Transcription Speaker 3

Mod: So Oh, thank you very much for participating and for sharing your, your opinion, or the information with me during the focus group. Some of the questions may be similar to the focus group. But in any way, I'd like you to just this is not just question answer session, I want us to have a discussion rather than just having general question and answers to that. But I'll start with general question. So could you describe a little bit more in more detail what your role in CAN Secretariat is, please?

S3: so I work as a communications coordinator. And so what that role involves, so it's mostly working with the media. So that deploys work that the coordinators are doing is communicated to the outside world through the media being the most effective and the most effective, one of the most effective tools, definitely. So it's about contacting journalists and selling them our stories. But apart from that, my job also involves internet communication, because it's nowadays very important that we present the internet. So it's the website and the social media. So and, well, all of these has to have kind of like a strategy behind that. So it also requires thinking through what we're going to communicate how we're going to communicate and when, what the focus is, what are the narratives behind all these stories that would be do so it also requires this strategy approach? And yeah, that's, I think, more or less it.

Mod: Mm hmm. Yes, thank you. And when you talk about the strategies and the media work, what languages would you normally use?

S3: We use English, I would say ONLY, it's very rare occasions that we would communicate in another language. And it's, I would say, accidental. So the rule is that we communicate everything in language and all the products that we produce. They're also (1)

Mod: What do you mean accidental?

S3: Well, from time to time, but on a very rare occasions.

Mod: But that refers to the other languages not English?

S3: yes, we would use, we will consider using other languages. So for instance, we organize a media stand, and then like a, you know, media event, an action that is supposed to attract attention of journalists. So, for instance, we did an action, I think, a year ago, about ETS reform, and then it was directed at Member States representatives, so they live in member states will have to support our cause. So we ask that them or (.) Well, actually, we produced placards that would have messages also in different languages, or we would have like flags, for instance of member states. So then, there is our for instance, we produced the report this year, and we have a comparison of different member states. And then we want our members to get involved in communications. So then they will translate the press release, and they would do the social media around it. So for instance, we as the Secretariat would retweet the information they put on their Twitter account in their original languages. And this is not really, I mean, it's basically to show the diversity of the network rather than actually reach certain audiences, because we consider English suitable for all the audience's that we communicate. So and it's, it's rather like, you know, this special occasions when we will think about that language

4:31

Mod: OK, So when you think about when you talk about your role, you said that for certain occasions for certain actions, you would organize? Like, stands, media stands, or whatever? And then Would you ever consider contacting members? They er (.) member organizations, because you said yes, sometimes member organizations will translate things, and then you'd use it. But in general, is this your practice that you would contact the member organizations from different countries?

S3: Yes, this is a practice. And it depends on the communications opportunity, sometimes we just comment on things that happen in the outside world, and this happens very fast. So there is basically no time to prepare in advance and contact the members. So they can also join us in this communications activity. But in general, we would aim for involving the members as much as possible. So if there is a product that we have on our own, like a reports, for instance, when we compare different states then the general idea would be as to try to sell it also in the member states through the work of our members.

Mod: Okay.

S3: And I think we hope to do more and more of this in the future. So then we're not only

Mod: yhm

S3: Yeah, like, we strengthen the cooperation.

Mod: So when you contact the the member organizations, to help you or to cooperate with you, what would it be like? What kind of language would you use? would you use English only?

S3: Yeah,

Mod: for all of them?

S3: Yeah,

Mod: even from your own country?

S3: Okay, this can be a bit of a difference. Indeed, if it comes to my country, then I would probably, Well, it depends on time, basically, because we will probably send a general email to the list. And then if we see there is diff, there is interest. This email will be in English. So then if there is interest from Greece, and somebody from Poland, I would probably switch to Polish to discuss the details or ask for more, I don't know whatever the like the the additional stuff. That would be that that happened, actually. And we did this like I switched to English to talk to person from Krakow of in Poland to Polish sorry, we spoke in Polish.

Mod: Yeah, yeah. So actually, I would like to go back to what you said er (.) refer to um in the

focus group discussion, you've used words like in terms of communication, this is nothing to scale.

I just want a bit more explanation, please.

S3: Sure.

Mod: Let me describe in er more detail what I mean. When it comes to choosing the language, we had a discussion and choosing the language we want to actually makes you choose one language over the other. And then there were words like habit, or don't feel comfortable, or rule in different places. So you'd say you'd ask someone for instance, when Dragana was describing the situation with a lady who is from new a new member organization from Serbia, and she was describing a situation from the GA the lady was actually swapping to from English to Serbian in front of Reinhilde who's not a native speaker of Serbian.

S3: Yeah.

Mod: And then you ask, but do you think it's a habit? That you do it from habit? or will she? Did she do it? Because she didn't feel? comfortable? confident?

S3: Yeah.

Mod: So what do you think about that? One?

S3: I cannot really judge this particular situation, and decide another person. So/

Mod: no, no, I'm not asking you to/

S3: /Okay,

Mod: judge on her. But when you think of your own language choices , er that was just an example, to actually describe to you, the more like, bigger context.

S3: Yeah. Okay.

Mod: That when then you use the word habit? Or don't feel comfortable? Or it's a rule like for instance, you said, okay, some people contact me and Slavic in Slovakia is very similar to my language, but as a rule, I would contact them in English.

S3: Yeah.

Mod: So which one? Would it be for you more? Would it be rule? Or would it be a habit that you would choose one particular language?

S3: I don't think there are any rules here. I don't think we have it. Like, I don't think actually anybody has thought about it before we have this project and your involvement and we may be realizing more things about the way we choose languages is just very spontaneous and not structured.

Mod: yhm

S3: Yeah. So we try to be polite. And therefore, like, if there is non English speaker, then yeah. Now I mean, if there is a person who does not speak your own language that is not English, like right here, in this particular case, and then we would speak English, because it's just kind and you know, a good manners. And then, well, in the case of using something else, not English. So this is alright, I would say, I don't think that some members from. (.) for me, it's obviously about Polish. So I don't think the Polish members or the people who attend our events or whatever who come from Poland, I don't think they don't er they have a problem with English. I don't think, I think all of these while all of the NGO people they kind of (.) are used to speaking there's (.) the level is quite good. And they feel comfortable speaking it's so when we switch to Polish is first because well, we know each other from Poland, for instance. So we used to talk Polish together. So it feels a bit awkward to kind of change it for the new situation. So maybe this is a habits in this sense. And also it's obviously Well, it's it's faster to communicate in your own language. And there are less nuances lost. The understanding is better. It's a (.) er it’s more efficient sometimes. Yeah.

11:19

Mod: So then, if someone is next to you, someone who doesn't speak Polish (.)

S3: Yeah, I would switch to English immediately. Yes.

Mod: without regard of the er of your (.)

S3: Yeah/

Mod: / the person. Okay. Good. Thank you. Now, you mentioned just before, like, just just now, you said that the English is good enough for those of those organization? What do you mean by that? About good enough? What is good enough for you?

Unknown Speaker 11:55

S3: I don't think also there is any objective standard it’s more like the way people feel about it, that they're not afraid of speaking. And they can basically express themselves in a level that is advanced enough to have a break communication.

12:14

Mod: Hmm. And what do you think about the English in general? In the network that you all use? is a good enough? Or would you use those terms in general? Or would you just say, What's, what's your attitude towards that?

12:31

S3: I think it's (.) As far as I can say, it's, I would say it's correct. And it includes grammatically, linguistically. There is a lot of jargon. So so I guess it's some it's specific. And actually, well, for me, I know that I, like since I am here, which is just fine. I learned a lot of these words that are specific for the network, like concerning the international (unintelligible) negotiations, there's just a lot of words that you just use for this. So with this, you have to be kind of a familiar, but everybody seems to be using them. So that's okay. I think the fact also that a lot of English native speakers are quite active in the network, it kind of raises the level, you know, like it's, well, this is very interesting.

13:42

Mod: Okay, so/

S3: /I don't know/, it's either, because of those native English speakers, the English is sort of better, or (.) Yeah,

Mod: you would improve your English because they are there. In the sense learning from them?

S3: Yeah, well, definitely learning from them. Hmm. Yeah, that's one point. I don't know if I feel any pressure. I don't think so bad. Just the way that you listen to them. And yeah, yeah, I think that's helpful.

Mod: Yeah, that's very interesting, because I'm actually interested in in English is the lingua franca, which is English as an international language were more of pragmatic reasons, practical reasons are behind the communication. So people would use it. Because one, this is the medium that we can use if we don't share the other, or our first language. Or two is basically good for business. Have a group of people from different nationalities who just share one language, which is which has to be English, but it's very interesting to actually see what you actually said, Okay, we've got native speakers who actually put it on to the, like, higher level.

S3: So I think this matters, like, yeah, that there is the difference, because they, it's a different language. I mean, okay. Now, I'm like having this very spontaneous thoughts, but I think that (.) was sometimes I mean, I have this experience from my past, maybe from my studies, maybe this is the the inspiration for this fault. But I remember that in a group of students were, nobody was a native speaker, then we kind of just, you know, the level of language was sometimes very poor.

15:46

Mod: But could you still communicate?

S3: Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Mod: But we, when you spoke to a native speaker, and in this groups of friends, the level of language was better?

S3: A, maybe by the learning from them, by learning from them, but maybe, I don't know. That was enough, like required more effort.

Mod: Mm hmm. And in your work, when you communicate, and you know that there are native speakers? Do you try to do anything? Do you feel any? How about your English?

S3: Well, it's a lot. There are a lot of journalists who are native speaker I have to contact very often. So with them. Yeah, I try to be I think I pay more attention to the language. NATO being correct and exact. Yeah.

16:46

Mod: And this actually brings me to the conversation that we had a couple of weeks ago, when we discussed English, and how it works in your work, like, for instance, when you have to communicate and how, (.) sort of (.) I think you mentioned something about English and, like different for obviously, journalists. I'm trying not to say too much, so.

S3: Okay, but I don't know what you want. What do you wanna?

Mod: Yeah, so I'm getting to that. So can we actually go back to the conversation that you sort of described the English and how you felt about actually be contacting the outside world? And how some native speakers dominate the, the forum? Here, but I'm not sure if I want to say that, to be honest. Like, I don't know, I don't have a very clear picture about it. Because I remember that. That I'm,

S3: yeah, that may be there is indeed a difference. People who are native speakers are more involved in the network, or more visible, or more vocal on certain issues, but I don't think I know the network enough to actually make that statement. And there are obviously examples of not now on the native English speakers are also very, very active. And you were really, you know, feel a difference like French people, German people, a lot of you know, different nationalities that come to my mind that I don't think that the language is any obstacle in their roar in their position. So it's very hard to say that, you know,

Mod: yeah, yeah. Okay. But that's still very, very valid point. Thank you. Okay, so I'd like to ask you another question, which is about (.)/

S3: /And one more one, sorry, I just remember when you said that you're interested in English being? Well, enabling basically said, networking or business opportunities and all that I think it's good to highlight or to emphasize the fact that we're for us, it's crucial that it is it does exist as this lingua franca, and it just makes our work possible, basically, because without it, if we had like, well, I don't know three major languages, or there was none who would have that role, we will then be able to work effectively. So basically, I think this is the first point that is just great.

20:00

Mod: Okay, thank you. So (.) do you know, er I've actually asked that question previously? Do you have experience problems when you communicate with members? Like to communicate something across? Do you have experience anything like that? Either them not understanding your message pre-, or in the way that you wanted them to understand? Or vice versa?

20:35

S3:Yes,

Mod: Mm hmm. And would/

S3: on a more current situations? Yeah, obviously, that would have situations/

Mod: /Could you tell me a bit more about this

S3: It is er very recent example. And I sent this email to the network asking for contributions to the annual report. So that people would give like very short testimonies of 100 words, when they do er describe or describe why it is important to work as a network and how they profit from being a member of CAN Europe, and then I got one reply from a person from Finland. And those big misunderstanding because this person just sent me the script description of their work, basically, because I think they are also a network. So he basically focused on working as a network as such. So them being an example of the network, you know, sharing their experience and all that. So this it wasn't what we needed, because it's just not about us working together, as CAN Europe. And I don't know how, you know, what was their confusion? Where the confusion came from? It's kind of hard to judge. But I guess with that, you get other/

Mod: / so you sent an email to him and others or was it just to the whole network? So er CAN Europe? Did you get replies that were the exact ones that you wanted?

S3: Yeah.

Mod: Okay, so you don't think it's the language?

22:06

S3: No, like the phrasing of the NA, NA? Well (.) I think (.) if I can make this (.) I think I can make this conclusion that it's a lot of emails that we sent before they get too much information. And if this information, they probably just scan it, you know, they see there's something interesting there. And I think that the fact that sometimes it's in English, not in their own language can be like too time consuming. So they would, you know, understand less from an English, email them from the email that is in their own language, and it will just require them more time. So that can be an obstacle in cooperation. And I know that sometimes, you know, if it's just just end this NGO people, they're very, very busy. And everybody's doing well, a lot of people are just doing too much like more than they can bear. So if they just have to ignore some of the stuff that ends up in their inbox. So I probably say that they would ignore stuff that is in English, that it's, it's more likely that it's well, it's also farther from their, their national programs. So that can also play a role. But I know that sometimes like you have to be pushed in, into getting a reply.

Mod: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. It was the same with some of the organizations I contacted for the survey as well. One of them actually replied to one of the questions in a sense that out of focus (.) that I didn't really ask for this in that question. So I guess it may be the case, as you saying as well (.) But now that we actually talked er touched upon English and other languages and news, how do you feel about English and other languages in the network? What's your opinion on that? What's your opinion on other languages being used maybe a national level? So how do you feel about that? Multilingualism in the office, and in the network? What's your opinion about that?

24:52

I don't know. It just it's a first of all, like from the eastern perspective, it's a sign of multiple altruism. Yeah. So that's kind of like a value in itself, that we're all coming from aside the different cultures, and then we have our own. Well, there is this diversity. And that's like, it's interesting, and it's inspiring. Also, it's, it gives you this feeling that it's good to learn other languages, like from your personal perspective, from my personal point of view. Like I definitely feel that way about French because some people speak French in the office, I'm, like, constantly motivated to start that course. Fine. I. So that's value. And I think it's, it can be important if we, for instance, want to prioritize a certain region as the Balkans. [short interruption from outside]

Okay, so if we want to prioritize there, so certain region I come from the east, for instance, or the Balkans. So I think it's it's a big added value that a person speaks that language, so we can reach out more to these people, especially that have, I think that's maybe in Poland, for some people, I know some people who work in NGOs there who don't speak English. And sometimes we have to reach out to them because they have some valuable information. So in this sense, it's good that I speak Polish. I'm sure it's the same for S2.

Mod: Yeah.

S3: Yeah. But I don't know if this plays such a big role in with every country like, you know, I don't know if, for instance, the Father, we don't have anybody speaking Portuguese in the office is a problem for contacting members in Portugal, because I know that I think, if I am not mistaken, I think there is an organization there that is quite active. And you know, we're fine without the language.

Mod: Now, if we think that some people would say that English, we all know that English is the dominant language in the network or in the office itself. And you see it as a positive. But then some people would say English is a threat to other languages. What's your feeling about that?

S3: I don't feel that way. I don't see this happening. With Polish. [interruption from outside]

S3:Yeah, I don't know. I mean, I don't see this as a threat a, I would say that. Yeah, it's like a tool and additional tool that allows us to do a lot of things that we wouldn't be able to do without it. So I will focus on the positive.

Mod: Yeah, yeah. And one of the final questions. That's interesting. We discussed a little bit about the language policy in CAN Europe? would you change anything in it? Do you think that you have?

S3: Well, I don't think we have a language policy now that I am aware of. And you refer to written text?

Mod: Yes. Mm hmm.

S3: That for sure. But also, I don't think we have any clarity, and now on the actual rules. So it's not possible to change something that is not already existing.

Mod: Yeah. Okay.

S3: But maybe, you know, it would be good to take this result of this project that you're doing and just consider what would be the best way? if, you know, there is something we should address. And for my work as a communicator, I'm unlike writing this communication strategy now, right now, so I could basically consider pulling their this the, you know, paragraph about the language us in our communication. But I think I mean, I don't really see a need to change what we're doing right now. So I do want to put that paragraph, if I wanted to make change it somehow what we have right now to the future. So say that on our Twitter account, we're gonna include more information in other languages, something like that. But I don't see this as useful. So I think we're, yeah, yeah. So I think we're gonna let just leave it the way it is. And for the network. Yeah, I guess, like I said before, then we can consider some improvements on the basis of your conclusions, hopefully, as well.

Mod: umm and is there anything else that you'd like to add? That hasn't been said? Any thoughts? /Any?/

S3: /No, no.

Mod: Okay. Thank you very much.

S3: Thank you.

Mod: That was very useful.