocation of migrants' lives (Baynham & De Fina 2005). With geographical movement comes also an awareness that communication itself is increasingly mobile. It has been understood for some time that the everyday interactions of many migrants are conducted in the online spaces of global and translocal communication (Jacquemet 2005). Mobility is also evident in the movement of capital of various kinds, economic, cultural and social (Bourdieu 1991), and of the loss in value of that capital entailed by the migration process. Following Pierre Bourdieu, Blommaert (2005) notes how the resources – linguistic in his case – which accrued at some expense in one place are valued very differently in other places. He maintains that the English learned by an African in an African city being worth a great deal there, but worth far less, that is, valued more cheaply, in London. In relation to this, the mobility of superdiversity is problematic for Monika. Our particular focus in this chapter is Monika's immobility, not necessarily in geographical terms, but certainly in socioeconomic ones. Her geographical mobility was made easier by the accession of the Czech Republic and Slovakia into the European Union in 2008, as the border of the EU moved eastwards. It may yet be contested, as the status of EU citizens in the UK remains unresolved until the terms of the UK's departure from the EU reach their conclusion. In our analysis below, though, we show how Monika's linguistic and discursive resources are not the ones that are privileged or valued in certain bureaucratic spaces. These spaces are the physical places of local government and third sector support offices. They are also the discursive spaces that emerge in the unfolding interactions that take place there, spaces where things might become possible or impossible for her. Associated with these are the familiar yet inaccessible spaces of bureaucratic literacy: job applications, paperwork for applying for benefits, or – as in Monika's

case – a small business funding application form. The communicative resources that she has brought with her on her migration trajectory, and has accrued since coming to the UK, are found to be adequate for some things but not others. She is therefore constrained as she struggles to achieve the socioeconomic stability that she needs for herself and for her family. So we resist a ‘Bakhtinian carnival’ interpretation of superdiversity, aiming to develop an understanding of fluidity but also of when that movement and fluidity stop, are stopped, and why.

Our research site is city-based, akin to much research into superdiversity (cf. Hall 2015a; 2015b; Wessendorf 2013; 2014), though not in the centre of the city. It takes place within the hustle and bustle and constant contact of the superdiverse streets of the inner-city suburb, in houses, in taxis, inside community centres and in borrowed spaces (Tsolidis 2008). The superdiverse city as a *contact zone*, resists cohesion and its interactions likewise resist resolution. Pratt (1991) describes the contact zone as presenting a challenge to the established sociolinguistic notion of a speech community. Moreover she suggests that unified homogeneous discourse within the contact zone is ‘anomalous and unimaginable’ (Pratt 1991: 39). We propose that the sociolinguistics of contact, rather than of community, is useful as we consider how communication takes place in superdiverse areas. In so doing, however, we recognise the inherently irresolvable nature of such communication.

### **Translanguaging, space and exile**

In this section we discuss how our analysis depends on an understanding of multilingual language use as translanguaging, and introduce the concept of negative translanguaging spaces, to account for occurrences where translanguaging is not enabled or allowed. We also sketch out Bauman’s (2000) notion of the exile, suggesting that this affords an enhanced understanding of Monika’s position as being distant from, and at the same time intimate with, her sense of her homeland.

#### ***Translanguaging***

Translanguaging as an analytical tool allows us to do different things. As Jurgen Jaspers and Lian Madsen state:



Translanguaging [...] appears to function as an ontological and descriptive term, and to name a pedagogical and language-political project the success of which depends on making room for bilinguals' multiple discursive practices [...].

(Jaspers & Madsen 2016:242)

Translanguaging orients towards the perspective of the language user, rather than of the language as code. Proponents of translanguaging recognise that on the ground, in many contexts of practice, languages and varieties interact with each other, in fluid and novel ways. This happens to the extent that language users might find it difficult to describe their multilingualism, for – from their perspective – they have only one language repertoire (rather than separate compartmentalised ‘languages’). An approach to language description and use in multilingual contexts that entails a shift away from the concept of bounded named languages is offered in work in the translanguaging vein (e.g. García & Li Wei 2014; Otheguy et al. 2015).

Moving beyond description, translanguaging can also be considered in terms of how it enables and extends *voice*, that is, the capacity of individuals and groups to be audible. To be audible (Hymes 1996), people need to ‘generate an uptake of [their] words’ (Blommaert 2005: 68).

Audible participation in the public sphere therefore requires a legitimisation of voice (Bourdieu 1991; Miller 1999): no such uptake can be expected without legitimisation. Particular languages, language varieties and registers are valued over others as we have noted; the voices of expert users of unlegitimised, non-privileged varieties are hence typically not as audible as users of the more highly valued one. The same can be said of discourses. For those ‘within’ a particular discourse (for example the discourse of third sector funding, the focus of this chapter), its language, and its nuances and conventions are accessible. For those ‘outside’ the discourse, they are not: any successful attempt to navigate the discourse depends on support, therefore, from an interdiscursive mediator.

We employ a framework for understanding translingual practice (e.g. Canagarajah 2013) developed over the course of the TLang project (Baynham et al., 2015; 2016; 2017) as being translingual and trans-semiotic. In addition to movement across societally-recognised language boundaries (cf. code-switching, e.g. Auer, 1984, 1998, and cf. Jakobson 1959), we identify translanguaging across registers, involving, for example, shifts from formal to informal English.

Translanguaging also enables a space for considering the multimodality of communication, offering a way to think of communication beyond *spoken and written language*, beyond the *linguistic* repertoire; we use the term trans-semiotic translanguaging to describe shifts across spoken and written, visual, verbal and gestural, to encompass the embodied, visual and multimodal practices which are part of communication. We extend the definition to incorporate the notion of *transdiscursive* translanguaging, as ‘translanguaging across discourses which occurs when there is an unfamiliar discourse that needs to be negotiated’ (Baynham et al., 2015:4). The analysis which follows (below) exemplifies transdiscursive translanguaging: movement across discourses and the specialised registers within which discourses are regimented.

### ***Negative translanguaging space***

Li Wei (2011) introduces the notion of translanguaging spaces, spaces created both *by* and *for* translanguaging (subsequently further developed in García & Li Wei, 2014). He suggests that translanguaging spaces support creativity in terms of individuals being able to play with linguistic features as well as deploy a broad communicative repertoire, in other words to exercise communicative creativity. A translanguaging space, according to García & Li Wei, has ‘transformative power’ and ‘generates new identities values and practices’ (2014: 24). The contact zone is a nexus, an emergent or possible translanguaging space where mobilities of different kinds are brought together. A translanguaging space might also be a contested space, however. Tong King Lee views translanguaging space as ‘a politicised space, a space for the encounter and *negotiation of different forces*’ (2015:3). We maintain in this chapter that translanguaging spaces are certainly not stable or consistent, and as well as opening up (through translanguaging and to enable translanguaging), they can get closed down. An antithetical proposition therefore is a *negative translanguaging space*. We use this term to describe instances when translanguaging is not enabled, where certain languages, varieties and registers are not allowed, and hence where creativity, audibility and resistance to social inequalities are restricted. Negative translanguaging spaces are sites of unsuccessful struggle in the contact zone, in this sense a negative translanguaging space. In our later analysis, through an examination of transdiscursive translanguaging, we will consider negative translanguaging spaces, whereby the potential for translanguaging is closed down.

### *The affordances of exile*

Our key participant Monika has dislocated and relocated, and in Bauman's (2000) terms is an *exile* (see also Bradley forthcoming, 2017). Bauman describes the position of language for the exiled, and the distance and intimacy – in terms of language – that being an exile entails. He uses the example of the Spanish writer Goytisolo for whom 'Spanish' becomes an authentic homeland when he is away from mundane and ordinary Spain. Spain and Spanish become both intimate and distant territories, and spaces for creativity. The position of the exile in a superdiverse inner-city suburb, therefore, returning to Li Wei's description of translanguaging spaces, fosters creation and transformation in terms of 'new opportunities for innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity' (Li Wei, 2011:1224). Exile thus can enable a space where we might re-evaluate our respective presumptions about culture, language and 'homeland'. So if being in exile allows for creativity, intimacy and distance, how does this assist us to understand translanguaging?

Translanguaging's creative affordances are described by Li Wei as being:

The ability to choose between following and flouting the rules and norms of behaviour, including the use of language, and to push and break boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging.

(Li Wei 2011:1223)

The key word here is 'choose'. In translanguaging spaces the individual has a choice. They can choose to follow or flout the rules. This implies individual agency, or as Bauman puts it, 'learning the trick is the chance of the exile' (2000: 207). Learning the trick, in this case, is to understand the rules and the processes around setting up a social enterprise, which, in turn aims to create a community venture or space. Learning the trick is also the way for Monika to support her family. By extension, in negative translanguaging spaces, where some voices are not allowed and audibility is restricted, there is no choice.

### **Data and analysis**

This brings us to Monika and her ideas for her enterprise. In the course of one interaction with her advisor from Leeds City Council whose job it is to support new arrivals in setting up new businesses, Monika suggested a long list of activities that she might carry out:

*Extract 1*

‘a dance school’      ‘some office where I can support clients with my advocacy’  
‘do some parties’      ‘people will come to me and I can help them call job seekers’  
‘I will do like drop-ins’      ‘my job’s gonna be get them some ESOL classes’  
‘zumba classes’      ‘carnival’      ‘advising them’      ‘take them somewhere’  
‘support them to go to GP’      ‘to be their hand’

Considering Bauman’s concept of the exile, and recalling the affordances of translanguaging spaces, we can think of Monika’s wide-ranging ideas as representing different aspects of her past, her present, and her perceived future. These ideas follow Monika’s own trajectory to her current position as an exile: a physical movement from Slovakia to the UK. The translanguaging lens allows us to view these ideas as part of her repertoire, upon which she might draw to develop her business plan. We can consider this as the opening up of the translanguaging space, as demonstrating creativity and criticality. She uses her experiences and her knowledge to develop ideas for her business plan as she draws from her own life in Slovakia and in the UK. She is positioned as somebody who is well-placed to contribute to the community: *We need a lot more Monikas*, said Parmi. Yet, in order to be able to make a contribution she must produce a business plan. This business plan must not only be written in standard English and in a specialised register, but it must also be communicated and discussed in English. The suggestions are made in English. She must adhere to the regime that is imposed upon her by developing her ideas into a plan of this kind.

The activities she suggests are multiple and varied. She indexes the Leeds West Indian Carnival, for example, which takes place annually in the area of Chapeltown, which neighbours Harehills. We also see examples of intangible heritage, in the dance school and parties she mentions. An authorised transnational heritage is present in the Zumba classes she proposes. The list leans also towards ideas which would fall under the category of traditional support services, which Monika, as a newly arrived migrant to Leeds and with two young children, might have called upon in the past. These include ESOL classes and advocacy, and link particularly to what Dowling & Harvie

(2014) describe as the financialisation of the community and social sphere. These activities in fact are ultimately to become the focus of Monika's entrepreneurial endeavour.

The list itself is inconsistent and fluid, and through interaction with her advisors, it is recommended that Monika should draw up a business plan to make at least one of these ideas fundable. The breadth of Monika's list makes it possible for Sharon, an enterprise and small business advisor, to start to shape her in a way that will work best within the narrow frame of third sector funding for a social enterprise.

### *The packaging of ideas*

In the following extract from an audio-recorded meeting, Sharon tells Monika what she should do to turn her ideas into a business, and to make her ideas for her community fundable. In this sense Monika has to 'commodify' her ideas. In another time and space she would not have to. But for her, living during an 'austerity crisis' (Harvey 2014) and a time of localism (Wills, 2012), in a postmodern era characterised by commodification (Harvey 1989), she must.

#### *Extract 2*

- 1 you'll need to find the wages
- 2 so the point I'm gonna make to you is
- 3 I hear exactly what you're saying
- 4 but what I'm gonna
- 5 the point I'm gonna make to you
- 6 is that advocacy service
- 7 what I'm I'm gonna help you to do is
- 8 package it in such a way that for example
- 9 you're gonna tie it into the benefits
- 10 benefits agencies

11 you're gonna say to them  
12 I've got a package here  
13 cause they're struggling  
14 and they want to get people off benefits  
15 and you're gonna say to them  
16 look at this amazing package I've got here  
17 if you refer people to me  
18 I can get people off benefits by doing a, b, c, d, e  
19 you see what I mean  
20 or you package  
21 or have a package here  
22 because the GPs are struggling  
23 because people from our communities and your communities  
24 they keep on going for antidepressants  
25 they can't sleep  
26 they this and that  
27 so the GPs are spending a lot of money on GP visits  
28 if you go to the GP  
29 and say with the package you've got here  
30 you can cut down the amount of people going to them  
31 if you refer people to me  
32 that's what I'm gonna help you to think about

Bronwyn Davies and Rom Harré define positioning as a discursive process whereby ‘people are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines’ (1999: 37). In lines 2, 4, 5 and 7 Sharon positions herself as the person with knowledge to impart, and the person who is going to help Monika, in the storyline of Monika’s business: *the point I’m gonna make to you / what I’m I’m gonna help you to do is ...*. The business idea itself is introduced in line 6: an advocacy service. Sharon explains from line 7 that she is going to help Monika *package it in such a way that for example* (line 8): the business idea will be packaged ready for sale. From here Sharon uses many directives (*you’re gonna tie it into benefits*): she uses *I want you to* and *you’re gonna* to command Monika to behave in particular ways. She again appears to be firmly positioning herself as the one who will take control of the way in which Monika will develop her plans. She moves into the first person (12), speaking for Monika, animating her imagined words in a hypothetical narrative (*you’re gonna say to them / I’ve got a package here*). The package by now has become nominalised, an item, a more tangible something to sell. The supposed customers are organisations in whose interests it is to get people off state benefits, and hence save money (16-18). In line 20 a development of the idea is offered relating to saving money by keeping people from going to the GP and being prescribed antidepressants. The rationale for the idea is strengthened by repetition: *or / or; because / because; they / they / they* (20-26). Again (28-31) the narrative builds up to the first person: Sharon eventually uses direct speech (31), animating Monika’s words as she sells the imagined advocacy package to the GP. In terms of topics and themes, we see the emphasis on the realities of third sector service provision detailed here in graphic terms. Money is made through cutting costs for others, and services are bought and sold.

Monika is a less powerful social actor than Sharon in this event: if Sharon positions herself reflexively as the person who will help, then Monika is positioned by Sharon, interactively, as the person who needs to adapt to the local ‘business’ environment. Also present with Sharon and Monika at this event are Monika’s sister and then-partner, and elsewhere in the meeting Sharon, in her role as modifier of perceptions, says: *The three of you need to think as business people*. She is articulating the hegemonic underlying assumption of the third sector discourse: that

nothing can happen without money. She is also encouraging Monika and her family members to align with the discourse into which they are being inducted. We can consider this using the concept we introduced of *negative* translanguaging spaces, as the possibility for creativity (to provide multiple activities for the community) is reduced. Here we can also suggest that Monika is unable to choose to follow or flout the rules, as Bauman's exile. She must follow the rules and both adopt and adapt to the discourse. These rules relate to the content of her business plan, the discourse of the business plan, the language of the business plan and the language in which the business plan is communicated and discussed. This must be done to the satisfaction of the reader of the plan the ultimate addressee, whose identity is unknown by Monika but whose decision rests on the effective completion of the plan.

### *Mediating discourses*

Around ten days after the meeting with Sharon, Monika, with the support of TLang researcher Jolana is completing the section in the business plan on 'personal aims'. To recall, we can consider translingual, transdiscursive and trans-semiotic translanguaging. In the following extract translingual translanguaging is very evident, as Monika and Jolana use the aspects of their repertoires that correspond with societally-recognised Czech / Slovak and English. They also go from talk to the text of the business plan, a trans-semiotic movement. Transdiscursive translanguaging too is at play, as Jolana helps Monika to navigate the business plan. Monika knows – to an extent – what she wants to say. Jolana, who is more 'within' the discourse of third sector funding than Monika is, helps her to say it (write it) in the right way, i.e. in a way that will be accepted, that corresponds with the legitimised discourse. Considering this positively, Jolana's mediation of Monica's ideas and the business plan through transdiscursive translanguaging helps Monika to develop new discursive practices which are appropriate for what she needs to do<sup>2</sup>.

### *Extract 3*

- 1            JH    Ok erm my personal aims and objectives erm (.)
- 2                    jo tak tady v těch v tom vysvětlení pod tím
- 3                    like to prove your capabilities provide security



4 for your family or something you have wanted to do

5 for a long time but just not had the chance

6 so it's like what you want to get out of it

7 <Ok erm my personal aims and objectives erm

8 **yea so here in this explanation underneath**

9 *like to prove your capabilities provide security*

10 *for your family or something you have wanted to*

11 *do for a long time but just not had the chance*

12 *so it's like what you want to get out of it>*

13 MS tak erm hm how to say it hm I want to people stand s-

14 be same as me change their future

15 <*well erm hm how to say it hm I want to people stand s-*

16 *be same as me change their future>*

17 JH I want

18 MS I don't know how to say it

19 ((Monika's partner laughs))

20 MS no I mean like my job gonna be change them (.)

21 like they in that I was

22 in that position where they are now yea ↑

23 JH Yea

24 MS and I wanna show them they can change (.)

25 they can be same like me working

26            look after family and be strong (.)

27            I mean this way I don't mean like me

28            I'm not good role model (.) some ways (sighs)

29        JH    ((typing, muttering)) community and

30        MS    you know what I mean

31        JH    ((typing)) manage to find my way to employment

32            ((reading out what she's just written))

33            I have been in in a similar situation like many people

34            in the community and I managed to find my way to employment

After reading the notes accompanying this section of the plan, Jolana asks: *So it's like what you want to get out of it*. Monika struggles at first to put this into words (13-18). She speaks of her ambition to show people that they can change, be like her, find work, take care of their family, be strong. Two recurrent themes from Monika's world view are evident here: the importance of family security, and a reciprocal altruism (as opposed to free-market entrepreneurship). She admits, sighing, that she is not a good role model but believes people can follow the same path (*I mean this way*). Jolana (33-34) translates this into the language of the business plan (*similar situation ... many people in the community... managed to find my way to employment*). Here, Jolana engages in transdiscursive translanguaging, as the discourse of the business plan is unfamiliar to Monika. As we suggested above, the neo-liberal economies of Monika's new environment favour those with competence in a specific range of discourses and registers in which these discourses are regimented. These include the bureaucratic discourses around funding applications, knowledge of which is crucial for those who need to navigate the regulatory regimes which are in play. So as we see here, just as translingual translanguaging involves moving between one language and another, so transdiscursive translanguaging can be understood as mediating or interpreting a discourse to someone who is outside it, as Jolana does for Monika here. Jolana therefore is observed as actively co-constructing translanguaging space.

However powerful a statement of Monika's life project this is, however, it is not yet a business plan. It begins to become one a little later (extract 4):

*Extract 4*

- 1           JH    what they say here er something or something you have  
2                    wanted to do for a long time but just not had the chance  
3                    I think that applies to you as well no↑ (.)  
4                    so I c- I would put something like (typing)  
5                    I have worked with the community for a long time  
6                    as a volunteer and also on paid position and now  
7                    and through through funding (.) funding (.) funding hmmm (.)  
8                    through funding jo počkej (.) že si s nima pracovala  
9                    dlouhou dobu  
10                  <*I have worked with the community for a long time*  
11                  *as a volunteer and also on paid position and now*  
12                  *and through through funding (.) funding (.) funding hmmm (.)*  
13                  *through funding yea wait (.) that you have worked*  
14                  *with them for a long time*>  
15           MS    ale němohla som im provide every any kind of service  
16                    what they looking for  
17                  <***but I could not provide every any kind of service***  
18                  *what they looking for*>  
19           JH    jo to je přesně vono

20                    <yea that's exactly it>

21            MS    because of lack of money or how to say

Jolana, drawing on the template guidelines which she had earlier read out (1-2) (*something you have wanted to do for a long time but just not had a chance*) to shape her own text (5-6) (*I have worked with the community for a long time as a volunteer*) introduces the notion of funding (7-8): *and now and through through funding (.) funding (.) funding hmmm (.) through funding*, as if aware of the importance of this point and not wanting to forget it. She is searching for the right way to continue, in written English appropriate for the business plan form. Following Erving Goffman (1959), she is within the form-filling frame; the legitimized and institutionalized discourse. Mid-way through the turn she moves outside that frame, slipping into an interpersonal interaction with Monika. In so doing, she again uses Czech, but perhaps not for increased comprehension: *yea wait (.) that you have worked with them for a long time*. At this point Monika comes in with the missing piece (15): *ale němohla som im (but I could not)* then moves back into the form-filling frame, and correspondingly to third sector-speak-English, *provide every, any kind of service what they looking for*. Jolana, realizing how well this aligns with the guidelines (*but just not had a chance*), acknowledges the fact (19): *Yea that's exactly it*. And Monika finally comes on message (21) with *because of lack of money*. Here, finally, we hear the voices of Sharon and the others who are supporting her, as well as the authors of the form and the policy-makers and bigger discourses sitting behind them. She is finally thinking like a business person, finally recognising that her 'dream' must be something she can present as something attractive to funders.

Money, in the form of funding, is what can empower Monika to realise her project, and establish an initiative or enterprise that caters for the cultural heritage needs of Roma people in Harehills. The examples show how there are two parallel trajectories: one discursive space opens up, as the funding possibilities become more real through the potential successful completion of the business plan form. It becomes possible that Monika might make a living from her ideas. At the same time the ideas that she might actually be able to commodify are narrowed as the possibilities are closed down, to conform to the funding requirements. Something is lost when

the heritage that Monika wishes to retain and pass on is contorted into the business plan. Sharon in the first extract explains that she will help Monika to ‘package up’ one of her many ideas so she will be able to ‘sell’ firstly to the small business funders and then, presumably, to organisations who might want to contract her and the ‘package’ that she offers. Later, in the completion of the business plan, we see that Monika’s original list of ideas (extract 1) has been reduced. In being packaged, the number of things on which Monika can realistically concentrate becomes smaller and constricted. The worthy efforts of agencies looking to engage with community groups and migrants are visible as Monika’s heritage and identity become commodified, become ‘a package’. The framework into which Monika is being squeezed means, however, that she must be able to source funding and to make a living, and it turns out that only certain things are actually commodifiable for Monika.

Considering translanguaging spaces (both positive and negative) in our analysis enables us to shed some light on what Del Percio and colleagues describe as ‘the ideological formation discursively enacted by actors representing specific interest and agendas’ (forthcoming, p.4). Monika’s projects, the processes involved in bringing them to fruition, and the way they are discursively constrained, highlight the inequalities inherent in the distribution of resources and in the reproduction of social capital.

## **Conclusion**

In superdiverse contact zones, people hang on in the hope that something better will happen. Laurent Berlant (2011) writes about ‘cruel’ optimism, which she describes as being a situation whereby what is desired is in fact the obstacle to flourishing. One of the scenarios she discusses involves the ‘fantasy of the good life’ (2011: 1), with optimism being ‘a scene of negotiated sustenance that makes life bearable as it presents itself ambivalently, unevenly, incoherently’ (2011: 14). The business plan is in this case the object of Monika’s optimism. It promises the endurance of something: for Monika, her ‘heritage’ perhaps, or at least that which is important to her and the wellbeing of her young family. It promises the survival of something, perhaps also linked both to Monika’s past and to her hopes for the future. It hints that something might flourish, in this case her perceived community.

Returning to Bauman’s idea of exile as a creative opportunity, we can consider such opportunity in relation to translanguaging spaces. These spaces are not concrete and are not assured; they are fluid and mobile, they open up and they close down, sometimes simultaneously. Recalling that translanguaging space can be politicised (Lee 2015) our data point to a problematic of settlement within a socio-economic setting which pushes community and social activities towards self-entrepreneurship (McRobbie, 2015). They also demonstrate the discursive barriers, boundaries and borders are also economic, or as Blommaert describes them, ‘new forms of structural inequality’ (Blommaert, 2015:5).

Sociolinguistics for Blommaert is ‘a science of the margins’ (2015:1), or ‘the odd one out’. In our case the trajectory of the text that has been the focus of this study – the business plan in development – exists at the margins, occupying liminal spaces (Turner, 1969). It resides at economic margins, at social margins and, in many ways, at the city’s margins.

At the time of writing the first draft of this chapter, the business plan had not been successful in financial terms: Monika’s activities were yet to be funded and she is as yet socioeconomically immobile. At the time of editing, her business has been funded and she is developing her activities within the context of a social enterprise advocacy service.

## Notes

1. The data for this study derive from an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded research project, Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities

2. Transcription conventions for Extracts 3 and 4:

(.) short pause

↑ rising intonation

(laughs) laughter, etc.

(( )) editorial comments

<*italics bold*> translated text in <angle brackets, *italics bold for Czech/Slovak*>

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