Maeve (Speaker 7)

Mod: You mentioned working closely with members, member organizations in your work area. Could you tell me a little bit more about your communication practice what kind of kinds of communication do you engage uhm within the network?

S7: Uhm I think like the main form I would use is email, like generally we use our lists err and then for that I would give a heads up for information sharing

Mod: uhm

S7: er with colleagues that I work more closely with sometimes I give them a call

Mod: uhm

S7: or Skype, so like you know, we can quickly skype and say ‘what do you think of this’ or you know (1) it just give me reactions or responses or generally they would call me if they have got like immediate reactions or responses. But I think predominantly it’s for sure email.

Mod: email

S7: And I think just because (2) that’s the way to ensure that everyone is in the loop and you’re not in an open, random, bilateral conversations with people, er which is one thing. But also I generally am just not I’m not as proactive in terms of. Like calling for me is useful when you really want someone to respond to something particular. But when its about really developing something as a team er it’s for sure probably better to have email

Mod: email (nods)

S7: and the whole group involved

Mod: uhm

S7: at least the whole group aware, I would say

Mod: yeah, thank you. So, uhm as a native speaker, that’s very interesting to have you here. Uhm because all the other people are not native speakers of English. I’d like to ask you about, the fact that, how do you, how do you normally communicate with the member organizations, you said emails or telephone

S7; uhm

Mod: and in terms of language, what language do you normally use?

S7: uhm

Mod; because you speak English and Irish

S7: I speak English an Irish uhm, my Irish is probably not so strong these days, but I speak French too, so if I had to speak French I would.

Mod; uhm/

S7 /and

Mod: and in what kind of occasions you’d have, you’d use/

S7: probably in uhm in external meetings or meetings with other NGOs that are probably not even CAN members/

Mod:/uhm

S7: so within a Brussels context more so/

Mod:/ uhm

S7: like where you have got the predominant number of people that are probably native French speakers so it’s easier for them to, to er have a meeting in French. It doesn’t happen too often to be honest

Mod: uhm

S7: uhm and then there are times where you meet er (1) I think with other NGOs that are from Africa like’

Mod: OK, yes

S7: French Africa/

Mod: /uhm

S7: er, so, but for the most part it’s English, I mean I think it is rare that er I would initiate an email or a call and have it in any other language than English/

Mod: /uhm

S7: so that would be yeah,

Mod: uhm and how do you feel about English being a dominant language in communication?

S7: ehm, part of me gets a bit like, kind, re, er: regretful about it (?) cause it’s like ‘oh it’s easy for ME’ (time 10:24.110) I mean like I would love to be pushed a little bit to be using French in a more professional environment/

Mod: /uhm

S7: because I think I can speak it but I could probably be a lot more proficient if I had to use it more frequently and particularly/

Mod: / uhm

S7: in this environment you you use a lot of technical terms and I mean to be honest a lot of the technical terms that DO develop end up staying in English/

Mod; uhm

S7: like people just say it and it’s it remains in English. But yeah, I sometimes kind of lament/

Mod; uhm

S7; the fact that we, like English is dominant and it makes me feel like you know, I’m KIND of (1) useless @

Mod:@

S7: I don’t know, because I am not like exercising many sort of additional (0.5)

Mod: skills?

S7: skills, yeah

Mod: but when you came to, I am not sure I got it correct but you said that you have worked in a similar type of organization/

S7: /uhm

Mod: type of network

S7: yeah

Mod: was it in Ireland?

S7: no, it was here/

Mod; oh it was here?

S7:@

Mod:@, OK

S7; yeah (uneasy) it was downstairs, yeah so,

Mod: oh, OK that’s ok, I don’t need to know the details, but my question is like, when you first came to Brussels obviously it was, it IS an English speaking place/

S7:/uhm

Mod:uhm we can’t deny it, but did you ever feel any differences that you may have, that they use different words or their way of communicating/

S7: /Oh yeah

Mod; have you ever felt/

S7; yeah

Mod: that ‘ it is my native language’ let’s say, but I just don’t understand what they are saying/

S7: yeah, totally

Mod:uhm

S7; I mean, like I think having been here now for more than four years, I find, I question my level of English, like I question whether I’m saying things correctly because I have heard so many NON-natives to say things in a way that I wouldn’t have traditionally said it.

Mod: uhm

S7: so even how language is formed, how you know, even when I see press releases I’m wondering is that even right?

Mod: uhm

S7: Like based, because I take for granted how I grew up speaking it thinking that, just because I didn’t learn it in a formalized manner like most of our colleagues er: maybe I am the one speaking it incorrectly because they probably learnt it really, you know, er: s- er kind of disciplined and I just learnt it as you would speaking or whatever, so yeah for sure, and I think (1)

Mod: do you have any examples of the things that really, when you came here, stroke you like as: different as you would not really used to:

S7: It’s like very small things, like prepositions and things like ‘oh we didn’t make a decision on that’ I mean, that, like for me it’s like ‘we didn’t make a decision ABOUT that’ you know

Mod; uhm

S7: or ‘we didn’t TAKE a decision’ I mean for me it was always ‘we MADE a decision’ like. But then I think ‘oh but in French ‘je pris la decision’ it’s like you’re directly translating/

Mod: / uhm

S7; maybe from what you’re, you’re native. Or maybe it’s fine to also say ‘take a decision’ like er: so there was certain things uhm, and then some people like you can tell they use the thesaurus/

Mod: uhm

S7: to because they do not want to reuse the word all the time, but then they take the synonym but put it in and it’s too strong, or its, it doesn’t fit/

Mod: /uhm

S7: so like, and you know it’s just because they want to develop their like/

Mod: /vocabulary?

S7: range, yeah so uhm, you as, few things stand out like that and it’s mainly small things er (1) like (1) ‘I didn’t saw things’ you know/

Mod: uhm, uhm

S7: like, they’re very very minor things/

Mod: uhm

S7: but generally when I’m reading sentences I have to, like (1) that to have been written by non-native speakers. Sometimes I think that hasn’t been done correctly and you have to spend a little time editing it and yeah, for sure, like (1) within here, when I was an assistant here I edited a lot of things for the policy people because you don’t,like they were new, they KNEW that it was probably mistakes

Mod: uhm

S7: and it’s easy to have a native kind of correct/

Mod: /uhm but who asked/

S7: /them so/

Mod: to, to do the editions

S7: ehm it was Ohh when we were here it was like before, a previous colleague of ours Julia/

Mod: /uhm

S7: she’s Polish, her English is extremely, extremely good but she would always ask just to be in, you know

Mod: uhm

S7: ensured that it’s absolutely perfect

[short pause due to alarm type of noise ]

S7: also, in CAN International/

Mod: uhm

S7: we do this thing during the sessions, climate negotiations/

Mod: uhm

S7: we have a newsletter er and you can do the editorial board. Now, anyone can do the editorial, you volunteer, so you don’t have to be a native English to do it/

Mod: uhm

S7: but it’s quite, its quite interesting to read the article done by different er nationalities/

Mod: uhm

S7: because, you can imagine in their own language what they are saying is quite funny

Mod: uhm

S7: but then when it translates to English it’s not/

Mod:@

S7:@ and we do the newsletter in English because that’s the/

Mod: uhm

S7:common language in the UN, and we know that everyone will understand it and we also try to be a bit satirical when we do it/

Mod: uhm

S7: so not super [ stops because an alarm goes off again] uhm, yeah, it’s funny to read some of the er: some of the articles because you think, some of them are very serious/

Mod: uhm

S7: but then you think ‘oh that’s the policy person’ and then you know they can’t be:, you know, supper witty (?). And some of them try to be witty but they’re like, it’s it just doesn’t carry through @

Mod:@

S7: so that’s also an interesting exercise as a native speaker because you realise that actually, you know English is so dominant

Mod: uhm

S7: and it must be a challenge for people, let’s say Germans who probably have a very good turn of phrase for certain things/

Mod: uhm

S7: or French/

Mod: uhm

S7: and it doesn’t come through and, you know they don’t have an equivalent for it in English

Mod: uhm

S7: so er, yeah, so it’s kind of like, there are many, there are kind of many examples where you can see that like

Mod: yeah

S7; that’s a challenge for a non-native English/

Mod: uhm

S7: speakers and I do like sympathise a lot with for sure with them especially in Brussels because it’s such a MIX of non-native English speakers/

Mod: /uhm

S7: that have probably learnt English in many different ways, so

Mod; some of them probably learnt it here when they came

S7; yeah, exactly yeah

Mod: yeah [SoundScribe17.53.189]

Mod: What do you think about the language role in organizations like CAN Europe?

S7: like, I, I never really think about it, but I think it’s extremely important, like er (1). I think gworng up in Ireland where like English is the dominant language

Mod: uhm

S7: er you take for granted the level of effort and the level of er professionalism that’s needed at the European level/

Mod: uhm

S7: where you know, you’ve got 28 different countries with whatever, twenty-five different languages or whatever

Mod: uhm

S7: that you really take for granted er how much you need to put in to

Mod: uhm

S7: a piece of work that can (1) like be applied in English that is used by most people

Mod: uhm

S7: but also translated into people’s native tongues

Mod: uhm

S7:and have the ability to have someone to actually do that

Mod: uhm

S7: like, I:, you know I also think I really take for granted the fact that I can, that English , being a native English speaker is probably already an advantage to many organizations

Mod: uhm

S7: so for me it’s like, you know which is, puts me at an advantage in like er completely ridiculously for what? For doing nothing/

Mod: /uhm/

S7: /essentially, for just growing up in a country that happens to be (0.5) you know

Mod: English speaking

S7: English speaking. So I think like that, I suppose the role of language for me is like, like, I think I take it for granted, but I try not to take for granted, the, the effort that people put in to

Mod: uhm

S7: to being proficient and like really improving their langauges/

Mod: /yeah, yeah

S7: like and for an organization like CAN, I mean, I think, like (1) yeah, the English thing is obviously essential because you know we have our meetings and when you’ve got so many nationalities in one room/

Mod: /uhm

S7: it’s, you, you know, you have a common denominator. But I think as a Secretariat in a way, it’s not something that I don’t think about often enough, but now I’m thinking that we should be as Secretariat staff making more of an effort to improve, like you know, our existing languages?

Mod: uhm

S7: so we can at least communicate with members and their natives, so if it’s French for me or if I wanted like learn Spanish I should learn Spanish and improve Span- like it’s whatever language it may be, so/

Mod: uhm

S7: but I think(1) yeah like er, in a way (1) when it’s a network [20;48.042] it’s difficult, like it’s diff, like you NEED one common language?/

Mod: /uhm

S7: But that probably excludes a lot of fantastic people working at their own national level/

Mod: uhm

S7: that can’t contribute or take from what we’re doing, which is: somehow a shame/

Mod: uhm

S7: but that’s the nature of languages, I think it, probably, every association and every kind of network kind of has the same challenge, so, yeah

Mod: uhm

S7: but it’s not something I really thought about it and I think it’s something that I need to consider more/

Mod: uhm. [Digression- describes the opinion of others to the speaker about the lack of opportunities to use other languages in the network due to work overload then the speaker agrees to that].

S7: Flemish, for sure, it’s probably the second language of our office/

Mod: uhm

S7: due to the number of of/

Mod: people

S7: Belgians we have. Er, but, uhm yeah a mean like, even Polish, which like, German, I mean they are big countries with a lot of people but it is having that time and that opportunity to really use it/

Mod: uhm

S7: and like, and it’s also you don’t want to put the pressure on, I mean, like I’m sure er: it’s easy for people to say, oh we can end it up do it, or like S7 is a native speaker let’s give her that and she can go through it and correct it or whatever. And like, I would probably go, oh it’s fine, Like I can give this to SX and she can translate to Greek or whatever. But you do, you have to consider that, that’s not at their job description either/

Mod: uhm

S7: so, so it’s also er: but I think it helps, like I think. About two years ago when we were lobbying around the 2030 package/

Mod: uhm

S7: we all went to our own respective permanent representations and in, not in Brussels/

Mod: uhm

S7: because you know/

Mod: uhm

S7: SX goes to the Greeks and she can chat to them in Greek, I can go to the Irish, like, we, we would talk in English because English is the dominant language. But, like it’s kind of you know that sense of Ireland’s funny words, that sense of familiarity as well/

Mod: uhm

S7: like, and then you know, Sx was going to the Spanish and so, it was nice in that context that you could have that SPREAD towards different countries and whether you’re speaking English or speaking your native tongue then it’s, it, it’s still kind of shows that level of like how much we could have

Mod: yeah

S7:if we, if we tried a little bit more

Mod: uhm

S7: thought about, when you think about the, the different countries that are in our office

[Digression from the discussion – observations and how many langs are used in the office and how many resources there are but they are not used because of the character of the job, and fast paced environment]

[26.20.324]

S7: like, I also think it, like, like I studies sociology so I was always about the social and anthropological/

Mod: uhm

S7: aspects of it. But like, I also lack the confidence er in like/

Mod: uhm

S7: it’s fine for me on the phone of course, er, but like it’s it’s also I think I’ve gone: oh I’m fine at French and I’m going to speak it all the time, like/

Mod: uhm

S7: it’s not like, that’s not my own personal feeling about it, it’s like you know I am always working on it and I am always trying to improve it.

Mod: uhm

S7: and er: my my working relationship with [Sxx] should be through French/

Mod: uhm

S7: I mean I know that. Er And I just think it came to situations when even er social situation where I’d sit with [Sxx] and we’d speak entirely in French but other, in in the office environment for some reason you kind of think, I don’t know, it’s like, and I think, also er:

Mod: uhm

S7: again it’s also, I don’t know maybe social or psychological and it’s like, you are reminded as a native speaker how, kind of, inadequate you are because you’ve got these people around you who probably have three or four languages and you just like (voice volume down) ‘what have I done in my life, like@?’

Mod: @

S7: and it’s it’s really, I mean, and I for a lot of native like, let’s say a lot of Irish people native English speakers would have a stronger level of French than a lot of people in Brussels you know, it’s funny, but that’s on the base of [27.50.110] fact that I studied it in school and I went to France for a short time as a kid

Mod: mhm

S7: so, b-but there’s, I think there’s a number of other aspects where I am kind of like to that sort (courage) to face up to the fact that like I should be using it and practicing regular- even if it’s the same phrases

Mod: mhm

S7: every day, or whatever. But uhm no I do and I think it it is taken for granted like all of the lan- even like Greek

Mod: mhm

S7: like it’s er that for me is like double Dutch, you you see it on on street signs like I’ve got no idea what that says but then S1’s English is absolutely perfect and yeah, and you know you can say that for all of the team so

Mod: mhm

S7: so it’s pretty yeah, you just feel like pretty inadequate I think as a native speaker it’s just

Mod: @@

S7: damn, damn English like

Both: @@@

S7: but then, yeah, it’s a great advantage to /

Mod: mhm mhm

S7:have this thing so: it’s got its pros and cons I think.

[Note: short discussion about the way different people communicate in the office – due to likely probability of identifying the different speakers, it’s not translated]

S7: yeah, and I think it’s, that’s other uhm another aspect of it’s it’s a HABIT and to to switch that

Mod: mhm

S7: oh- it’s its (deep) possible, uhm but it just never comes around. Again as you say, it’s kind of this thing with time it’s like it’s like ‘I have a question, its about my finances or its about administration’ and we could do this in French or it’s probably more efficient to do it in English ‘cause my French would not near be as strong as her English for example, so it’s like also, case of EFFiciency too, you know

Mod: mhm

S7: and uhm, but I also think er: interestingly enough before you came here and it’s about two years ago now since we last did it. Er we got French lessons

Mod: mhm

S7: or@ some people, I think SXX who used to work here previously, did German caus e his wife (spouse) is German and CAN paid for them.

Mod: mhm

S7: But even that, we we really were like, ‘oh my god I’ve got French now’. You know it was an hour and a half during lunch time, or/

Mod: /oK

S7: we would do an hour and a half after the /

Mod: work

S7: working day finished

Mod: mhm

S7: so the teacher used to come here. It was so fi-, so easy for us/

Mod: /mhm

S7: you know. We used to book the climate room it was across the hall and we would be like (whispers) ‘oh crap we have got French’. And it was mainly because you would you didn’t want to be pulled away from your desk for an hour and a half.

Mod: mhm

S7: Like that was my reasoning. Like ok, sometimes I do go to the gym or sometimes I do it to have a longer lunch or whaterver, but, on a on a weekly basis it was like, ‘oh man:’ you know like. And that was something, it was it was handed to us on a silver platter and would be again

Mod: mhm

S7: if we approached them

Mod: yeah

S7: if we approached CAN and said like, you know ‘can you give me lessons, can you pay for 10 weeks or whatever. It’s part of the training or whatever./

Mod: mhm

S7: but it’s like, I think sometimes work just envelopes you

Mod; yeah

S7: and you really (.) yeah you really take, you take for granted the extra things you could be learning outside of work

Mod: uhm

S7: or improving, like, for whichever role, so

Mod: mhm

S7: er, (.) yeah

Mod; mhm

S7: it’s a, that’s an interesting observation too, like, well it was for me because we were, we didn’t have to do anything, we just had to show up and and try to speak French for like 90 minutes or

Mod: and

S7: yeah,

Mod; did you think that it was helpful? To have those lessons?

S7: YEAH I mean I think the teacher was fantastic that we had er, like maybe that’s why we gave up, we we didn’t want to renew we didn’t want to take it up again and find a replacement I suppose is part of it

Mod; uhm

S7; erm but, yeah, and I , but I think the thing is that it’s like a lot of things. You really have to WANT it.

Mod: mhm uhm

S7: and I mean like I even met many people an they said ‘oh you should do a {clicks the tongue} a tandem?

Mod: mhm

S7: where you know someone speaks English and I speak French, whatever. Erm it’s it’s so many things like I still haven’t started, like yeah ‘great idea, I will, I really will’ Like I think it’s very much you need to commit to it.

Mod: mhm

S7: I mean I’ve got a friend who had to move to JAPA:N. No he chose to move to Japan. But the condition, he works for the Toyota here, and the condition was he had to learn Japanese

Mod; OK

S7; I mean 100% and be fluent and every day he went home and studied for three hours. Like that was it. He gave up his other hobbies, his other activites and concentrated a 100% for 6 to 9 months on Japanese, and that made his life in Japan so much easier because then you know he could

Mod; yeah

S7: he could work with his colleagues and everything. But, yeah, so I do think it takes a level of commitment and like dedication. Cause it’s learning something it’s like learning an instrument, you’re you you’re going to be pushed out of your comfort zone, so

Mod: mhm

S7: well funny enough I think, like SX and SX who work, grew up in more bilingual or MULTILINGUAL

Mod; yeah

S7: they they don’t have that much challenge as much as people like myself who were just exposed to English growing up, and Irish of course

Mod: mhm mhm

S7: so, it’s, yeah I think it comes back to a lot of the elements to languages to, like.

Mod: mhm

S7: And these are things we as native speakers talk about all the time. Like all my friends we always talk about how crap we feel when we’re surrounded by Continental Europeans ‘cause we are like, ‘what did we do all our lives? Like, why didn’t our school system make us learn international languages from the age of (.) six or seven? Rather than 13, you know.

Mod: mhm. What do you mean international languages? Do you/

S7: /Well, non-Irish

Mod; OK

S7: like I would say like er French, Spanish

Mod: OK

S7: german

Mod: yeah yeah, other European languages

S7; other European languages yeah or Chinese, or whatever it may be, yeah, yeah

Mod; mhm

[Note: digression, the speaker talks about the native English attitude towards other languages/people from other linguistic backgrounds when abroad ‘Some level of English is expected’]

Mod: Let’s just return to the topic of language in CAN. I wanted to ask you about your opinion about the language practice here in CAN both the network and the office. We talked about this from the perspective of who does what, but uhm what is your opinion about this sort of practice?

S7: I think it’s good, yeah, I mean it’s lovely to be in an environment where you’re hearing different languages?

Mod; mhm

S7: mhm, I mean it doesn’t bother me that I don’t understand, I mean. Like for Dutch I can pick up a little bit, er French I can understand exactly what they’re saying and so forth

Mod; mhm

S7: er: for Polish, it’s a bit different,

Mod; mhm

S7: I am not familiar with the language at all. But I think it’s nice that we can do it and I think it’s good to all to go to that environment where (.)

Mod; mhm

S7: er English is indeed the dominant one but and the common one

Mod; mhm

S7: But that you know colleagues can still use co-

Mod; use

S7: yeah, use their own. Erm, I think it is a way that you can be a bit more yourself/

Mod; mhm

S7: I imagine? Like there SX speaking in Polish; SX can probably be, er express him/herself much more, and like, be be a bit more comfortable even though of course his/her English is perfect, er yeah, but it’s really nice. And yeah, part of me sometimes (it would) be nice if I had, like even my Irish colleagues, you wouldn’t speak to them in Irish, you’d just speak to them in English, so that’s a bit yeah.

Mod; mhm

S7: a bit different, but erm, no it’s good. I think it’s that thing it’s the habitual thing of who do you speak to in one language

Mod; mhm

S7: if you had those, I mean like as you say with SX’s habits, I mean I should have started my habit of speaking in French with even SX for example,

Mod; mhm

S7: I think it would have been easier, so I I still think it’s nice that they have their dynamics and it doesn’t bother me if they’re speaking in a certain language and I don’t follow it

Mod; mhm

S7: If it’s in anyway of concern to me they will tell me, so it’s not like, it’s er it’s an issue.

Mod: and in terms of network?

S7: erm (1) I think, erm like it’s it’s interestingly enough like, you don’t get many emails in, uhm (neither) that are forwarder to you?

Mod; mhm

S7: or you’re copied into, where there’s like ANOTHER language?

Mod; mhm

S7: Like they, a for a, contacts, sometimes the commission, sometimes other groups ,you get that in French

Mod; mhm

S7: but erm (inhales) no I think it’s good that eh, like I think it’s really nice that erm {clicks the tongue} like some of our colleagues can speak to our members in their native languages, like SXX with the German ones, and S2 with the Serbians.

Mod: yeah

S7: erm, I (.) like (.) again from myself I find it one of those things. I think it’s again a confidence thing

Mod; mhm

S7: of like speaking English to the French when I should probably be trying to speak French to them

Mod; mhm

S7: er: but that said, I think they’re used to such an environment where anytime they’d speak to one another they’re probably be speaking to someone else in English, so

Mod; mhm

S7: erm but I think it’s a good dynamic and if we can kind of maintain the level of ,even at the GA, where you’ve got, you know the Dutch members speaking in Dutch and so forth, it’s it’s nice like

Mod; mhm, but would you change anything about the existing practices?

S7: erm (2) it’s kind of hard, like I think, it’s har-, I men I’d love to say oh we should (.) oh because Belgium is such a funny place, like

Mod; mhm

S7: you’ve got the S6 who has a bit of eh like, (.) you know, he has his view point on like the languages of the country and the differences between the French speaking or the Dutch speaking/

Mod; mhm

S7: so you don’;t want to choose,wha- like English is just a happy compromise, you know

Mod; mhm

S7: like it’s something that. Like I would love to say ‘ oh can we not speak in French, you know when we, like, you know. Or let’s say we agree with SXX that we speak with SXX in French or whatever and. Like I don’t know how we could change it to make it any better, I would say.

Mod; mhm

S7: like the common denominator thing seems to work er: but (1) but maybe that said I think it should be (.) encouraged that we exercise the languages we have a bit more

Mod; mhm

S7: and maybe with the members is the most effective thing.

Mod; mhm

S7: like (.) I don’t know how it could be encouraged or forced? Erm, for sure I think it’s something like, we should take upon ourselves. And not necessarily have a policy about it. Because unlike many other things the language thing seems to be natural, like uh

Mod; mhm

S7: like the office, how how it works, there’s so many formal, organized things like meetings and who has a role for what. Whereas language just seems to be er like it evolves more naturally and therefore it’s hard to put in place a different way of practicing it

Mod; mhm

S7: apart form kind of encouraging, that you know maybe we should retake the lessons or whatever we want to improve and

Mod; mhm

S7: then therefore exercise that with our members

Mod; mhm

S7: or something like that

Mod; so you wouldn’t want to have language policy stated? Like for this we use this language for that kind of communication new use that language

S7: ehm not necessarily, no. I mean like I think it would be hard in Brussels to hire someone who couldn’t speak English? Erm I think that would be a challenge, erm. But in the same respect if we had to have hired someone for for SXX position let’s say who couldn’t speak French

Mod; yeah

S7: erm like cause, you’ve to deal with the Belgian administration so much.

Mod; mhm

S7: er (.) so it’s kind of like yeah, it’s difficult where I think designating certain languages for just certain areas of our work would would probably, just it probably wouldn’t really work out too much.

Mod; mhm

S7: Especially given the VAST array of languages and of abilities within the office. So I think it may be (.) it would be nice but @@ I think it may be a bit challenging as a-

Mod: uhm yeah. There’s just another thing that comes to my mind, I did a little bit of research, I looked at the formal documents like the statute or the welcome pack for the prospective members and it is never mentioned that English is the language/

S7: yeah

Mod: and I have heard opinions that maybe there should be a sentence where we say that English is our language for communication/

S7: yeah yeah

Mod: uhm

S7: I mean you’re right, like it’s never really said, but I think people just assume

Mod; mhm

S7: and also, like I think if you look at like the job descriptions of the last few positions we put out I IMAGINE there it’s like, English is Like not native but like (innative) or equivalent

Mod; mhm

S7: is a requirement

Mod; mhm

S7: and therefore, like I kind of er like, we the we could say the working language of CAN Europe is English

Mod; although it is not stated anywhere

S7: yeah, yeah I mean it would be useful to know and like also because Brussels for me was not a place I ever considered working

Mod; mhm

S7: and I don’t know why, I think it was more because it wasn’t in my radar

Mod; mhm

S7: and not because I thought oh it is all in French, but I think it’s important for people to know that there’s [47.02.881] this whole world where you’ve got a massive melting pot of different nationalities and cultures and, but in that there’s a common, I think English is probably the most common things you can find in Brussels

Mod; yeah

S7: amongst all the different member countries

Mod; mhm

S7: so it’s er, it’s yeah not something I ever really considered too heavily, but something that we probably should say MORE @@ like

Mod: @@

S7: in spite of it being Belgium. But although English for Belgians can be very fine compromise too@

Mod: yeah as you said with. OK, is there any thing you’d like to add, any thoughts any anything that we really haven’t

S7: erm (.)

Mod; covered yet?

S7; not really, no, but I find like. I think it’s an interesting like like for being one of the things that you you begin to understand the real value of it when you look at the Council

Mod; mhm

S7: and the commission and all the institutions where they have like translators and interpreters working round the clock on so many documents

Mod; mhm

S7: so many conferences and like that was something that I, I didn’t even consider until you speak to the people who do it and you just think wow that’s amazing

Mod; mhm

S7: and when you think of, yeah I mean I just think it’s something that we tend to take for granted a lot

Mod; mhm

S7: in terms of languages and how something that gets drafted and agreed upon in English has to then be understandable for all the other people in Europe. Like it’s pretty amazing, and uhm. Yeha, I er there’s something (where you’d add) it’s just something like during this interview makes me think a little bit more about @@

Mod: uhm @@ [49.51.280]