

“HUMAN SPEECH” AS A KEYWORD: PLAIN- LANGUAGE REDESIGN OF INFORMED CONSENT IN ASYLUM ADMINISTRATION

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This article examines how the emic keyword “human speech” circulates among actors in the asylum procedure and how its situated meanings can inform the design of applied anthropological interventions. Building on research into interpreters’ positionality, institutional scripting, and communicative asymmetries, the analysis foregrounds what “human speech” indexes in interactional and institutional contexts. I argue that positioning linguistic clarity at the center of legal procedure is not merely a stylistic concern but a question of epistemic justice. Ethnographic research conducted in Slovakia (2017–2019) revealed how applicants routinely signed legally binding documents without adequate comprehension or institutional accountability. The notion of “human speech” is examined through an epistemic, pragmatic, and empirical lens, drawing on the perspectives of applicants, interpreters, legal practitioners, and state officials. The article demonstrates how authorship of plain language can be institutionalized as a structural obligation rather than left to *ad hoc* compromise. An ethnography-informed intervention (2023–2024) shows how the concept of “human speech” guided the intralingual legal-to-plain-language transformation of informed consent templates in the asylum procedure.

Keywords: plain language, interpreting, asylum procedure, informed consent, epistemic justice, relevance

INTRODUCTION

Why did you sign it? This question often went unnoticed during appeal proceedings, referring to situations when applicants signed legally binding documents without sufficient explanation or comprehension. Informed consent is a procedural cornerstone of any

administration. In the asylum field, legal professionals and interpreters routinely engage in intralingual simplification of its legal complexity. Research has repeatedly highlighted how institutional scripts, interpreter mediation, and legal advice routines generate epistemic and linguistic vulnerability (Maryns 2006; Reynolds and Holmes 2025). However, an ethnographic account of redesigning consent artifacts into plain language is virtually absent.

People in the asylum field frequently use the term “human speech” as a synonym for plain language, indicating that the content should be communicated in a universal, cross-cultural code (O’Barr 1982). However, if the task of making the law intelligible is left solely to interpreters, the integrity of informed consent collapses and the asylum process risks becoming an exercise in bureaucratic formality. To address these conditions, the article presents an ethnography-informed intervention inspired by the notion of “human speech”. First, I outline the theoretical foundations of this intervention, followed by a description of the research methods and data trajectories. In three sections, I analyze the data concerning “human speech” through the lens of epistemic justice, relevance theory, and administrative implementation of informed consents relating to asylum procedure and camp rules.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Concerns about the highly formalized register of legal language have long been the subject of scholarly critique (Mellinkoff 1963; Gibbons 1994; Conley and O’Barr 1998; Nord 2018). Its inaccessibility poses a serious barrier to understanding for those subject to legal authority. Peter Tiersma (1999) argued for a contextual understanding of legal discourse, noting that although legal language serves specific institutional functions, reform is necessary to align legal procedures with the principles of accessibility and fairness. Ambiguity and syntactic complexity in legal texts can undermine their communicative function, contributing to broader structural inequities (Gibbons 2003).

The ongoing use of complex legal language can also create epistemic injustice (Fricker 2007; Dotson 2011). One part of this, hermeneutical injustice, as Miranda Fricker defines it, arises when individuals cannot adequately interpret or communicate their experiences because of inadequacies in shared conceptual resources. In such cases, the lack of access to standard linguistic and epistemic frameworks renders people unintelligible within institutional contexts. Thus, where mutual comprehension is not guaranteed, the act of signing consent risks being based on confusion or constraint rather than genuine understanding (Fricker 2007; Eades 2016).

In asylum procedures, intralingual translation (Jakobson 1959) is especially salient in negotiating meaning between legal jargon and what interlocutors emically call “human speech”. Linguistic inaccessibility and the bureaucratic complexity of legal instructions often reproduce systemic inequalities. Institutional reliance on monolingual norms dele-

gitimizes the communicative repertoires of asylum applicants, particularly those without proficiency in the host country's official language (Pavlenko 2024). Untrained interpreters frequently lack the competence to render legal meaning with precision. Within such conditions, informed consent is reduced to a procedural formality and routinized enactment of institutional compliance. Aneta Pavlenko further documented the "foreign language effect" (Pavlenko 2017: 74) when individuals making decisions in a non-native language are less sensitive to potential negative consequences. This has also been observed in the context of asylum, where applicants may formally agree to terms they do not fully understand, while the interpreter's epistemic role is overlooked (Rycroft 2005; Amato and Gallai 2024).

Extensive scholarship documents how institutional scripting, interpreter footing, and documentation practices generate epistemic vulnerability (Määttä et al. 2020; Pian 2023; Rehnberg 2025). Beyond interlingual translation, intralingual mediation is shown to occur routinely, as lawyers and interpreters simplify legal terms and adapt registers (Reynolds 2020). Other studies highlight how asylum procedures themselves create epistemic vulnerability through discourse, documentation, and interactional scripting (Määttä et al. 2020). Recent research further embeds consent within institutional ecologies, emphasizing governmentality, thus moving beyond text-only clarity models towards ethnographic and interactional accountability (Dahlvik 2018; Reynolds and Holmes 2025). However, a systematic study of the redesign of consent artifacts into plain language has not yet been undertaken. This article therefore contributes by presenting how the creation of a communicative space (Tužinská 2024) enabled the move from informal to institutionalized use of "human speech" in redesigned consent forms.

RESEARCH CONTEXT, METHODS, AND POSITIONALITY

Slovakia, situated on the eastern border of the Schengen Area with Ukraine, has been presented in recent decades within the contemporary European asylum regime as a transit country. Although its history is more associated with emigration than immigration, the country is navigating the infrastructural and institutional transformation necessary to support its evolving role as a host state (Sekulová and Hlinčíková 2018). Asylum seekers are commonly framed within dominant security and economic threat narratives, which shape both public discourse and policy, sometimes depicted as "messy" (Walther 2024). With regard to language policy, a monolingual institutional standard remains prevalent across many Central, Eastern, and Southern EU member states, where state communication typically assumes proficiency in the national language (Pavlenko 2011). In general, as Uršula Lipovec Čebroň and colleagues show on the example of the Slovene healthcare system (Lipovec Čebroň et al. 2019; Lipovec Čebroň and Škraban 2022), it faces not only a shortage of trained interpreters and intercultural mediators, but also a lack of awareness among professionals regarding the importance of their role.

Innovations in interpreting services for the state are emerging slowly and unevenly, and a comprehensive public service interpreting policy has yet to be implemented (Štefková and Tužinská 2021; Šveda and Tužinská 2021). Administrative interactions take place in a predominantly monolingual institutional environment, where interpreting is managed through a combination of professional and untrained interpreters. Although the Slovak Act on Experts, Interpreters, and Translators (No. 382/2004) mandates professional verification, it does not apply to public service interpreters and offers little guidance for the unpredictable communicative events that frequently arise in asylum contexts. An Ethical Codex for Interpreters in Asylum Proceedings is available at the Migration Office (UNHCR 2010) and briefly introduced before each session, yet untrained interpreters are often unaware of its scope and complexity.

From the perspective of asylum seekers, the first set of documents they are expected to sign – including informed consents regarding their stay in the Slovak Republic – is presented at the departments of the Border and Foreign Police. The applicant's short initial statement then becomes the primary reference point in their court file. A second, more detailed set of rights and obligations is provided before the entry interview at the Migration Office, the decisive body of the Ministry of Interior. The next stage at which informed consents are required concerns expectations, rules, prohibitions, as well as proposals at the asylum facility itself. If the asylum application is rejected, applicants may appeal, and during the court hearing they might be confronted with their previous understandings of the various sets of informed consents they have signed.¹ In each of these offices, the state provides interpretation services, but court interpreters are not available in every language. In such cases, untrained interpreters also interpret after taking an interpreter's oath. In justified cases, they may request a replacement interpreter. In any case, however, the spoken becomes written in the minutes, and the written becomes fact.

I first became aware of linguistic exclusion through legal terminology during fieldwork in reception and detention camps as well as in observations of asylum court hearings. During the 2005–2008 and 2010–2011 period, I repeatedly encountered references to misunderstandings related to informed consent. In 2017–2019, I conducted ten participant observations of court hearings at the Regional Court in Bratislava, complemented by ten pre- and post-hearing interviews with asylum applicants and sixteen interviews with their interpreters, state officials, NGO legal advisors, and social care workers. The interlocutors ranged in age from 20 to 50 and represented a wide variety of educational and professional backgrounds, ethnic origins, and language ideologies (Eades 2012). My focus was on how actors, spanning from illiterate to professionals with legal education, routinely shifted between language registers.

Building on my previous research (Tužinská 2019, 2020), I began drafting an applied project – “Research and Response: Plain Language in Administrative Communication with

¹ Further details of the asylum procedure in Slovakia can be found in my recent articles (Tužinská 2023, 2024).

Refugees” (RESPLAIN). Following coordination with the UNHCR and the Migration Office in 2022, we engaged further key actors: legal representatives from the Human Rights League, the Slovak Humanitarian Council, and social practitioners from NGO Mareena. Between 2022 and 2024, I carried out numerous meetings and fifteen ethnographic interviews with these actors, including both court-certified and untrained interpreters, some of whom later participated in a pilot public service interpreting training organized by the Faculty of Arts, Comenius University in Bratislava in cooperation with UNHCR.

The research processes adhered to ethical standards for studying vulnerable, refugee populations (AAA 2012; NSS 2017; Jacobsen and Landau 2003). Due to the small number of long-term cases in Slovakia, all parties would be identifiable; therefore, extracts are presented without file numbers and the names are fictitious.² I respected the interlocutors’ privacy and maintained their anonymity throughout the research. The objectives of the study were clearly communicated as part of academic research, and verbal informed consent was obtained prior to all interviews.³

The research questions were closely intertwined with those raised by interlocutors themselves during earlier court encounters: Who is in charge of meaning-making when asylum applicants are required to sign informed consents in a language they do not understand? Who bears responsibility for rendering legal formulations into comprehensible terms for the applicant? In the case of untrained interpreters, how can the state minimize the risk of misconduct? Which of the routinized practices in multilingual exchanges might be open to change? And how can the authorship of plain-language versions remain with the state rather than being informally delegated to untrained interpreters? Against this background, the following sections connect these questions to the notion of “human speech” from epistemic, pragmatic, and empirical perspectives grounded in the experiences of the actors involved.

“HUMAN SPEECH” AND EPISTEMIC JUSTICE

The first perspective situates “human speech” within debates on epistemic justice (Fricker 2007; Dotson 2014). Here, the question is whether asylum applicants are equipped with the conceptual and linguistic resources to make sense of their consent. Drawing on José Medina (2012), epistemic accountability lies in the participatory inclusion of their perspectives, with the aim of minimizing epistemic exclusion. When clarity is absent, consent risks becoming formal rather than informed. Epistemic silencing emerges as a recurring feature

² In the data extracts research interlocutors’ pseudonyms begin with the respective capital letter of their position: asylum seekers (A), court and public service interpreters (I), representatives of the foreign police (P), representatives of the Migration office (M), legal representatives (L).

³ Interviews were conducted in Slovak or non-native English, and quotations were translated by the author, John Minahane and Pavol Šveda.

of institutional encounters, in which displaced individuals are unable to participate on equal footing due to communicative asymmetries (Nikolaidou et al. 2022) and language ideologies (Eades 2012).

When information is not conveyed in a way that recipients can meaningfully comprehend, the conditions for informed consent are fundamentally compromised. Register adaptation (Pian 2023) and intralingual simplification practices (Rehnberg 2025) are also observable in the words of the court interpreter Ivan. I asked him how he would interpret the following sentence from the report: “On the ground of complaint raised by the appellant, that the organs of public administration did not ascertain the true state of the facts sufficient for a regular assessment of the matter in accordance with the opinion of the Supreme Court, this objection is not founded”.

I suppose, I'd say: You said afterwards that they had not found enough proofs and they could not make a sufficiently good decision, and the court does not agree with you – I think you have to translate it for him into that kind of human language. Because if I translate it for him in any precise way, he's not going to understand anything.

Decision-maker Oliver responded that they try to avoid legal concepts.

Persecution? Mostly we don't explain it, we ascertain, we evaluate from his statements and reasons. But it's possible too to give it in a shortened form from the law: it's a set of measures that the state takes against him, or a non-state actor causes sufferings. Naturally, you must say that in human speech, not just read it off for him from the law.

Some state officials also acknowledged the limitations of their own terminological frameworks but remain bound by institutional lexicons that perpetuate epistemic silencing, as a police officer concluded: “We are stuck in our own terminology! It is specific and necessary, yet incomprehensible to others”.

In the case of applicant Adam, his interpreter, Imre, hesitated over most of the terms used in his attorney's speech. He tried to clarify the meaning of fundamental expressions, in particular:

the merits of the case, the general credibility of the appellant, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted, the principle that the applicant should be given the benefit of the doubt, the overlapping meaning of political, ethnic, and social reasons, or the concepts of real and ascribed.

In this, as in other cases, a formal approach to interpreting did not provide sufficient space for intralingual interpretation; on the contrary, professional registers were oversimplified. Even interpreters with legal education objected to the intricate formulations, which they had to simplify on a regular basis. Such pretextual disparities resulted in applicants being misaligned with institutional expectations regarding the content and form of their responses (Maryns and Blommaert 2002). Moreover, untrained interpreters possess only a limited command of legal terminology (Hale et al. 2018), often accompanied by diverse expectations regarding their professional role (Pöllabauer 2004, 2023).

Proactive legal professionals sometimes take a training role, as Linda expressed: "I have trained them myself, let's go over this distinction. [...] I also rely on English, gesturing, using hands and feet, even drawing it out for them!" However, in the absence of state regulation, interpreters also act independently, as Iveta did after an applicant's queries: "Sometimes they (applicants) have legal questions and we allow ourselves to answer them if we know exactly, even more than the lawyer sitting next to us". This practice is also described by applicant Adnan, who bypassed legal consultation altogether, seeking guidance from compatriots: "When I didn't understand something, I spoke to a (community) interpreter I knew, and that's how I learned certain things".

In extreme cases, untrained interpreters take full control, as Ingrid notes from her own experience: "Sometimes I don't interpret something because I don't consider it important. It's difficult to explain words that don't exist in the other language." Thus, public service interpreters often filled gaps left by formal legal and bureaucratic mechanisms, providing guidance beyond the scope of official interpretation services.

A respect for the dignity of all interlocutors in proceedings can be observed in the perspectival turn towards applicants. Questions of authorship and responsibility for making legal discourse comprehensible are bound up with interactional practice. Epistemic justice unfolds in a communicative space (Tužinská 2024), in situated encounters in which "human speech" becomes relevant.

"HUMAN SPEECH" AND RELEVANCE

"Human speech", "space", "complicated", "simply", "explain", and "understand" – such frequently mentioned terms often appeared as indices of missed meaning in asylum appeal hearings. Many of these expressions pointed to contrastive experiences shaped by dense legal announcements that left applicants uncertain or confused. From a pragmatic point of view, "human speech" can be understood as part of an interactional practice. In their interactionist model of communication, Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson (2015: 135) highlight the importance of manifest meaning-making: "If a proposition is relevant at all, then the greater its manifestness, the greater its relevance" (Sperber and Wilson 2015: 135). If relevant information is not available from the state, it is supplied by other actors, but possibly with unexpected outputs.

The following interview extract illustrates how tensions arise when responsibility for plainification is left to interpreters and legal representatives, exposing the risks of *ad hoc* meaning-making (Pian 2023). A police officer posed questions and subsequently presented a summary to applicant Artur for signing: "I signed documents in Slovak, which were written in a complicated way – like all official notices. I didn't understand a lot of it. I was relying on the interpreter". The word *all* referred to the eight pages of an individual decision and an additional eight documents, totaling eleven pages of dense administrative instructions.

Legal representative Lucia described how she witnessed a police representative hand the “Instruction on Voluntary Return” to a foreigner for signing without explaining the proceedings. The untrained interpreter did not understand the term *detention* and asked: “What is this detention?” The police officer replied: “Well, look, it’s a camp, tell him he’s going to a camp.” Lucia objected: “No, a camp isn’t what it is”. She then began to explain to the interpreter that *detention* should be imagined more as imprisonment, where a person is completely deprived of personal freedom. The police officer questioned whether it was necessary to interpret the entire eight-page legal provision, which was supposed to form the basis for informed consent:

And do you think it’s necessary to interpret each page for him? When it’s actually legal text? He won’t understand that. Maybe even the interpreter won’t be able to translate it, with all those legal expressions. Do you think it’s necessary to translate everything for him when he has a legal representative? So that you can explain the whole thing to him afterwards, you get me, so what’s the point of us translating it all for him here?

Like many times before, the above-mentioned point was relevant to both parties, yet if the initial text had been expressed more succinctly, such situations would not have arisen. When it comes to plain language, communication theory can serve as a tool for understanding persistent challenges. As Sperber and Wilson note, “an ostensive stimulus is optimally relevant to an audience if: a) It is relevant enough to be worth the audience’s processing effort; b) It is the most relevant one compatible with communicator’s abilities and preferences” (Sperber and Wilson 2006: 612). In other cases, to prevent similar misunderstandings, court interpreter Ivor typically intervened with a request:

First of all, I put it to the speaker (staff) – could you formulate that more simply? Because I have a feeling that the asylum seeker doesn’t understand that. [...] It is necessary to express oneself very simply and explain.

By elucidating the preceding context and merging it with current expectations and notions of relevance for both parties, interpreters played a key dialogic role as cultural experts (Tužinská 2023). As court interpreter Ivan put it in relation to communicative space: “If he doesn’t understand, then one must say it again, in different words. There must be a space”.

However, unlike Ivan’s professional approach (interpreting to and from English and Spanish), asylum administrators often relied on interpreters for languages of limited diffusion in Slovakia. Their scarcity and limited command of legal vocabulary created “spaces of linguistic partial understanding” (Reynolds and Holmes 2025). An untrained interpreter, who was also a former applicant, Ali, approached the above-mentioned limits without reflecting on his own impact: “Most of the time I don’t even need to prepare. No one tells me what the topic will be, but I know it. I know everything that concerns our people already: all the questions, all the answers”. In such cases interpreters thus take on the task of mediating meaning without explicit pressure by authorities to do so. Lawyer Laco also emphasizes that the lack of manifestness and self-reflexivity with which some interpreters approach applicants’ interactions rarely results in official complaints:

They are afraid to express their misunderstanding or that something is wrong at the beginning, because they are in a position where they would be expressing something negative about the person who holds their fate in their hands.

The research-based intervention in administrative plain-language redesign therefore began by documenting consent logistics, identifying existing bottom-up practices of institutionalized clarity, and locating the niche for providing relevant information in “human speech”.

“HUMAN SPEECH” AND ADMINISTRATIVE DESIGN

Administrative and legal jargon often excludes those it is ostensibly designed to serve. This issue has been increasingly recognized through a range of communicative inclusivity initiatives worldwide, with *Klarspråk* promoted in the Nordic countries even before its institutional adoption since the end of 1960s.⁴ Informed consent as a part of decolonial approach to research participants has been addressed primarily in the medical sector (Chaar et al. 2025). Related efforts aim to enhance access to administrative justice (Dahlvik 2022; Hertogh et al. 2022) and address comprehension asymmetries in bureaucratic procedures (Wagner and Walker 2019). Recent contributions also highlight specific parameters of linguistic accessibility, particularly in the context of public communication (Cinková and Latimier 2021; Bohušová 2024).

The European Union Agency for Asylum has advanced important policy through its *Practical Guide: Information Provision in the Asylum Procedure* (EUAA 2024), which outlines standards for effective and comprehensible communication with asylum applicants. Complementing this, initiatives such as “Inclusion Europe” promote easy-to-read standards for public communication, accessible in multiple EU languages.⁵ These are further supported by domain-specific resources, including administrative guides (Šamánková and Kubíková 2022) and emerging language technologies designed to facilitate plain-language use.⁶ Across the EU, legal aid organizations and private actors increasingly use audiovisual platforms to disseminate procedural guidance through user-centered design principles, often reaching audiences underserved by official channels.⁷

The Communication of Rights Group – an international group of linguists, psychologists, lawyers, and interpreters – developed *Guidelines for communicating rights* (CORG 2016) which substantiated my earlier research leading up to the RESPLAIN project. Following a series of meetings with UNHCR Slovakia and the Migration Office of the Ministry of

⁴ <https://plainlanguagenetwork.org/plain-language/plain-language-around-the-world/>.

⁵ <https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read-standards-guidelines/>.

⁶ <https://www.plainlanguageeurope.com/en/tools/texamen-3>.

⁷ One of the exceptions in the implementation at the state level is *Asyl in Deutschland*, which provides an exemplary multilingual, visually guided introduction to the German asylum process in 18 languages.

Interior, the latter agreed to analyze their consent forms and revise both content and form through two expert working groups: one focusing on procedural instructions “Rights and Obligations of Asylum Applicants” and the other on the “Internal Regulations of Reception and Accommodation Centre”. Two teams of state decision-makers from procedural and integration departments, NGO legal representatives, social workers, a sociolinguist, and an ethnographer (myself), collaboratively developed four sets of plain-language instructions corresponding to different forms of international protection. The transformation of complex legal instructions into “human speech” involved adjusting both content and tone.

The Slovak version was subsequently translated into twelve languages: Arabic, Bengali, Dari, English, French, Hindi, Farsi, Pashto, Russian, Turkish, Ukrainian, and Urdu. The revised documents align with the recently adopted ISO standard for plain language (ISO 24495-1:2023) and European easy-to-read guidelines. These incorporated thirty informative icons to enhance spatial orientation, refined through iterative testing. Site-specific informed consent materials were produced for two reception centers and two accommodation facilities, including a temporary shelter for Ukrainian citizens. Each version now comprises eight to ten user-friendly pages intended for asylum applicants to retain and consult, replacing the previous seventeen-page legal texts. Furthermore, the Migration Office initiated a broader revision of legal translations and announced plans to adapt the plain-language instructions into a fully audiovisual format, extending their reach across diverse literacy backgrounds.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This article examined how communicative conditions of informed consent are shaped within asylum procedures, where legal authority, linguistic complexity, and institutional asymmetry intersect. It foregrounded the often-overlooked question of authorship: Who takes responsibility for rendering legal discourse into what actors emically describe as “human speech”? Despite EU policy frameworks promoting communicative accessibility, plain language has not yet been mainstreamed in asylum administration. This dynamic constitutes a form of epistemic injustice, where applicants are expected to act meaningfully within a system that offers them neither the linguistic resources nor the interpretive space to do so. When applicants sign documents that they do not fully understand due to abstract legal formulations, linguistic inaccessibility, or the absence of verification practices, their consent is formal rather than informed.

The article approaches “human speech” through three interrelated lenses. First, it situates the notion within debates on epistemic justice, highlighting how institutional language practices conduct participation. Second, it examines how meaning is negotiated, showing how legal density and interactional expectations collide, often leaving applicants reliant on improvised, *ad hoc* explanations. Frequent metalinguistic references to terms relating to

“human speech” reveal recurrent gaps in meaning. Third, these ethnographic insights inform the administrative design of consent procedures, demonstrating how plain language can be structurally embedded rather than situationally improvised.

Administrative and legal jargon frequently excludes those it is intended to inform. In response, international initiatives have promoted linguistic accessibility: *Guidelines for Communicating Rights* (CORG 2016), easy-to-read standards, and the EUAA communication guidelines. Building on these developments, the RESPLAIN project in Slovakia, after observation of consent encounters and ethnographic interviews, facilitated a redesign of informed consent materials. Through participatory collaboration between state officials, legal practitioners, interpreters, and researchers, complex legal texts were transformed into “human speech” and translated into twelve languages.

The resulting multilingual, icon-supported plain-language versions comply with ISO and EU readability standards and represent a structural shift toward state-authored clarity, with plans to expand accessibility through audiovisual formats for applicants with limited literacy. This applied participatory intervention aimed to institutionalize clarity as a structural condition of procedural justice. By reassigning responsibility for intelligibility to the state, plain-language redesign enables communicative spaces in which dignity and procedural fairness can be called in. In this sense, plain language is both a communicative right and a precondition for epistemic justice. The findings illustrate what Kristie Dotson (2014) terms reducible epistemic oppression – a form of inequality that can be addressed through systemic change. The critical question is no longer only what is communicated, but also how, including the adoption of an “in-your-own-words” requirement (CORG 2016). Asylum interviewing can, in this sense, become a site of epistemic justice, where “human speech” transforms uninformed assent into an in-formed consent.

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“LJUDSKI GOVOR”: PREOBLIKOVANJE INFORMIRANOG PRISTANKA U OBIČNI JEZIK U POSTUPKU TRAŽENJA AZILA

Ovaj članak istražuje kako emski pojam “ljudski govor” cirkulira među akterima u postupku traženja azila i kako njegova situirana značenja mogu utjecati na osmišljavanje primijenjenih antropoloških intervencija. Nadovezujući se na istraživanja pozicionalnosti prevoditelja, protokola komunikacije s institucijama i komunikacijskih asimetrija, analiza pokazuje na što se sve “ljudski govor” odnosi u interakcijskim i institucionalnim kontekstima. U radu se tvrdi da smještanje jezične jasnoće u središte pravnog postupka nije pitanje stila, nego epistemičke pravde. Etnografsko istraživanje provedeno u Slovačkoj (2017–2019) otkrilo je da su podnositelji zahtjeva za azil redovito potpisivali pravno obvezujuće dokumente bez njihova potpunog razumijevanja, pri čemu institucije za to nisu snosile odgovornost. Pojam “ljudskog govora” istražuje se kroz epistemičku, pragmatičku i empirijsku prizmu, oslanjajući se na perspektive podnositelja zahtjeva, prevoditelja, pravnika i državnih dužnosnika. Članak pokazuje da se upotreba običnog jezika može institucionalizirati kao strukturna obveza, a ne prepustiti *ad hoc* kompromisu. Na etnografiji temeljena intervencija (2023–2024) pokazuje kako pojam “ljudskog govora” dovodi do intralingvalne promjene obrazaca za informirani pristanak iz pravnog u jednostavni jezik.

Ključne riječi: obični jezik, prevođenje, postupak azila, informirani pristanak, epistemička pravda, relevantnost