

### Observation Session 3

Friday, 24 January 2020 11:58 AM

Researcher      alright, so first up what languages do you speak?

TC      00:00:03.660 - 00:00:08.042

P3      English, my native language and in order- in the order that I have learned them in, after that I studied German, Russian, Czech Hungarian and Mandarin Chinese

TC      00:00:07.410 - 00:00:19.473

Researcher      wow, ok, um and what are you um, proficiencies in each of your languages?

TC      00:00:18.614 - 00:00:23.794

P3      Well, I'm a native speaker of English and I would say that my Czech is native-like, and I've been doing academic and literary translations for a long time now, my German was once on a

similar level, I studied German literature in college but I don't use it so it's um, faded away, Russian largely got booted straight out by the Czech, um Hungarian's a little rusty but I

can still order a meal in a restaurant. Mandarin Chinese I never learned to read and write, it was just spoken, so I don't have very much of that either, that's also some years back.

TC      00:00:23.025 - 00:00:55.232

Researcher      yep, um and did you have to take the Czech language certificate exam?

TC      00:00:54.268 - 00:00:59.123

P3      No, I've never taken an exam in Czech, but I will apply for citizenship, so I see one in coming up in my future

TC      00:00:58.286 - 00:01:06.467

Researcher      yep, um and what's your opinion on mixing between languages in your speech?

TC      00:01:04.824 - 00:01:11.732

P3      sure, do it, have fun like, it- doesn't seem like a yes or no question to me

TC      00:01:10.955 - 00:01:18.954

Researcher      yeah, I pretty much agree but not everyone does so, ok so in conversation with other bilingual people do you ever notice yourself using both of your languages, and why do you feel that you do this?

TC      00:01:17.852 - 00:01:30.410

P3      um, I don't hang out in expatriate society, like the other woman does, so by bilingual people, um, we could speak about my family, and sometimes we'll switch back and forth depending on

what company we're in, and I know people who are bilingual but generally I speak Czech better than they speak English so unless it's either something that's understood that they wanna

practice their English and I, you know, do that with them, or when it's a power negotiation and this usually comes up with physicians

TC      00:01:29.571 - 00:02:00.102

SD      (0.2)

P3      they constantly tell me my Czech is no good and I should shut up and let them speak English - they don't actually say shut up but they - it's that bad

TC      00:02:00.303 - 00:02:09.233

SD      (0.17)

P3      they're arrogance and overbearing in other ways as well and the only way to deal with it is to tell them that my title is Dr and they don't know I'm an anthropologist

TC      00:02:09.405 - 00:02:19.870

Researcher      yeah yeah, it's - yeah I think it can be like that in many places around the world unfortunately, for sure

TC      00:02:18.200 - 00:02:25.581

P3        yeah

TC        00:02:23.500 - 00:02:24.908

SD        (0.67)

Researcher        um, ok and so I've also got some ideas about like why this may happen, um and so if you could say yes or no to each one of them that would be great, so does it ever happen due to momentarily forgetting a word?

TC        00:02:25.581 - 00:02:37.978

P3        sure, yes

TC        00:02:37.031 - 00:02:39.677

Researcher        um, due to finding another word more useful or more appropriate for a given situation

TC        00:02:39.631 - 00:02:45.109

SD        (1.73)

P3        um, do you mean like I forget a Czech word, and like an English word wants to impose on it, or like the other way?

TC        00:02:46.840 - 00:02:53.811

Researcher        more like the other way, but you can say either, if it happens either way, yeah

TC        00:02:52.500 - 00:02:57.616

P3        um no sometimes I just find the Czech term more apt, but it's not because I've forgotten the English term for grandmother, but when we talk about babičky, you get a certain cultural picture of the elderly women here

TC        00:02:57.228 - 00:03:13.460

Researcher        yeah, you do, yeah definitely no that makes sense, and I guess it also kind of encapsulates the - expresses the meaning more fully, right, if you use the Czech word, um, and do you ever have that a word feels easier to express in a certain language?

TC        00:03:10.891 - 00:03:27.565

P3        probably, but I can't of any example right now

TC        00:03:27.504 - 00:03:31.337

Researcher        it's ok yeah, it's really hard to kind of self-analyse like this but yeah, ok, so do you feel that you borrow words from between languages in a bilingual situation and what types of words, so like nouns, verbs, adjectives, or just any type of word?

TC        00:03:28.054 - 00:03:47.858

P3        probably not adjectives very much, nouns, verbs, endings, I heard you speaking about endings with the other interviewee

TC        00:03:46.353 - 00:03:56.326

Researcher        yes, so do you sometimes use Czech endings on English words when you're speaking English?

TC        00:03:54.595 - 00:04:01.785

P3        yes, sometimes we'll add -ovat to an English verb, or if we're talking about a place where something is kept or where something happens we'll call it an -oviště like a mousoviště is a place where mice have been making a mess, you know eating and pooping and that sort of stuff, that's a mousoviště or we have a plastic boxoviště, which is where the plastic boxes are kept but that's just my family, you know

TC        00:04:00.458 - 00:04:24.737

Researcher        yeah no but that's really cool, that's great, like that's really fun and stuff so, and it's useful 'cause you have more words to use in English and you can just use the Czech and, you know, ok so do you ever feel that you say two words or two morphemes in one sentence that express the same concept but use them both like for emphasis so you might've heard me saying

like, you could say said little holčička, the čič part means it's small and cute anyway, and then you've got little, they're both kind of expressing the same thing, across languages like  
do you ever think you would-

TC 00:04:22.950 - 00:04:56.499

P3 um well the Czechs will double up on that because the holčička's already diminutive and then they'll say malá holčička right, and then in English we use diminutives generally less and I

use them at an absolute minimum because I grew up just feeling a repulsion towards them, any type of baby talk is just like oh no that's what stupid people use to talk with dumb kids,  
and so I realise at an intellectual level like that it is a part of the speech but I avoid it much more than- this is one thing that would set me apart from a native speaker of Czech, I  
really avoid the diminutives whenever I possibly can

TC 00:04:55.068 - 00:05:27.683

Researcher ok yep yep, and do you ever feel that you borrow grammar from between your languages in a bilingual situation?

TC 00:05:26.606 - 00:05:36.039

P3 um other than adding endings? Can you give me another example, because my brain's not firing.

TC 00:05:35.748 - 00:05:42.199

Researcher So - that's ok, like so for example with the syntax, so like, if maybe speaking Czech all the time when you then go to speak English, does it then kinda come out in Czech word order or  
the other way around, or you're not really aware of it or-

TC 00:05:40.234 - 00:05:55.869

P3 I can't think of a good example now, I wouldn't say it doesn't happen but - yeah

TC 00:05:54.849 - 00:06:02.292

Researcher it's hard to know, it's really hard to know, yeah, um ok, what places do you tend to be in when you either are mixing between your languages or when you speak English and when you speak Czech, so like home, work, the shops

TC 00:05:59.424 - 00:06:17.983

P3 um ok, if we wanna talk about my job at the university, um the language is English, I will almost never speak Czech there, except if the select few colleagues who find it enjoyable to  
sometimes speak Czech because everyone else is speaking English. At home the pattern is, I speak English, my husband speaks Czech, that's how we communicate together and the kids have  
more of a tendency to speak Czech with - you know, among themselves, and depending on what company we're in, we'll switch, and sometimes we'll switch because we don't want people  
understanding the conversation

TC 00:06:14.899 - 00:06:52.316

SD (0.21)

P3 because we're aware that a lot of Czechs do speak English, like we might additionally lower our voices which will make it all the harder for them to catch it if they're not quite sure  
what we're talking about

TC 00:06:52.532 - 00:07:03.755

Researcher yep yep, and what about with your kids, what language do you choose to speak with them?

TC 00:07:02.421 - 00:07:09.594

P3 English, unless we're among Czechs

TC 00:07:07.531 - 00:07:10.996

Researcher and then it's Czech, mmhmm, ok um, so do you feel more relaxed in speaking when you can use both languages interchangeably, or just English and just Czech?

TC 00:07:09.594 - 00:07:21.788

P3 it doesn't make a difference to me  
TC 00:07:21.251 - 00:07:25.396  
Researcher ok, yep, um how long have you been living in this country?  
TC 00:07:23.280 - 00:07:27.789  
P3 I think about 23 years  
TC 00:07:26.967 - 00:07:30.100  
Researcher ok yep and then you said you've got - you had a break in between?  
TC 00:07:29.410 - 00:07:33.757  
P3 There were a couple of comings and goings and breaks and things  
TC 00:07:31.740 - 00:07:37.711  
Researcher and how long have you been speaking Czech?  
TC 00:07:36.282 - 00:07:40.142  
P3 well, I first began to study it in 1993 and actually before I came here for a semester program, and I was building on the four semesters of Russian I'd already had before that  
TC 00:07:39.997 - 00:07:52.642  
Researcher it's a lot easier with slavic -to, for sure, ok and do you feel any form of societal or community pressure to mix or not mix language in a sentence in public or -  
TC 00:07:50.876 - 00:08:03.832  
P3 um, when my husband and I speak in the way that we do, sometimes people stare, occasionally, like we're sitting in a restaurant minding our own business and just having a conversation  
people will be like [feigns staring]  
TC 00:08:03.052 - 00:08:14.690  
Researcher oh really  
TC 00:08:12.579 - 00:08:14.232  
SD (0.45)  
P3 you know um, they just consider it unusual, to mix or not mix, um, I've encountered some remarkably ignorant people in schools who think that my kids have a horrible disadvantage because they're bilingual, that it's slowing down their language and their brain and it's a handicap, and, this is like, I know, you're a linguist, your mind is boggling but- and so is mine  
TC 00:08:14.690 - 00:08:38.440  
Researcher yeah yeah yeah  
TC 00:08:35.333 - 00:08:39.845  
P3 so is mine but um, that was dogma, you know Austria-Hungary was a very multilingual empire and that was prized, you know to have multiple languages, and the communists, you know there was Czech and there was Slovak, and they wanted people to learn Russian and people mostly weren't enthusiastic about it, and bilingualism was really suppressed, and in order to not say, other people have something great that we're gonna deny you, they gave them this line about, it's bad for your brain, and so many people still believe it  
TC 00:08:38.469 - 00:09:09.296  
Researcher that's so crazy  
TC 00:09:08.283 - 00:09:10.621  
P3 any difficulties that my kids ever had in school, and they were minor difficulties, oh well what do you expect, you're bilingual. It's exactly what some bilingual Spanish speakers in the United States put up with.  
TC 00:09:09.296 - 00:09:22.462  
Researcher yeah it would be yeah, it's as you know it's completely untrue, it's rather the opposite so, wow that's crazy I

TC 00:09:21.040 - 00:09:31.225  
P3 I know  
TC 00:09:27.750 - 00:09:29.270  
SD (1.95)  
Researcher I was not aware that that was still going on here  
TC 00:09:31.225 - 00:09:34.883  
P3 it might be less the case in Prague than in more provincial areas, which is where my kids have gone to school  
TC 00:09:33.834 - 00:09:40.096  
Researcher yeah, goodness me, and when you are out in public or whatever do you feel any form of societal or community pressure to erm, conform to the majority language  
TC 00:09:39.244 - 00:09:49.644  
P3 well if I'm among Czech speakers, you speak Czech I mean, does it feel like they're imposing on us, I mean no it just seems like, if we're speaking with them then we speak Czech, if we're speaking together and it doesn't concern those people like we're walking down the street then maybe I wouldn't speak Czech but one type of interaction with the public that I greatly dislike, is people who hear me speaking English, say on the telephone and they'll come right up to me and ask if I would like to teach, like teach their kids and home or teach for their preschool or teach in some language class somewhere and I'm like, excuse me, like,  
TC 00:09:48.291 - 00:10:28.175  
Researcher wow yeah that's so random  
TC 00:10:25.334 - 00:10:28.599  
P3 I don't - and again I don't think that's Prague, that's gonna be the more provincial areas where they're really desperate to get a hold of people and like, I could be a psycho, you know?  
TC 00:10:28.187 - 00:10:36.957  
Researcher yeah, yeah they don't know you at all, it's-  
TC 00:10:34.681 - 00:10:37.875  
P3 they don't and it just seems kind of, yeah  
TC 00:10:37.109 - 00:10:44.723  
Researcher yeah wow, um this is interesting because I haven't really spoken to anyone who lives in a more provincial area so it's a new insight for sure, um do you feel any language pride for your own language?  
TC 00:10:42.673 - 00:10:54.120  
P3 I think so, um I think there's a difference between speaking English and speaking it well, and when people have questions about English, how do you say this, you know, I don't wanna go teach for someone's kindergarten for sure but you know if someone comes along and says tell me why there's this or explain that, like I'm really happy to do that and  
TC 00:10:52.436 - 00:11:13.766  
Researcher mmhmm yeah well, that makes sense, um and what language do you listen to most of your media in, TV, movies, I know you said you don't really do much of that but, books?  
TC 00:11:12.872 - 00:11:26.542  
P3 [unint], alright I read books in English primarily um I have to read quite a lot in Czech because I translate it, which leaves me less hungry for reading for fun, my husband keeps the Czech Radiožurnál going constantly which makes me nuts because I like it to be quiet at home, so yeah I get a lot of Czech radio um films, some of both not much of either  
TC 00:11:21.075 - 00:11:50.912  
SD (1.2)

Researcher and what language do you most often speak with friends, at home, with your husband etc, well you sort of already said that-

TC 00:11:52.118 - 00:12:00.419

P3 ok well I answered that about my family and most of my friends are Czech so I speak Czech with them

TC 00:11:59.006 - 00:12:04.404

Researcher ok yep cool, um and how often do you visit home or an English speaking country?

TC 00:12:02.617 - 00:12:08.171

P3 Um typically we'll visit the States about once a year but there's some you know, plus, minus

TC 00:12:06.478 - 00:12:14.591

Researcher um, ok well that's pretty much the whole interview so thank you so much again for coming I really really appreciate you coming in, and um

TC 00:12:13.311 - 00:12:22.501

P3 ok

TC 00:12:17.117 - 00:12:18.070

SD (1.43)

P3 thanks for the invitation and I hope the research works out

TC 00:12:19.507 - 00:12:25.420

Researcher thank you, and if you think of anything interesting later on, as I said before feel free to email me or whatever but, yeah

TC 00:12:24.008 - 00:12:32.310

P3 any guidelines for what you think is interesting?

TC 00:12:30.360 - 00:12:35.854

Researcher Um, probably more of the grammatical borrowing stuff so the syntax, you know um, the endings and that kind of

TC 00:12:34.350 - 00:12:44.900

P3 examples, of like the mousoviště or just-

TC 00:12:43.363 - 00:12:47.743

Researcher yeah yeah

TC 00:12:46.373 - 00:12:48.187

P3 like oh we put these kind of endings on

TC 00:12:47.743 - 00:12:52.536

Researcher anything like that yeah yeah, like if it just happens and then you're like, that could be- and then just feel free to write me or whatever

TC 00:12:51.527 - 00:12:59.304

P3 I'll think about it

TC 00:12:57.872 - 00:13:01.624

Researcher thank you!

TC 00:13:00.180 - 00:13:02.096

P3 I'll tell you one thing is - I never lost my accent when I speak Czech and that was a conscious decision, I had a private teacher who got me up to a certain point and she said now we

need to work on your accent and I told her I don't want to, I said because I still make some mistakes, I said I would rather be perceived as an educated foreigner than a dumb Czech who

is making grammatical mistakes and she didn't really like that reason, but what could she do, so I said let's work on the grammar let's work on the other stuff, so we did and the result

of this is I have a distinct slight foreign accent that not everyone is able to place, so I sometimes encounter discrimination, harassment, and violent threats because they think I'm

Russian or Ukrainian

TC 00:13:01.624 - 00:13:44.420

Researcher wow, wow that's awful.