University of South Bohemian in České Budějovice

Faculty of Economics

Master of Regional and European Project Management

Master thesis

Multilingualism and Interculturality in International or Interregional Projects and Work Environments

How do interculturality and multilingualism impact efficiency in the workplace?

Student: Eveline Furtuna

Thesis tutor : Prof. Dr. Phil. Doris Fetscher

České Budějovice

- 2023 -

Summary

This master's thesis deals with the research question "How do employees deal with interculturality and multilingualism in their everyday professional life?". In order to respond to this question, qualitative research has been conducted in the form of survey questionnaires. These questionnaires give a more in-depth look at how employees of a cyber security company deal with the intercultural and multilingual characters of their teams.

The first part deals with theories on multilingualism and interculturality, their undeniable relation and their impact on the efficiency of workgroups. The second part briefly describes the company and the teams. Thirdly, the research method is presented, the challenges faced in the preparation process and the process itself. Lastly, the discussion brings a critical reflection on the conducted research, the methodology and the findings.

The chosen organization welcomes cultural and linguistic diversity, internally and externally. However, challenges arise on both levels, mainly due to the multilingualism and the different levels of proficiency in the working languages.

Key words: interculturality, multilingualism, teamwork, international teams, lingua franca

1. Introduction

Globalization has brought us a multitude of wonderful things and processes. It has brought people together through easier exchange and mobility. People from different societies and cultural background, who speak different languages are reunites not only in their professional settings but also in their everyday life. Nowadays, we are still learning to coexist and share our knowledge while tolerating and accepting other cultures, languages and societies, which are constantly changing. The intertwined processes of multilingualism and interculturality are a source of fruitful international projects, with multicultural teams who are reunited and are collaborating towards a same objective.

However, global teams and organizations are still facing challenges regarding the compatibility of the cultural backgrounds of the members of a same team or, on a larger scale, between employees and the organizational values and norms. This Master's thesis will focus on linguistic and cultural diversity in professional settings and the chosen topic is "Multilingualism and interculturality in international or interregional projects and work environments".

In the context of my studies in a trinational joint master's degree, I study Regional and European Project Management. Three universities from France (Université Bretagne Sud), Germany (Westsächsische Hochschule Zwickau) and Czech Republic (Jihočeská univerzita) have joined forces toward a common goal and created this master's program, offering students a multilingual and intercultural study environment, as well as a multidisciplinary curriculum. If the focus was the study of management processes of different kinds of projects, our degree provided us with knowledge in a panoply of fields, such as economical, linguistic and social sciences. The choice of topic for my Master's thesis was influenced by my interest for interculturality, as well as linguistic studies.

To support my thesis, I conducted qualitative research with the help of an organization of cyber security. I was already familiar with the concept of the organization as my past experiences have led me to their services and I was aware of the existence of a pluricultural team within the organization. The organization members wished to remain anonymous as their work revolves around sensitive data and high-profile clients, so I will refer to it as Organization P. As it was quite difficult for them to take part in interviews, I opted for data collection through open question surveys. The research question for my topic is "How do the

employees of Organization P deal with interculturality and multilingualism in their everyday professional life?"

The objective of this thesis is to gather information through qualitative research methods and analyse it in order to find out how an intercultural and multilingualism deals with cultural and linguistic diversity in their professional setting. The participants' answers to the survey helped me gain a more in-depth understanding of their experience and coping mechanism with their work environment from a pluricultural and plurilingual perspective.

The thesis is structured as follows: firstly, I will focus on the theoretical aspects of interculturality and multilingualism and their impact on team performance. Then, Organization P will be described as well as their different international projects. In a third part, I will explain the research methodology employed for data gathering and the analysis and interpretation of results will make the object of the fourth point. The last part deals with the discussion which will include the interpretation of my findings.

2. Theory

2.1 Interculturality in the Workplace

In order to understand interculturality in a context of work environment, it is important to define it as an ensemble. Interculturality is a complex concept which can be defined as the relations between groups of individuals with different cultural backgrounds within society. According to anthropologist Gunther Dietz (2018), in a broader sense, interculturality is dealt with in anthropological and social science literature following three axes, all "different but complementary semantic axes".

 The first axe Dietz (2009) identifies is "the distinction between interculturality as a descriptive rather than prescriptive concept. From a descriptive perspective, interculturality is "the ensemble of interrelations that structure a given society in terms of culture, ethnicity, language, religious denomination and/or nationality". In terms of political and financial power, these relationships are typically asymmetrical, and they also often reflect historically ingrained patterns of displaying or concealing, stressing or downplaying variety, stigmatizing otherness, and discriminating against specific groups.

The emphasis on interculturality as a descriptive tool relies less on the internally heterogeneous makeup of society and its fragmentation into different groups than a multicultural approach would suggest, in contrast to the opposing idea of multiculturality. The intercultural perspective emphasizes intergroup relations within society rather than group composition. Therefore, minority and majority are defined here in terms of power — the authority to determine who is considered a member of a majority and who is labelled as a member of a minority.

People who come from various countries, identify with different ethnic groups, or speak different languages can work together and form relationships in the workplace, which is a highly relevant context for intercultural communication. Interpersonal communication in the workplace has undoubtedly always been a major subject of interest for intercultural communication study. Early research centred on preparing American diplomats, businesspeople, missionaries, and military personnel for abroad deployments. However, research efforts have been strengthened by the social landscape's growing pluralism. In today's environment, the breadth of research on intercultural workplace communication includes ordinary face-to-face and technology-mediated interactions in encounters, relationships, groups, and teams in a variety of working arrangements. The research also makes use of organizational strategies for managing diversity and anti-discrimination that were developed in the United States and later exported to and reinterpreted in workplaces around the globe.

Social categorization, stereotyping, management, conflict management, organizational satisfaction, supportive communication, the negotiation of shared workplace cultures, knowledge sharing, decision-making, learning and innovation, or leadership and management are just a few examples of workplace communication processes and phenomena that have been studied by researchers. The use of languages in interactions at work has attracted increasing attention in recent years.

2.1.1 Constructive intercultural negotiation – definition and conceptual framework

Barmeyer et al. (2001) understands interculturality as the "dialectical process that moves between differences and that serves the development of individuals and groups". He defines interculturality as a "reciprocal and dialogical, if possible, symmetrical, process of negotiation, communication and cooperation between, actors in which adaptation, learning

and development take place." For Barmeyer, it is essential to differentiate the concepts of interculturality, multiculturality and transculturality.

BOX 5.1 INTERCULTURALITY, MULTICULTURALITY AND TRANSCULTURALITY

Interculturality: negotiation of (new) rules of communication and behaviour which, as a result of mutual interpretation and adaptation processes, may differ from those in the respective cultures of the involved individuals.

Multiculturality: the coexistence of members from different cultures within one social system, for example in a country, *with limited interaction*.

Transculturality: blurring of cultural boundaries through networking and interconnectedness of many elements which belong to multiple cultures. Emergence of communities carrying pluralistic cultural identities.

Figure 1 Difference between the concepts of interculturality, multiculturality and transculturality according to Barmeyer (2021)

Whenever individuals from different cultural backgrounds are reunited in organizations or workgroups, intercultural situations are created and emerge into something innovative. The way interculturality is perceived and received can either be constructive (stimulating) or destructive (threatening), depending on the situation and the context. In intercultural and multilingual settings, it is important to avoid critical incidents at all costs. Critical incidents refer to misunderstandings between intercultural individuals, where their different cultural backgrounds are not compatible in terms of values or norms, or even interpretation (Batchelder, 1993).

2.1.2 Management of intercultural teams

In the recent years, an increasing number of companies put in place policies and management strategies to better adapt to all kinds of diversity (racial, cultural, educational etc.). Leaders of multicultural teams are to take into consideration the cultural diversity in the workplace.

Social psychologists started to take interest in culturally diverse teams in the 1960s and the 1970s, but it was not until the 1990s that management researchers started to really investigate the question. Since then, research in this field has made visible progress, although a consensus

has not been reached in understanding the performance and functioning of these diverse workgroups.

Milliken and Martins' (1996) research on the question of diversity in a business context has brought a real contribution in understanding and analysing how diversity can influence the performance of a company. Their research showed that different types of diversity result in different impact on performance. In the case of cultural diversity, communication and cooperation are the most impacted, as misunderstandings may often occur between the group members.
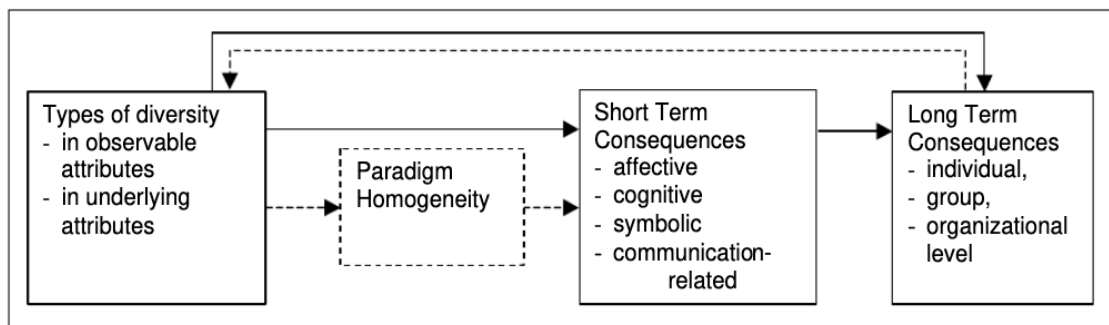

Figure 2 The framework of analysis of diversity outcomes used by Milliken and Martins (1996)

Organizational members that are not like most of the group have a propensity to quit the organization earlier and to be less satisfied. Cultural variety causes problems with communication and collaboration. Even if this impact lessens throughout time, diversity has a detrimental effect on affection as well (Watson et al., 1993). On the other hand, Wiersema and Bantel (1992) discovered, for instance, that the top management team's educational curriculum heterogeneity was positively associated to changes in the diversification strategies of the enterprises. For senior management groups and project teams, diversity along skill- or knowledge-based dimensions appears to have some beneficial cognitive benefits.

The "diversity research network" marked the beginning of a new phase in organizational diversity study. A more thorough approach is provided by Kochan et al. (2003), who claim that the relationship between diversity, team processes, and outcomes is moderated by organizational context (organizational culture, business strategy, and human resource policies and practices). A lot of academics now agree on their model of how diversity affects society.
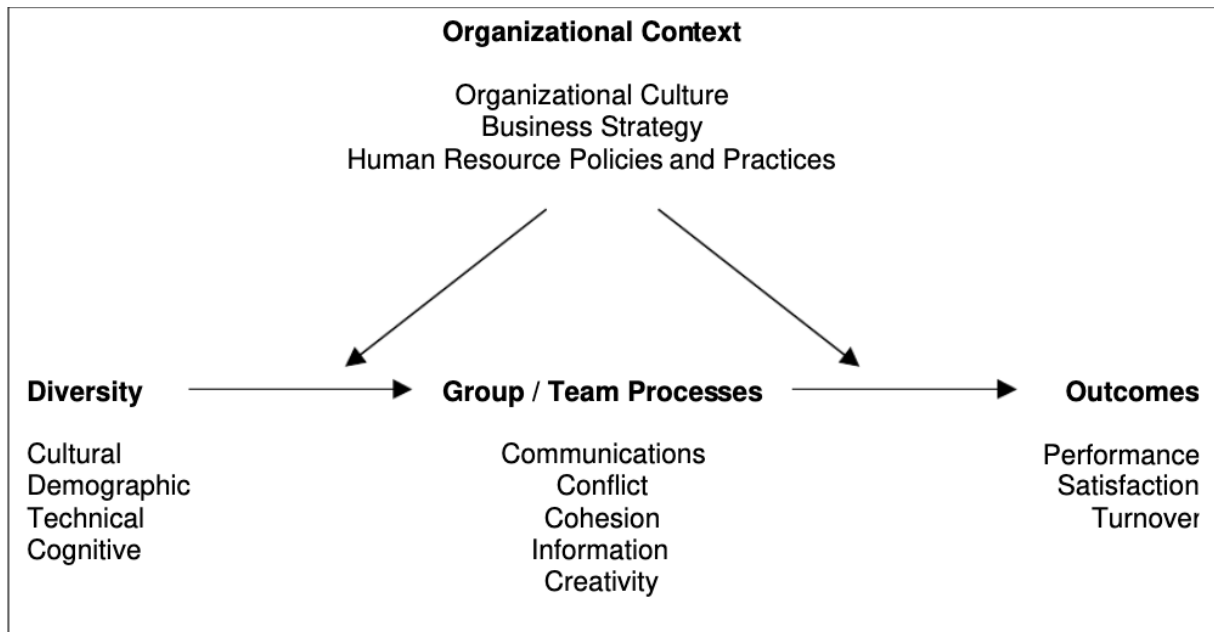
Organizational Context

Organizational Culture
Business Strategy
Human Resource Policies and Practices

Diversity

Cultural
Demographic
Technical
Cognitive

Group / Team Processes

Communications
Conflict
Cohesion
Information
Creativity

Outcomes

Performance
Satisfaction
Turnover

Figure 3 Effects of diversity studied by Kochan et al. (2003)

2.2 Intercultural Communication

The workplace has become a crucial setting for people from different cultural backgrounds to interact and form relationships in today's countries, which are becoming more heterogeneous. According to Braithwaite, Schrodt, and Carr (2015), intercultural workplace communication refers to a symbolic process where two or more people from diverse cultural backgrounds construct and negotiate meanings in work settings. Interactions between those who come from other countries, speak different first languages, or identify with distinct ethnic groups have long been the focus of intercultural communication research.

People's various cultural affiliations may manifest through communication at work in ways that have an impact on individuals, groups, organizations, and societies. These communication considerations may also be different from those found in other spheres of human activity (Hua, 2014).

When people communicate at work, it frequently happens in the context of interpersonal attachments formed at work or over the course of repeated interactions (Sias, 2009). Peer-coworker, subordinate-supervisor, and business partner relationships are a few examples of these. Workplace connections differ from chance meetings with strangers that are typical in

jobs like customer service. Small-group conversations and, increasingly, team interactions are also included in communication in the workplace (Lahti et al., 2017).

In the context of intercultural communication, culture functions as a system based on interpretation. The members of a same culture have access to a common stock of meanings, ideas, signs, symbols etc. Language can be defined as a system of words with meaning that is culture-bound; the same word can have different meanings depending on the context). However, there can be differences in national cultures and languages depending on the context and the differences between the users in terms of professional background, age, gender etc.

2.3 Overlapping Challenges and Opportunities

The goal of diversity management is to establish and preserve a supportive workplace culture that values both the similarities and differences between people. The organization culture, its effect on diversity openness, human resource management practices, institutional environments and organizational contexts to diversity-related pressures, expectations, requirements, and incentives, perceived practices and organizational outcomes related to managing employee diversity, as well as several other issues, have all received significant attention in the literature on diversity management. Diversity is a set of conscious behaviors that include understanding and appreciating the interdependence of people, cultures, and the natural world; demonstrating mutual respect for traits and life experiences that are different from our own; realizing that diversity includes more than just ways of being; it also includes ways of knowing; and realizing that institutionalized and personal discrimination gives some people advantages while causing and maintaining disadvantages for others.

- **The impact of cultural diversity on performance**

The majority of organizations would like to do research on the relationship between diversity and organizational culture, its impact on diversity openness, and between diversity and performance at the individual and organizational levels. This is because diversity has become increasingly important in the setting of organizations. According to Patrick (2010), diversity affects an organization's outcomes from a diversity perspective as well as how accepting the culture, work groups, and individual members are of differences.

Despite the marvels of modern communication technology, dealing with one another personally is still necessary in international interactions. Language and stereotype hurdles must be overcome for this to be effective. This may call for the mental erasure of concepts like alien and the assumption that the person has a unique background (Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2011). Global leaders must not only get familiar with their counterparts' conventions, courtesies, and business norms but also with their respective cultures, management philosophies, and cultural mindsets in order to foster opportunities for collaboration (Hofstede, 1994).

According to research, diversity has improved performance by diversifying the group's viewpoints. Strong empirical evidence supports a positive correlation between effective diversity management and an increase in organizational performance (Ozbilgin and Tatli, 2008). The consensus is that differences should be explored in moderation, nevertheless. As group members get more familiar with one another's viewpoints and acquire transactive memory, they may also become better at elaborating a variety of information over time. This implies that it is crucial for varied work groups to be able to attain longer tenures and be given more time to establish themselves than more homogeneous groups (Knippenberg, de Dreu, & Homan, 2004).

3.   Managing Intercultural Communication in Diverse Workplaces

With globalization, the modern workplace has witnessed many changes over the past few decades and has gained tremendously in mobility. The advent of the Internet encouraged the mobility of the workforce, as enterprises can conduct their business without being stranded to a sole area especially through remote work. More accessible mobility of people leads to a more diverse work environment, which reunites people from different cultures and backgrounds working for the same purpose.

Some may argue that although this is an encouraging step towards a more inclusive work environment, it comes with its obstacles and challenges. Every culture is unique and not all cultures are compatible, as norms can vary greatly from one another. This might harbour miscommunication and even create a hostile work environment.

The increasing global diversity renders intercultural competence an absolute must, especially in the work environment. Communication technologies are continuously improving and

thanks to these advances have geographic proximity is no longer a precondition to intercultural communication. With more mobility and facilitated intercultural communication, the number of culturally diverse workgroups has grown exponentially. The members of these culturally diverse teams rely not only on their expertise (and ability to work on virtual interfaces) but also on their intercultural competence (Zakaria, Amelinckx, & Wilemon, 2004). The term "intercultural competence" refers to an individual's "effective and appropriate" grip of cultural differences (Arasaratnam, 2016). Studies consider intercultural competence as a twofold concept, both of internal orientation – the effectiveness – (when talking about one's cognitive, emotional and behavioural abilities) and external, - the appropriateness – "a product of a context" (Arasaratnam, 2016), determined by the contextual parameters of a situation.

Interdisciplinary research shaped our definition and understanding of intercultural competence, but researchers in the communication field have ownership of the nomenclature, particularly the term intercultural communication competence (ICC). Speitzberg and Chagnon (2009) defined intercultural competence as "the appropriate and effective management of interaction between people who, to some degree or another, represent different or divergent affective, cognitive, and behavioral orientations to the world" (p. 7). Again, the effectiveness of intercultural competence is particularly individualistic whenever an individual successfully manages a communication exchange. Appropriateness, on the other hand refers to an external perception, where the interlocutor judges whether the communication exchange happened according to the contextual expectations.

Intercultural competence depends on the combination of individual abilities and *savoir-être* (i.e. self-awareness, adaptability, language proficiency, general and cultural knowledge etc.) as well as contextual factors (i.e. incentives, shared goals, perceptions of different notions).

Multilingual and intercultural communication

In a multilingual workplace, decisions are being made constantly to benefit all employees who belong to different cultural and linguistic groups. They decide collectively through « processes of meaning and negotiation » (Schoeneborn, Kuhn, and Kärreman 2018: 476) on the common language to be used (a lingua franca) and on communication methods to be put in place (non verbal or translation).

The Impact of Language Diversity on Multinational Teamwork

In a context of knowledge economy, companies need to ensure knowledge sharing in order to achieve competitiveness. Knowledge sharing asserts that language has an impact of the communication between individuals and the way in which they relate. Knowledge sharing is intrinsically linked to the exponential growth of multilingual and intercultural teams in contexts of international collaborations with members who engage in activities in non-native languages.

In today's multitude of multinational companies, multicultural teams are an important asset, a "a key feature of today's business environment" (Kassis Henderson, 2005: 66) in managing complex operations. One specific characteristic of these teams is the diversity of native languages of the members, which defines the communication within the team and thus shapes the processes and outcomes on multinational level.

Global corporations need these teams to perform at their best (Butler, 2011) by reaping the benefits of diversity while avoiding its pitfalls (Stahl et al., 2010).

Despite the vast research that has been conducted on the impact that interculturality has on teamwork, the multilingual aspect has been neglected until not too long ago. Recent research has shown that language diversity is a "distinguishing feature" (Chen et al., 2006: 670) of global teams where verbal communication is primordial.

In a context of multilingual teams, the team members and leaders negotiate and decide on a common working language and English has earned the title of "lingua franca in business communication" (Nickerson, 2015: 390. However, this may also be a source of inequality amongst team members if the proficiency is uneven between them, creating language barriers and misunderstandings leading to potential conflicts thus jeopardizing effective teambuilding and cooperation (Cohen & Kassis-Henderson, 2012).

Research on processes in multinational teams (language diversity, use and selection of a lingua franca and language barriers) has increased in recent years. Given the important number of these new studies, this chapter will focus on the studies conducted on power distortions induced by language.

How does language diversity influence power relations in multinational teams?

Jansens & Brett's work (2006) defines that power relations are a key factor in teamwork a power differentials dictate the degree to which tasks are distributed and managed by team

members. A very influential factor is language, as communication is the primordial way to exercise power and thus language is essential.

Research has shown that the linguistic background of team members strongly influence one's power degree and the esteem they get from their team mates. Various studies have established a relation between the proficiency of team members in the chosen working language and the power relations (Paunova, 2017). Méndez Garcia & Pérez Cañado's research (2005) links proficiency, especially that of native speakers, in the designated working language with higher positions and influence within the teams. Inversely, team members with a lower level of knowledge of the designated lingua franca are more likely to be excluded from crucial information exchanges (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006) and from decision-making processes (Louhiala-Salminen, Charles, & Kankaanranta, 2005), thus having restrained access to power positions (Lou & Shankar, 2006).

The way a speaker expresses themselves in a language is another factor influencing power relations in multinational teams. According to Paunova (2017), speakers with a more refined speech are more likely to be regarded as having leadership potential than those who struggle to express themselves. As English is the prevalent designated working language in multinational teams, native English speakers have an advantage in discussions and exert a certain power within the team (Méndez Garcia & Pérez Cañado, 2005).

Moreover, leadership figures proficiency can also influence their power position; leaders with a superior working language proficiency are seen as suitable for their position and in contrast, leaders with subpar language proficiency might struggle when exerting their power. Similarly, experts with linguistic disadvantages struggle to leverage their expertise in strategic decisions for which they have the superior task competence (Finkelstein, 1992).

The degree of language-induced power differentials in multinational teams is heavily influenced by the discrepancies between the proficiency levels of leaders and subordinates in the designated working language. In the teams in which members with low language proficiency are united with members with superior proficiency, the latter benefit from a language-based power. According to Tenzel and Pudelko (2017), in contrast, whenever the members of a multilingual team have similar language proficiency levels language-based power relations are replaced with equality. Consequently, power differentials based on language proficiency may lead to exclusion from the decision-making process and loss of information and expertise despite the competences (Jansens & Brett, 2006).

On a management level, leaders of multinational teams should alleviate the unfair advantages or disadvantages between team members based on their linguistic proficiency. Moreover, it is important that managers of multinational teams remain perceptive of any arising frustrations within the team and ensure fluid communication between members with higher and lower linguistic proficient levels.

3.1 Understanding Cultural Differences

Understanding cultural differences in a multilingual workplace is crucial for effective communication and collaboration among team members. Multilingualism and awareness of cultural differences can help increase empathy and understanding of other cultural values and helps leaders to understand, inspire and better manage their employees. However, language differences can also cause dysfunctional group formations, social fragmentation, and lower individuals' rhetorical capacities.

Multilingualism in the workplace usually means cultural differences; people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds are reunited to collaborate. For global companies, multilingualism is more than an asset, it is nowadays an absolute necessity to ensure a fruitful communication, devoid of misunderstandings not only between the employees and the leaders, but also amongst members of a same team. A study by Alinasab et al. (2021) found that language diversity can enhance creativity and innovation in teams. However, the study also found that language barriers can hinder knowledge sharing and communication, leading to misunderstandings and conflicts.

Another study by Cohen and Kassis-Henderson (2017) found that linguistic and cultural diversity contributes to positive team outcomes. The study suggests that multilingualism can lead to a more inclusive and diverse workplace, which can enhance creativity and innovation.

Understanding cultural differences in a multilingual workplace is essential for effective communication and collaboration. Multilingualism can be an asset in the workplace, but language barriers can also hinder knowledge sharing and communication. However, studies suggest that linguistic and cultural diversity can contribute to positive team outcomes and enhance creativity and innovation.

3.1.1 Cultural Norms and Values

Cultural norms and values in the workplace are important for creating a positive and productive work environment. Cultural norms refer to shared beliefs or values and the human behaviors that support these values within a given society. Cultural standards and values in the workplace are common beliefs about what is important, acceptable or unacceptable, and right or wrong in a particular society.

Schemata, behavioral scripts, and frames—i.e., the rules, laws, and conventions of social interaction—are significantly influenced by culture (Lustig & Koester 2013; Samovar et al. 2013). When interacting with people from different cultures, a person usually becomes aware that various norms may exist (Chen & Starosta 1998; Lustig & Koester 2013; Samovar et al. 2013). The rules for the preferred method of interaction and communication are set by culture (Doise 1986; Servaes 1989). Communication (Hall 1976), perception (Cole & Scribner 1974; Fisher 1997; Nis-bett & Miyamoto 2005), conduct, and identity (Collier & Thomas 1988; Combs & Snygg 1959; Yep 1998) are just a few of the things that are influenced by culture.

3.1.2 Communication Styles and Etiquette

According to Barmeyer (2021), businesses neglect language and communication and do not explore the resources that their diverse workforce may offer them. Culture, language and communication are intertwined, as mentioned previously. Language conveys and reflects cultural values, artifacts, and practices as an element of communication. Communication can take multiple forms in various cultural contexts: verbal, non-verbal (through body language, written communication, eye contact), para-verbal (the tone of the voice, the tempo, the typography in written communication) or extra-verbal (the setting of the communication and the time).

In an organization, communication can be analysed through oral conversations, documents, or analog versus digital exchanges. The members of an organization will use different tools and communication forms depending on the complexity of the message, or on their interlocutor.

Moreover, cultural differences will influence the communication styles. For example, in cultures where communication is based on a low-context system, the communication is more explicit, the message conveys the information. This is especially the case in Anglo-Saxon and

Germanic cultures, where the speakers prefer clear messages, thus avoiding misunderstandings. On the contrary, in high-context culture, the communication style is implicit, the information is contextual and less encapsulated in the message. The interlocutors interpret the message depending on their own understanding of the information. This style of communication is adopted more by Asian, Arabic or Latin American cultures.

3.2 Barriers to Effective Intercultural Communication

People must deal with both the advantages and disadvantages of intercultural exchange when they come from various nations, cultures, and backgrounds. The most important ones to consider are those related to fear, language, stereotypes, prejudice, ethnocentrism, and the presumption of commonality rather than difference. The basic barriers to intercultural communication that people from different backgrounds and cultures may experience are covered in this essay.

When we interact with people from different cultures, we could act as we would in our own and assume that there are no distinctions between our viewpoint and theirs. However, adopting such assumptions could lead to misunderstandings. When communicators come from vastly diverse cultural origins and so have divergent perspectives on the world, serious issues may arise.

3.2.1 Intercultural Barriers

Regarding the way people from various cultures interact, R.M. Barna (1997) identified 6 intercultural barriers: anxiety, presuming similarity rather than difference, language, ethnocentrism, stereotypes and prejudice, and nonverbal misinterpretation. One of the first issues that may arise during an intercultural encounter is assuming similarity rather than difference. Because every culture is diverse to some extent, assuming that all cultures are identical could lead us to overlook crucial details about the distinctive traits and characteristics of each individual civilization. Problems develop when the link created by similarity results in the exclusion, prosecution, or eradication of individuals who are different. People are frequently more divided than united by culture. Most individuals shy away from the unfamiliar because they prefer the familiar.

Another issue that could arise is the excessive level of worry. People experience anxiety when they are in an unfamiliar setting or context because they are unsure of what to say or do. People feel more at ease being with one another when they have more things in common.

Contrarily, people rarely feel comfortable speaking to strangers, which makes interaction challenging, particularly when a second language is involved. Limitations or reserve in the intercultural encounter may emerge from concern over speaking English (or another contact language) correctly.

Another significant impediment to intercultural communication is ethnocentrism, which is the conviction that one's cultural habits, customs, and ways of thinking are better to those of all other cultural groups. This could result in communication barriers as well as a lack of understanding of the practices and traditions of the other culture. Stereotypes are skewed perceptions, conclusions, or presumptions about another individual, group, or culture. A stereotype is a form of cognitive structure that encapsulates the perceiver's expectations, knowledge, and beliefs about particular human social groups. In order to assess, appraise, or categorize a situation, our minds sometimes use stereotypes as a sort of categorization. Stereotyping and overgeneralization, particularly when they are unfavorable, can cause communication issues even though it is a natural process that aids us in making sense of our surroundings and lowering ambiguity.

3.2.2 Intercultural Misinterpretations and Misunderstandings

According to Hinner (2017), there are many intricate causes of intercultural misunderstandings, and these causes can quickly turn into conflicts. Because there isn't a single answer to every issue, finding solutions to conflicts is difficult because they are likewise complex. It is important to understand that different cultures may interpret the same phrase differently while speaking across cultural boundaries (Klopf 1998). When nonnative speakers are involved, the problem becomes much more complicated because many of them translate a word's or a concept's denotative meaning from their original tongue into another language. One language's denotative meaning may differ significantly from another, which can lead to misunderstandings and even conflicts.

Every person gives the same term, item, experience, behavior, nonverbal cue, etc. a distinct meaning. The concept of perception can be used to explain this variation in personal meaning. Identifying, organizing, and interpreting the sensory inputs that people are exposed to is referred to as perception (Adler et al. 2013; DeVito 2015; Gamble & Gamble 2012; Jandt 2013; Klopf 1998). People learn to connect particular words, nonverbal cues, objects, etc. with meanings as they get older, interact with others, and experience the world around them. According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis or the Linguistic Relativity Theory, a language's

structure has an impact on the worldview or cognitive processes of its speakers. The language we speak determines our reality; as a result, persons who speak various languages will necessarily have distinct worldviews.

3.3 Developing Intercultural Competence

Intercultural communication, or communication between individuals from many cultures, has existed for as long as recorded history. It has taken place for millennia in the form of conflicts, trade, or interpersonal interactions. Intercultural connections are now a natural process and a requirement as the globe has become a global society. In many contexts, such as the workplace, in politics, in healthcare, and in the school, it is normal practice to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds. Organizational communication research in the exciting field of intercultural communication. The phrase "intercultural communication" also covers a broad range of communication problems that might occur within a workplace between people from various educational, socioeconomic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Each of these people brings to the workplace a special set of experiences and values that are distinctive to the culture in which they were raised and are currently living.

Since all communication takes place within a particular culture, cultural disparities represent the main barrier to cross-cultural communication. Distinct languages, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors toward things like time (the value of punctuality), context, traditions, space, non-verbal cues, etc., are characteristics of distinct cultures.

The term "intercultural communication competence" (ICC) refers to a person's active possession of qualities that facilitate effective intercultural communication. These qualities can be broken down into three main categories: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Sociolinguistic awareness, cultural self-awareness, culture-specific knowledge, and deep cultural knowledge are additional categories of knowledge that can be taken into account when discussing culture, which is defined as the beliefs, values, and norms of a group of people that influence individuals' communication behaviors. In terms of skills, the are defined as the main abilities needed for processing the learned knowledge are observation, listening, analysis, evaluation, interpretation, and relation. Critical self-reflection is also crucial to the growth of intercultural competence. Additional categories of knowledge can be taken into

account when we discuss culture, which is described as a collection of people's beliefs, values, and norms that influence how people communicate with one another: sociolinguistic sensitivity, cultural self-awareness, cultural expertise, and profound cultural knowledge.

In theory, internal outcomes such as empathy, flexibility, and adaptability will be attained if the critical attitudes, knowledge, and abilities are obtained. People will be better equipped to react to others in accordance with their expectations as a result. The quantity of knowledge and abilities obtained would determine how well communication functions. The external outcomes: The internal outcomes—attitudes, knowledge, and skills—would result in effective intercultural communication practices.
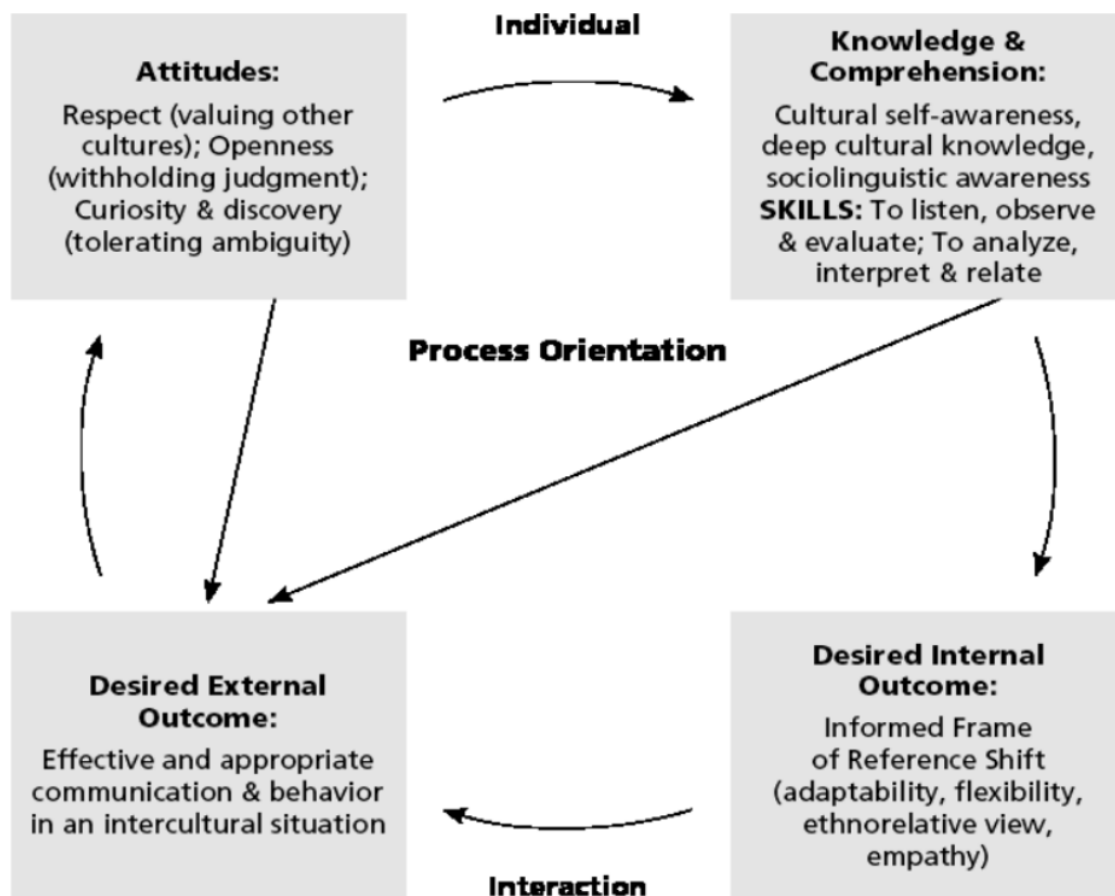

Figure 4 Process of intercultural communication competence

3.4 Acquiring efficient ICC skills

Because they must communicate with people from all over the world, global business executives need to have great intercultural communication skills. They must also take into account cultural context and customs, such as the timing of an international discourse, the

distance that different cultures need, and the variations in nonverbal communication codes, in order to be genuinely effective. Successful businesses enforce diversity acceptance as a moral and legal requirement, which is essential for enhancing the work environment, employee morale, creativity, and productivity. Employees learn to value their uniqueness and understand the diverse ideas, solutions, and points of view by acknowledging that different sets of people perform same tasks in different ways. Three viewpoints are recognized under the intercultural competency model developed by Guo-Ming Chen and William G. Starosta (1996): intercultural sensitivity (become aware and respect cultural differences), intercultural awareness (acknowledge other cultural identities), intercultural adroitness (appropriate social skills, interaction management).

4. Multilingualism

The Impact of Multilingualism on Workplace Dynamics

Since biblical times with the Tower of Babbel, multilingualism was a subject of interest for many. If it is impossible to know the exact numbers, estimations show that the majority of the worldwide population is at least bilingual and a very small percentage is monolingual. According to the European Parliament Research Service, around 7000 languages are spoken in the world nowadays. The EPRS defines multilingualism as "the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-day lives".

Many have formulated definitions of what multilingualism is, and according to the EU,

The way multilingualism is perceived has changed over the last few decades in the business context, as nowadays it is not only an asset anymore but has become an obvious necessity. Businesses that want to expand abroad need their teams to be able to communicate with foreign partners and clients. If English was the designated lingua franca for many decades, there is a real prominence of other languages, such as Spanish or Chinese.

Linguistic and cultural diversity are intrinsically connected, language being an essential part of culture, be it national languages, **dialects**, **regiolects**, **sociolects**, **professional languages** (physicists, computer scientists, consultants,…), **technical languages** of certain departments (marketing, research and development,…), special vocabulary connected to **hierarchy**, **age** and **gender**. For all these categories, there is a specific vocabulary and meaning attached to common vocabulary. They are intertwined and have an influence on one another.

However, different semantic inventories may lead to misunderstandings; in a situation where communication across national languages is dysfunctional, one may argue that proficiency of the professional language may enable intercultural understanding.

In organisations, the designated working language (often times, spoken at different degrees of proficiency) is not necessarily the same as the first language of the employees. English, for example, as previously stated, is the leading standard language of global organisations. Moreover, a language specific to each organisation (or groups within the organizations) may evolve over time with usage of acronyms or abbreviations, for instance, or even different meanings for certain terms. This enables a more efficient and faster communication and can facilitate the integration of new-coming members. Team languages are created between individuals of the same group who collaborate for a certain amount of time on a specific task, for example in the context of projects.

Having a designated working language has many advantages, as it fosters the diffusion of knowledge, reinforces trust-based relations between its users and facilitates the creation of a hybrid team culture. However, in a situation where member of a same team or organization fail to agree on a common language, this can hinder the trust between them, thus fostering asymmetrical power relations and emotional conflicts.

Multilingualism in the workplace is becoming increasingly important due to globalization and changes in the organizational workforce. A survey article by Cenoz and Gorter (2013) presents studies on multilingualism in the workplace carried out in different regions. The article discusses both positive and problem-based accounts of multilingualism at work and provides a cross-cultural picture of workplace studies on different languages[6].

A study by Debellis et al. (2021) found that language diversity can lead to better decision-making in multinational teams. The study suggests that language diversity can provide a broader perspective and lead to more creative solutions[2].

A trend of internationalisation of the workforce in organizations was set over the past few decades. Two main globalisation processes have influenced this trend: on the one hand, companies are delocalising and expanding abroad, and on the other hand, mobility has never been this accessible, and both working categories of "white collars" – workers whose professional activity takes places mainly in an office –, and "blue collars" – workers whose work is manual – are seeking work outside their native countries. As a result, an increasing

number of workers doing their jobs in professional settings where the working language is not their mother tongue and where their colleagues or partners come from different cultural backgrounds.

In their study on multilingual workplaces, Hazel & Svennevig (2018) aimed at covering more aspects than other workplace studies. If the state of the art was rich in workplace studies, they only focused on language and did not encapsulate factors likely to determine the atmosphere in the work environment, such as the speakers (if they are first or second language users), their proficiency and how its influence on the degree to which they engage in activities, or the negotiation and selection of a working language (lingua franca).

4.1 Language Diversity and Collaboration

Choosing a common working language is a crucial step that may either reinforce fruitful collaborations or jeopardize them. As previously stated, language diversity can have a serious impact on the power relations between members of a same organization or team; better proficiency in the common language facilitates the access to leading positions. This goes both ways, as members in the higher hierarchy may also influence the choice of the working language, thus reflecting the power relations between members. Speakers with more fluent language command are more likely to be regarded as legitimate to have more power. For this reason, it is important to take these factors into consideration when designating a working language.

Language Choices within Multilingual Organizations

- **Language choice in different types of organizations**

Language choice is particularly pivotal in multilingual organizations. Depending on the organizational type, the choice of the common language in multilingual companies is made differently. Different approaches of recruitment in international businesses will influence the type of communication that will be implemented within them. This paragraph will deal with ethnocentric, polycentric and geocentric approaches of global organizations.

Whenever an international company is looking to recruit the right candidate based on skills and compatibility with the organization's culture, an ethnocentric approach is adopted. This

approach emphasizes the importance of cultural fit and seeks individuals who are willing to integrate into the company's culture. By selecting candidates who are open to embracing the organization's values and norms, the Ethnocentric Approach aims to ensure a harmonious and productive work environment in international settings. This approach is based on the belief that staff from the parent country is best suited for the job and can better represent the interests of the headquarters. All managerial decisions, including mission, vision, and objectives, are formulated by the multinational companies (MNCs) at their headquarters, and the host company is expected to follow the same.

Advantages of the ethnocentric approach include no need for a well-developed international local labor market and better communication between the parent company and the host. However, the staff of the parent country may find it difficult to adjust to the host country's culture, which is a disadvantage of this approach. It is essential to consider the cultural fit of the employees while implementing this approach.

A suitable choice in ethnocentric organization is lingua franca, as it enables a homogenous approach to culture where ideas and practices are translatable. However, the top-down approach may be a source of problems, especially in terms of acceptance of decisions made solely by leadership at the top.

The geocentric approach asserts that the hiring process of MNCs aims at recruiting the best fitted candidate for the job, regardless of their cultural or linguistic background. The idea behind this approach is to give equal opportunities to every candidate and not let their nationality be a deciding factor in their recruitment, as there are many talents and eligible candidates with good expertise in their field. This approach is particularly beneficial for MNCs, as the employees have international experiences and contacts across the borders and complementary expertise. In terms of language choice, multilingualism seems to be the most suited for this case, as employees are most likely able to speak multiple languages. Members can choose the language (or languages) they want to speal in order to communicate, leveraging cultural differences.

However, this approach has several disadvantages, including high costs associated with training, compensation, and relocation of employees. Additionally, highly centralized control of staffing is required, which can be challenging to manage. Proper scrutiny is required by the human resources department to select the most suitable person for the job, which could be

time-consuming. Moreover, this approach is costly since recruitment agencies or consultants are hired for the global search for eligible candidates.

- **Communication tools**

To overcome eventual miscommunications, multiple tools are used, such as lingua franca, translation, intercomprehension, simultaneous and consecutive interpreting and language training.

The first tool, lingua franca, can be defined as a common language serving as basis enabling communication between speakers of different languages. Nowadays, English is often times the designated lingua franca as a proof of the hegemony of the British Empire. Although having a lingua franca has its upsides, such as bringing common organizational identification, in practice, different proficiency levels can lead to misunderstandings, miscommunication and even deterioration of trust-based relations between the speakers.

Translation can also be taken into consideration as an enabler of communication in multilingual contexts. This tool is not only culture-bound, but also context bound, and it is shaped by cultural, institutional and linguistic influences. Translation is a twofold tool, following two approaches: lingo-centrism and lingo-relativism. Lingo-centrism applies principles of ethnocentrism in language use, assuming that rules in one's language are valuable in other languages. The latter – lingo-relativism – invites to reflection on one's own linguistic system and on the appropriate use of other systems from and for other languages. A qualitative translation does not reside in pure lexical transfer of meaning, it is an entire process of intercultural interactions.

Intercomprehension is a communication technique which allows people to speak in their own mother tongue. This technique implies that at least passive understanding of the other language is necessary. Intercomprehension is especially suitable for languages of the same family, for example Romance languages (French, Spanish, Italian, Romanian, Portuguese etc.) or Slavic languages (Russian, Ukrainian, Czech, Polish etc.).

Another useful tool is interpreting, whether it is simultaneous or consecutive. Simultaneous interpreting takes places in real-time, thus promoting immediate conversation, whereas the latter happens when the speaker takes a pause or after they have finished talking, supporting

active listening, reflection and understanding albeit more time-consuming. For this communication tool to be efficient, high linguistic and cultural competences are required. To make up for eventual linguistic gaps, language training is essential, and it is especially important for those in leading positions.

Finally, to ensure communication in a multilingual environment it is supporting multilingual individuals is crucial. To do so, leadership representatives need to identify the existing language competences of their colleagues, as multi-cultural and multilingual employees may act as boundary spanners between different meaning systems.

To sum up, communication, language and culture are closely intertwined, where language has the spotlight in multilingual and intercultural settings.

- **Factors influencing language choice**

The story of linguistic diversity is told since the beginning of times, with the Genesis that tells us the story of Babbel and how humans were cursed to speak different languages so that they cannot build a tower so high, so that it could reach heaven. If this story presents multilingualism as a curse, more recent studies and scholars argue that it is a blessing. What once tore people's relations apart, is now bringing them together and enriches our cultures and societies.

The population of the globe is more multilingual speakers than monolingual speakers. Not all speakers are required to be bilingual in a multilingual society. Linguists categorize a community of multilingual speakers based on the functional distribution of the languages involved.

Research shows that there must be certain motivating reasons before a person considers their language preference. The value linked to the potential gains that come along with language proficiency in the relevant field will determine the individual's motivation and involvement in this process. Utilitarian factors also have an impact on language choice. A speaker can believe that using a certain language will provide him an edge within a group or in a larger social setting.

The social, political, and economic context in which language acquisition occurs will have a significant impact on learning a second, third, or fourth language. A multilingual context is either present from birth or is shifted to (as a result of migration) for language learners. People who are born into such circumstances typically embrace the necessity for multilingualism as a natural phenomenon and can therefore easily appreciate the significance and benefits of acquiring a high degree of skill in the numerous pertinent languages. Immigrants who find themselves in multilingual settings must make some challenging decisions:

- preserve the native tongue in order to retain culture and ethnic identity.
- learn the new national tongue in order to have equal access to the riches of the new nation
- gaining proficiency in a language for greater communication, like English, for academic and professional objective
- learn a second local language, which is necessary for communication with neighbours or co-workers.

Language choice can vary across different professional settings due to various factors. First, the choice of the working language depends heavily on the context and the audience. For instance, English speakers may adapt the language variations depending on their interlocutor and context.

Diglossia is a concept that was made well-known by Charles Ferguson's acclaimed paper. It refers to a situation "where two varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play" (Ferguson, 1959, p. 325). In other words, the sociolinguistic term for the usage of two different languages in the same community for various reasons is diglossia. The two variations are High (H) and Low (L), the former being a standard variety used for 'high' purposes and the latter being a 'low' spoken vernacular. In such a region, the literary or prestige dialect and the dialect used by the bulk of the population are frequently distinct from one another. According to Ferguson (1959), a diglossic circumstance looks like this:

> "Diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codifies (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation" (p. 336).

- Code switching

According to Nordquist (2019, para. 1), code switching is the "practice of switching between two languages or between two dialects or registers of the same language at one time" It is subtle, occurs in more circumstances than just those involving bilingual speakers, and is also referred to as language mixing. Most of the time, even when we are entirely unaware of it, we code swap to identify with a particular social group. It is likely that when people are speaking with coworkers in the office, their speech will become more official.

Instead, because of the considerably more laid-back social environment when people are around friends, their speech takes on a more casual tone. These code shifts become more obvious depending on the social situation. Romaine (1994) asserts that a speaker may switch for a number of reasons, such as to reframe the contact as suited to a different social arena or to avoid defining the engagement in terms of any one social arena by repeatedly switching codes. The second function of avoidance is crucial because it acknowledges that code hopping frequently serves as a neutrality tactic or a way to determine which code is most appropriate and acceptable in a certain circumstance (p. 60).

Language choice varies across different professional settings based on factors such as context, audience, cultural identity, social norms, language proficiency, and the need for effective communication. Professionals should consider these factors when making language choices to ensure successful communication in their respective settings.

4.1.1 Language as a Bridge or Barrier

Linguistic diversity can have both positive and negative effects on team dynamics in multilingual workplaces and thus act either as a bridge between cultural and linguistic gaps or

as a barrier to communication in an intercultural and multilingual context. Communication challenges may arise, as language differences can create communication barriers within teams. Different languages, accents, and levels of proficiency can lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and difficulties in expressing ideas effectively[5]. This can result in decreased productivity and collaboration.

Moreover, power relations within teams can be impacted by proficiency in a shared language, frequently English. Discussions may be dominated by more assured speakers who are competent in the language at hand, while those who are less skilled or assured may feel excluded or afraid to participate. This may result in unequal involvement and make it more difficult to include different viewpoints.

The relationships between team members, particularly their trust and cohesiveness, may also be impacted by linguistic variety. Teams' trust and cohesion can be impacted by linguistic misunderstandings and differences in fluency. The formation of strong relationships and mutual understanding depends on effective communication, which can be hampered by language limitations. This may impact how well your team works together, collaborates, and performs.

On the plus side, interculturality and multilingualism frequently encourage creativity and innovation among teals. Different language backgrounds enable people to contribute distinctive knowledge, viewpoints, and methods to problem-solving. Through the exchange of knowledge, this diversity of viewpoints can produce more creative solutions and a wider range of ideas. Language barriers can affect how easily and successfully knowledge, ideas, and skills are shared. It is crucial that team members figure out how to overcome language hurdles and foster an inclusive workplace that promotes honest communication and information sharing.

Teams might think about a variety of options for navigating the difficulties and maximizing the advantages of linguistic diversity in multilingual settings.

- Encourage a climate of respect and inclusivity on the team so that everyone feels respected and inspired to share their individual perspectives.

- To assist team members in overcoming language hurdles, offer language assistance and resources, such as translation services or language training.

- To maintain clear communication and understanding between team members with various linguistic origins, promote active listening and empathy.

- Encourage cooperation and teamwork by using organized activities and procedures that aid in information exchange and idea production.

- Give team members the chance to interact across cultures and languages so they can learn from one another's languages and cultures.

Teams may use the power of language diversity to improve team relationships, encourage creativity, and spur innovation in multilingual workplaces by recognizing and addressing the obstacles and opportunities.

4.2 Language Policies and Practices

Multilingualism in the workplace: Policies and practices for language needs

For global businesses to formulate policies and put in place practices appropriate to a multilingual setting, they need to identify their linguistic needs. For this, it is important to determine which languages companies need in order to communicate with their clients and stakeholders, but also for their internal communication. Moreover, they must designate a language for manager and employees to master in order to cope with their professional responsibilities. The definition of the needs has inspired psychologist Abraham Maslow who categorized the different types of human needs and inspired the formulation of business needs.
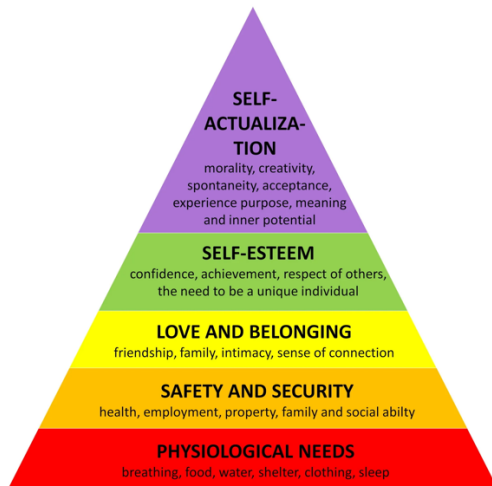
Figure 5 Maslow's Pyramid of Human Needs

Maslow's work (1945) asserts that human needs are from the bottom upwards physiological safety-related, love and belonging needs, esteem and self-actualization. According to him, in order to achieve the higher needs, the ones lower down in the hierarchy need to be satisfied first. For Maslow, there are two types of needs: deficiency and growth needs. The first category applies to the bottom part of the pyramid, linked to basic survival and safety. Deficiency arises whenever there is a need that is unmet, which intensifies the desire and motivation to fulfil said need. On the other hand, humans also have growth needs, related to one's full potential and need to self-actualize. In this case, they do not arise from unmet needs but from a desire to achieve more through intellectual and creative behaviours.

In business contexts, strategic needs reflect management's overall plan, for survival, growth, adaptability, and profitability. Individual needs and organizational needs must be differentiated, as the first one refers to individual wants, whereas the latter refers to demands, goals and requirements of the organization.

As mentioned previously, needs can be both met and unmet. A need is something that is lacking. In a linguistic context, needs can already be met, and language needs, policies and practices are strongly intertwined. Whenever a business wants to follow a language policy approach (for instance, decide on a common working language), it must conduct an in-depth analysis of its language needs. Usually, companies have an explicit language policy (clear, without arguments, extremely detailed), but sometimes an implicit one is put in place (clear

but without being verbally expressed), which has a greater impact than explicit language policies and management on the employees' professional environment and lives, as it affects their social status and even economic success.
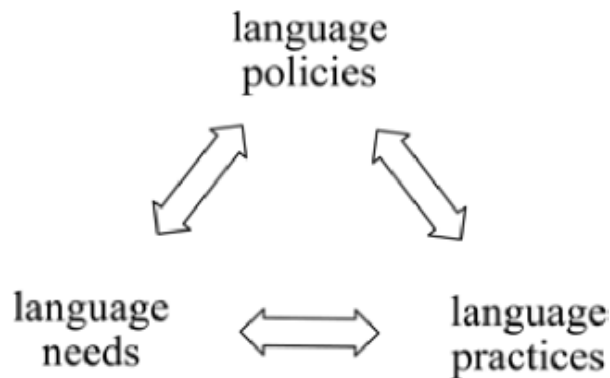

Figure 6 Triangular relationship between language policies, practices and needs

Many distinguish policies from practices through a set of differences. If policies are future-oriented, concrete, purposeful, explicit, long-term and top-down, practices are more individual, implicit, grounded in the past and emerging from the staff (bottom-up).

Language practices in companies are at once the reflection and the solution to language needs, as well as the empirical basis and the field of action of corporate language policies. Practices refer to communication through acts and habits, which may manifest through oral or written interactions between the employees.

In order to study language practices, a set of methodologies are proposed. A very effective way are observation studies or participant observation (qualitative interviews while avoiding self-report bias). Language practices are ways to resolve eventual conflicts in corporate communication situation, whether it is internal or external.

- **External communication**

This type of communication takes place between the members of the company and 'outsiders. It is especially the case in the selling business, where the business communicates with the customer or client (B2C). The

The customer's language issues are closely linked to the choice of distribution channel. Companies that deal directly with their customers or clients are typically in a weaker position and must therefore adapt linguistically; however, companies that use sales agents, joint ventures, or subsidiaries can likely force these to adapt or at the very least fall back on a lingua franca (generally, English). Many businesses use a hybrid approach, setting up subsidiaries in the more crucial markets and employing sales managers or commercial agents in the smaller ones. Most of these mediators are fluent in the languages of the nations they serve.

The utilization of inter-mediated distribution channels is crucial to the success of an English-only strategy, but not for a multinational corporation. What works well for outward communication may cause major issues for internal communication. Linguistic adaptation is crucial as it allows businesses to speak the same language as their customers (mainly the case in service companies, where there is a direct interaction between the company and the clients).

The best way for a business to ensure effective external communication is, of course, to utilize its own employees. This means either hiring staff with specific language skills (especially native speakers) or offering existing employees language training (typically during their free time but funded by the business).

The operation of business cannot overlook the fact that linguistic requirements are always subject to cost-benefit analyses with the related trade-offs. Even while it seems intuitively evident that having a foreign language competence has a favourable impact on business outcomes, there are significant challenges when trying to quantify these benefits. Language proficiency can, in some cases, create its own market prospects and businesses should have a thorough understanding of the language abilities of their entire workforce.

High-level negotiations create a unique communication environment with their own set of rules. The requirement to put both parties on an equal footing takes precedence over language considerations, which typically forbids utilizing the mother tongue in favour of a lingua franca. Small talk at the beginning or during pauses provides a good opportunity to use a partner's own language and thus score on the sympathy scale.

- **Internal communication**

In the context of internal communication, the choice of language for inter-team communication remains essential.

Multinational businesses must make language choices between three types of languages:

1. the language(s) of the country where their sites are located,
2. the language of the country where their parent company is based,
3. a lingua franca.

Because they are confident that this is the most straightforward communication answer for a global organization, an increasing number of (multinational) corporations are implementing a one-language policy. Language diversity is not viewed as a strength but as a disadvantage. Numerous studies, however, demonstrate that limiting communication to one language does not benefit workers whit a different mother tongue.

The extent to which an official language policy is observed in oral communication depends on the formality of the context. Employees only typically adhere to the official language policy in written communications, such as reports and papers, emails, and memos.

Code-switching is "the alternative use of two or more 'codes' within one conversational episode". A wide range of internal and external elements (the conversation participants, the situation, the discourse kinds involved, the media employed, etc.) affect language choice.

- **Language policies**

As mentioned previously, language policies reflect the needs of a multilingual company. A policy is a purposeful action, long-term and future oriented. It explicitly applies to the entire company and follows a top-down structure.

Language policies are formulated to influence the linguistic diversity within an organization. They are the result of decisions, objectives and orientations made by institutions in order to manage linguistically conflictive situations.

Language policies are an umbrella term for three intertwined elements: language practices in the community, combined values and beliefs attached to linguistic variations and language related management. Language management is usually part of an organisation's explicit language policy.

Corporate language policy regulates the use and non-use of languages and linguistic varieties which employees and managers have at their disposal, whether actually or potentially.

Language policy in business therefore encompasses all measures aimed, explicitly or implicitly, at influencing the language practices of employees and managers, and at stabilising or changing the power relationships between different languages and groups of speakers within a company.

- Policy levels

Language policy decisions and activities can be located at the levels of the suprastate and the state, as well as at regional, institutional and organisational levels: "many of the language management policies come from a higher level". The state policy on bi- and/or multilingualism might influence language policies in businesses.

Laws, as well as other language-related regulations and choices, will have a significant impact on the formulation of an organization's language policy.

- **Power relations and language contact**

In businesses where many different languages are often present (corporate languages, learned and used foreign languages, heritage languages and first languages), the latter may play an important role in the power relations within the business.

Diglossic/polyglossic situations may occur, which are conflictual relationship between two or more languages within a given territory deriving from their speakers' differing status and power resources. Languages used in organizations that have diglossic or polyglossic functions may be a sign of existing power disparities and imbalances between various groups of speakers or employees. Language policy choices can therefore assure some kind of certain forms of social inequality.

Not easy to set optimal language policy but it is a question of persuading more and more companies, and their managers, that the "language question" is crucial for both external and internal communication.

4.2.1 Language Accommodation Strategies in multilingual workplaces

Some information on the kinds of foreign language interactions native speakers may encounter comes from litigation involving the improper enforcement of English-only policies in the workplace. For instance, when engaging in work-related activities, native employees might overhear other workers chatting in a foreign language (EEOC, 2014). Additionally, non-native employees are required to speak the designated working language at all times, especially in social situations like during lunch (EEOC, 2001). In addition, nonnatives may be required to apply their language skills while interacting with nonnative clients (EEOC, 2000).

Language accommodation strategies are important in multilingual workplaces to ensure effective communication and collaboration among employees who speak different languages.

Studies on multilingual organizations in the US found that native speakers of English were generally accommodating towards foreign language speakers, but their level of accommodation varied depending on factors such as the language spoken and the context of the interaction. These studies also found that foreign language speakers were more likely to accommodate to English than vice versa.

The Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) underlines the importance of language accommodation strategies in facilitating effective communication and reducing misunderstandings in multilingual workplaces. According to this theory, individuals modify their speech communication practices depending on their interlocutor, which may have repercussions on the development of their interpersonal relations by converging toward and diverging away from each other. Convergence is the process of altering one's speech pattern to be more like that of their addresses in order to gain acceptance, bridge social gaps, and highlight solidarity. Through divergence, speakers keep their speech patterns to stress their membership in their ingroup or to set themselves apart from the addressee or a particular group, for example, by speaking to a host national in their ethnic dialect or language. This increases social distance.

Overall, effective language accommodation strategies in multilingual workplaces require a combination of factors, including language proficiency, cultural sensitivity, and awareness of employees' attitudes towards different languages. Employers can promote effective communication and collaboration by providing language training and resources, encouraging employees to be open-minded and accommodating towards different languages, and creating a culture of inclusivity and respect for diversity.

Convergence, divergence, and maintenance are the three basic types of adjustments that the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) focuses on. Dragojevic et al., who concur that these adjustments (convergence and divergence) can be either unconscious and automatic or conscious, support this point of view. They also remind us that "CAT seeks to explain and predict such communication adjustments, as well as how others in an interaction perceive, evaluate, and respond to them.

One's speech shifts depending on the speaker and their relation with their interlocutors. The audience design framework (ADF) refers to the style that an individual speaker will adopt in a certain language in relation with other people. The chosen style derives its meaning from the association of linguistic features with particular social groups. Thus, the evaluation one does of a social group is transferred and recognized through the style they choose and the linguistic features associated with said group. The audience design applies to all codes (languages) and levels of proficiency, whether it is monolingual or multilingual. Whenever an individual addresses to other people, they are able to adjust and even design various styles of speech. The linguistic features that are associated with a group can be employed to express a certain affiliation with the group. One may use a particular style or language variety to exert a sense of integration to another group.

Both CAT and ADF are indicators of the choices speakers make daily regarding the most human action, speaking. These choices of speech styles can influence their interpersonal and intercultural relations, but this goes both ways, as the nature of the relations (power, positioning or situational or contextual constraints) may limit our speech style choices.

4.3 Linguistic Identity and Inclusivity

National languages are an essential factor in the cultural identity. Alongside with official national languages, which are a symbol of inclusivity. In the EU, there are 24 official languages today.
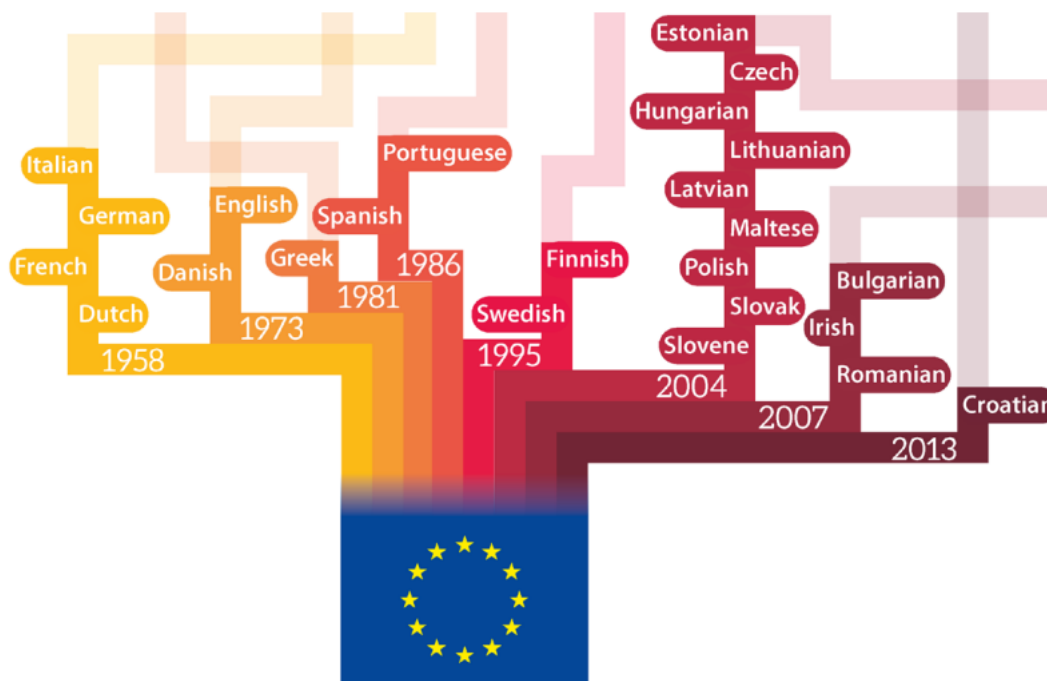

Figure 7 Official EU languages since 1958, European Parliament

Linguistic identity and inclusivity in multilingual workplaces are an important topic that has gained attention from researchers and practitioners in recent years. The following scientific articles provide insights into the impact of language diversity on knowledge sharing, creativity, and innovation in multinational and multilingual contexts, as well as the challenges and opportunities of working in multilingual teams.

Language use is one way people define themselves and others (Giles, 1977). Thus, linguistic identity is fundamental to people's social identities.

From a young age, people begin to understand the world via their linguistic identity, and members of the linguistic group aid in this process (Giles, 1977). According to Bordia & Bordia (2015), p. 416; Petrieglieri (2011), "linguistic identity influences how individuals respond to other languages as well." Two sorts of responses to foreign languages are suggested by the communication accommodation hypothesis (e.g., Giles & Ogay, 2006; Giles,

Coupland & Coupland, 1991). Collaboration occurs during convergence as communicators adapt to one another's nonverbal cues, speaking patterns, and language fluency. Divergence draws attention to both one's own unique group identification and the membership of another person's out-group (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). As stated by Gasiorek and Vincze (2016), "Convergence in bilingual or multilingual contexts [...] means [accommodating, adapting to, or] using another speaker's language (i.e., not one's own), while divergence typically entails maintaining use of one's own language."

- **The Impact of Language Diversity on Knowledge Sharing(1)**

Knowledge is regarded as the most important resource for an organization's success in the cutthroat business world of today. How effectively a business uses its knowledge resources greatly influences its capacity to outperform its rivals. Knowledge is innately present in those who are in charge of its development, use, and transformation into working procedures and processes (Bock et al., 2005; Nonaka and Konno, 1998). Organizational learning and innovation are directly affected by how individuals cooperate and share their expertise with one another (Radaelli et al., 2011).

The most recent changes in the organizational workforce have sparked researchers' and practitioners' interest in language diversity and its effects on knowledge sharing in multinational and multilingual contexts due to the globalization of both research and business activities (Alinasab et al., 2021; Debellis et al., 2021). Interestingly, Ahmad (2018, 2017) believes that knowledge sharing is a language-based activity and that using a language other than one's own is a complex and expensive procedure that reduces some of the benefits of the process. This article investigates the impact of language diversity on communication and knowledge sharing in the multicultural university research teams. The authors found that language differences can cause dysfunctional group formations, social fragmentation, and lower individuals' rhetorical capacities in diverse settings. However, operating across different cultures and languages is a crucial feature of contemporary science since it extends the chances of discovery.

- **Language diversity in the workplace can spur creativity and innovation**

Some would contend that mixing individuals from various linguistic backgrounds can promote innovation and creativity at work. Working in multilingual teams can have its

drawbacks, such as the distortion of power dynamics caused by fluency in the common language, which is frequently English, where more confident speakers take control of discussions and teams miss out on the original ideas and perspectives of those who are less confident or less proficient in a language.

- **Making meaning of multilingualism at work (3)**

This study aims to inspire more innovative approaches with a potential direct effect in multilingual workplaces, especially in those welcoming. The authors suggest that multilingualism at work can be a resource for creativity, innovation, and problem-solving. However, it can also be a source of conflict, misunderstanding, and exclusion.

- **The Impact of Language Diversity on Multinational Teamwork (5)**

This book chapter discusses research on language diversity, foreign language use, and language barriers in multinational teams. The authors found that language diversity can have both positive and negative effects on team performance, depending on the context and the way it is managed.

- **Linguistic and geographic diversity in research on second(2)**

This study assesses linguistic and geographic diversity in selected outlets of SLA and multilingualism research. The authors found that the majority of research is conducted in English, and there is a lack of diversity in terms of the languages and regions represented in the research.

- **Language policy, planning, and practice in multilingual blue-collar workplaces (6)**

This article discusses the multilingual reality of the multinational workplace and the challenges of language policy and language use in blue-collar workplaces. The authors suggest that language policy and planning should consider the linguistic diversity of the workforce and the needs of the workers.

In conclusion, linguistic identity and inclusivity in multilingual workplaces is a complex and multifaceted topic that requires attention from researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. The articles reviewed in this response highlight the importance of language diversity for

knowledge sharing, creativity, and innovation, as well as the challenges and opportunities of working in multilingual teams.

5. Research Methodology

This section deals with the methodology I employed in order to collect the data I needed for my research. The first part will deal with the presentation of the research method applied for the surveys to which the participants responded. Then, I will describe the platform used in the creation of the surveys, followed by a brief description of Organization P and the employees who took part in the surveys. The last part focuses on the description of the surveys interpretation.

5.1 Research Design and Method

As the question of this thesis is difficult to quantify, I opted for a qualitative research design through surveys. The thesis questions itself calls for qualitative research, as it answers to a 'how?' question. The research design is flexible, which is frequently associated with qualitative research, as it provides more flexibility in the data collection process. The questions were formulated in such way as so the participants could answer freely, in their own words. On the contrary a fixed research design would provide fixed answers, which would orientate the data and the participants would not be able to give complete or even accurate answers on their experience.

As mentioned previously, I contacted Organization P as I had already had a first contact with them in the past, in a different context. They were not my first choice; I had already tried to contact other companies with intercultural teams, but my search was not fruitful. The initial contact was via e-mail with the CEO of the company. We then talked on the phone, and they told me they would gladly participate in my research but want to remain anonymous.

Given that the team members come from different cultural backgrounds, they were able to respond to my questions and describe their experience and perception on the degree to which this diversity impacts their collaboration and performance and how they cope with eventual misunderstandings linked to their linguistic and cultural differences.

Due to difficulties in terms of logistics, I had to give up the initial idea of carrying out interviews and I proposed surveys instead, which they agreed upon. I had to modify the

questions, as semi-structured interviews would have allowed me to navigate through the given information and add or avoid certain questions.

5.2 The interviewees

Organization P is a cabinet of digital investigation. One of their main activities is to collect and treat public information about people or institutions that are available on the internet. They are a multinational team of French, Spanish and Colombian members, aged between 23 and 54 years old. The predominant native languages are French and Spanish, and they all speak at least a foreign language. The members' experience in the company varies between 1 and 8 years, so the relations between the members and the employees and their superiors may not all be the same.

 The designated work languages are French and English, as they all speak both, additionally to their mother tongues. It is important to mention that English is the main language in their field, as the entirety of the programs they use and develop are in English.

Organization P applies it expertise to various kinds of clients, to high-profile organizations to individuals. Their objective is public data collection, which means that they scan the available information on their clients that could either benefit or harm them.

Multilingualism is part of the employees' professional life, as they must work in multiple languages on a daily basis. According to the conducted survey, the employees speak between one and three languages at their workplace. Not only do they speak a lingua franca in their interpersonal relations, but also with their clients. Moreover, the digital world has its own languages, that not all digital professionals understand. There are professionals specialized in some digital languages but not others. The challenge regarding this matter is to be able to understand their co-workers, while making sure they are understood. This, however, can foster inequalities amongst the employees, as well as inclusion-related challenges.

- **Language barriers**

When asked if they encounter difficulties in expressing themselves in a foreign language in the professional framework, 33.3% percent of the participants replied they frequently struggle to express their message. On the contrary, 33.3% of the participants answered that they rarely struggle. The rest of the participants, in a smaller percentage, replied that they either struggle

very frequently or never. This makes one wonder if the proficiency levels of the workers in the lingua franca, especially English, is a source of struggle for them.

On an interpersonal level, the participants have replied that they did not notice any remarkable cultural shocks, but one of them had a linguistic shock due to their low proficiency in French, which rendered the communication with other employees difficult. According to them, their level in French has ameliorated since then.

Externally, the organization may face communication challenges with their clients, due to their different cultural backgrounds and their system of norms and values. For instance, during a telephonic conversation I've had with the CEO, he told me about the communication challenges they faced with one of their provider companies from India, as the workers would agree to accomplish tasks, they were not prepared for only so that they would not lose their clients. This was somehow confirmed by one of the employees, who admitted that they struggle when they are communicating with their Indian collaborators because of their thick accent and technical vocabulary.

 Another difficulty Organization P faced was in terms of values; they must be very diplomatic with their foreign partners whenever an issue occurs, as they take remarks personally. Having a somewhat emotional intelligence comes in very handy in these situations, both as a manager and as a partner. It is important to be able to understand and mediate conflicts on internal and on external level.

- **Language anxiety**

Although multilingualism and interculturality are obviously welcome in the company, some employees admitted that their communication with their superiors or even with their colleagues is not smooth, mostly driven by anxiety. This is why acquiring ICC is important, so that in situations where anxiety paralyses communication, a leader should be capable to identify and remedy the situation and encourage communication.

- **The intercultural aspect**

As stated, this company welcomes workers from different cultural backgrounds. There do not seem to be any tensions between the cultural differences between the workers, the difficulties stem more in the different linguistic backgrounds. In a business that cooperates with international partners, being able to understand, communicate and work with other cultures is

crucial. An axe of amelioration for Organization P would be to offer linguistic training or team-building activities that could help bring the workers closer and bridge the linguistic gaps between them.

- **Culture shocks**

As mentioned previously, the co-workers did not mention any cultural shocks that they encountered in the workplace,

DISCUSSION

This part will deal with a critical reflection of the research I conducted. I will first focus on the research method and its effectiveness. Then, I will present a critical overview of my findings.

To begin, the methodology I chose presented itself as a survey questionnaire with open questions, to which the participants were able to answer freely. The members of the team have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, as well as their mother tongues differ. They speak multiple languages on a daily basis in their professional setting.

I approached this company as I was already familiar with the teams from a previous experience. Although the interviews could not be conducted, an alternative was proposed of survey questionnaires. In order to collect the most accurate data, I decided to ask open questions, where the participants could use their own words. I tried to remain as objective as possible despite knowing the team members. Since the logistics and the schedule did not allow the interviews to take place, I opted for the surveys. The waiting was quite long as the participants answered the questionnaires whenever they had the chance, so the delay was important.

I used Google Forms to create the interview, as it gives the option to see the percentage of the answers that were given and thus have a more statistical and exact overview of the participant's answers. There were no issues regarding this method, as the participants were able to use it. Unfortunately, not all team members were able to respond to the questionnaires due to various reasons, so the number of participants is quite low. However, they helped me gain a global overview on how they deal with their intercultural team. As the team communicates mainly in French, I formulated the questionnaire in French.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis is to put in place a qualitative research on the topic "Multilingualism and interculturality in interregional projects and work environments". The research question was "How do employees deal with interculturality and multilingualism in their everyday professional life?". Therefore, the goal of this work was to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences, opinions and perspectives.

REFERENCES

"(PDF) UNDERSTANDING and ASSESSING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: A
SUMMARY of THEORY, RESEARCH, and PRACTICE (TECHNICAL REPORT
for the FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAM EVALUATION PROJECT)."
ResearchGate, Feb. 2007,
www.researchgate.net/publication/237592016_UNDERSTANDING_AND_ASSESSI
NG_INTERCULTURAL_COMPETENCE_A_SUMMARY_OF_THEORY_RESEA
RCH_AND_PRACTICE_TECHNICAL_REPORT_FOR_THE_FOREIGN_LANGU
AGE_PROGRAM_EVALUATION_PROJECT.

Antes, Alison L., et al. "The Role of Culture and Acculturation in Researchers' Perceptions of
Rules in Science." *Science and Engineering Ethics*, vol. 24, no. 2, 20 Mar. 2017, pp.
361–391, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-017-9876-4. Accessed 4 Sept. 2021.

Arasaratnam, Lily A. "Intercultural Competence." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of
Communication*, 3 Feb. 2016,
https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.68. Accessed 6 Aug. 2023.

Auwalu, Abba, and Muhammad Yunusa. *The Meaning and Theories of Intercultural
Communication* . 2015, https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.14026.36806. Accessed 6
Aug. 2023.

Berisso Genemo, Tesso . "Multilingualism and Language Choice in Domains."
Www.intechopen.com, 24 Dec. 2021, www.intechopen.com/chapters/79781.

Canestrino, Rossella, et al. "The Impact of Language Diversity on Knowledge Sharing within
International University Research Teams: Evidence from TED Project." *Frontiers in
Psychology*, vol. 13, 21 Apr. 2022, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.879154.
Accessed 6 Aug. 2023.

---. "The Impact of Language Diversity on Knowledge Sharing within International

     University Research Teams: Evidence from TED Project." *Frontiers in Psychology*,

     vol. 13, 21 Apr. 2022, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.879154. Accessed 6 Aug.

     2023.

Dale-Olsen, Harald, and Henning Finseraas. "Linguistic Diversity and Workplace

     Productivity." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2019, https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3457665.

     Accessed 6 Aug. 2023.

"Developing Intercultural Communication Skills for the Hybrid Workplace | British Council."

     Britishcouncil.org, 2022, corporate.britishcouncil.org/insights/developing-

     intercultural-communication-skills-hybrid-workplace.

Dietz, Gunther. "Interculturality." *The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, 5 Sept.

     2018, pp. 1–19, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118924396.wbiea1629. Accessed 6 Aug.

     2023.

Drobot, Irina-Ana. *Multilingualism and Awareness of Cultural Differences in*

     Communication. *Www.intechopen.com*, IntechOpen, 31 July 2021,

     www.intechopen.com/chapters/77761.

Graham, John R., et al. "Corporate Culture: Evidence from the Field." *Journal of Financial*

     Economics, vol. 146, no. 2, Nov. 2022, pp. 552–593,

     www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0304405X22001684,

     https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfineco.2022.07.008.

Gunnarsson, Britt-Louise. "Multilingualism in the Workplace." *Annual Review of Applied*

     Linguistics, vol. 33, 1 Mar. 2013, pp. 162–189,

     www.cambridge.org/core/journals/annual-review-of-applied-

     linguistics/article/multilingualism-in-the-

workplace/6552DC7C200C253543577EA4BA8B8086,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190513000123.

Hazel, Spencer, and Jan Svennevig. "Multilingual Workplaces – Interactional Dynamics of

the Contemporary International Workforce." *Journal of Pragmatics*, vol. 126, Mar.

2018, pp. 1–9, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2017.11.005. Accessed 6 Aug. 2023.

Heunermund, Heather. "What Are Cultural Norms?" *Study.com*, 2022,

study.com/learn/lesson/cultural-norms-definition-examples.html.

Hofstede, Geert, and Michael Minkov. *Cultures and Organizations SOFTWARE OFTHE*

MIND Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival |Mc IGrauu JHill.

2010.

Ilie, Oana-Antonia. "(PDF) the Intercultural Competence. Developing Effective Intercultural

Communication Skills." *ResearchGate*, June 2019,

www.researchgate.net/publication/334677436_The_Intercultural_Competence_Devel

oping_Effective_Intercultural_Communication_Skills.

Jan, Jeffy, et al. "Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions in Technology Acceptance Models: A

Meta-Analysis." *Universal Access in the Information Society*, 10 Dec. 2022,

https://doi.org/10.1007/s10209-022-00930-7. Accessed 6 Aug. 2023.

Lahti, Malgorzata, and Maarit Valo. "Intercultural Workplace Communication." *Oxford*

Research Encyclopedia of Communication, 27 July 2017,

https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.404.

Liu, Chengwu, and Lunxu Liu. "Dilemma in Pulmonary Metastasectomy." *Chest*, vol. 143,

no. 6, June 2013, pp. 1836–1837, https://doi.org/10.1378/chest.13-0258. Accessed 6

Aug. 2023.

Panocová, Renáta . *THEORIES of INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION Renáta*

Panocová. 2020.

Sciences, Bartel-Radic, and Po Grenoble. *Management of Intercultural Teams: The Crucial Role of Time and Space for Understanding the Perspective on Diversity*. 2006.

Taras, Vasyl, et al. "Research: How Cultural Differences Can Impact Global Teams." *Harvard Business Review*, hbr.org, 9 June 2021, hbr.org/2021/06/research-how-cultural-differences-can-impact-global-teams.

Tenzer, Helene, and Markus Pudelko. "The Impact of Language Diversity on Multinational Teamwork." *Managing Multilingual Workplaces*, 11 June 2020, pp. 88–104, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429431128-9. Accessed 6 Aug. 2023.

Tietze, Susanne , et al. *Contexts of Management Communication*. May 2022.

Vizuette, Jessica. "Language Choice in Different Social Settings." *Arcadia*, 18 May 2022, www.byarcadia.org/post/interaction-between-language-and-society-101-language-choice.

Watson, Warren E., et al. "Cultural Diversity's Impact on Interaction Process and Performance: Comparing Homogeneous and Diverse Task Groups." *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 36, no. 3, June 1993, pp. 590–602, https://doi.org/10.5465/256593. Accessed 14 Aug. 2023.

Contact e-mail

Mémoire de fin d'études : demande d'interview

Eveline Furtuna < >
to direction

Bonjour Monsieur ,

J'espère que cet email vous trouve bien.

Suite à notre conversation lors , je me permets de vous recontacter concernant mon mémoire de fin d'études.

En effet, je dois me rapprocher d'entreprises telles que la vôtre, avec un fonctionnement multilinguiste et interculturel, afin de mieux comprendre les différentes problématiques qui en découlent.

Auriez-vous une disponibilité pour un échange téléphonique afin de vous poser quelques questions à ce sujet ? Je reste joignable par mail ou par téléphone au +33 .

Je vous remercie d'avance pour le temps que vous pourrez m'accorder.

Bien à vous,
Eveline Furtuna
Master Student Regional and European Project Management

Université Bretagne Sud Lorient, University of Applied Sciences Zwickau, University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice

Survey Questionnaires

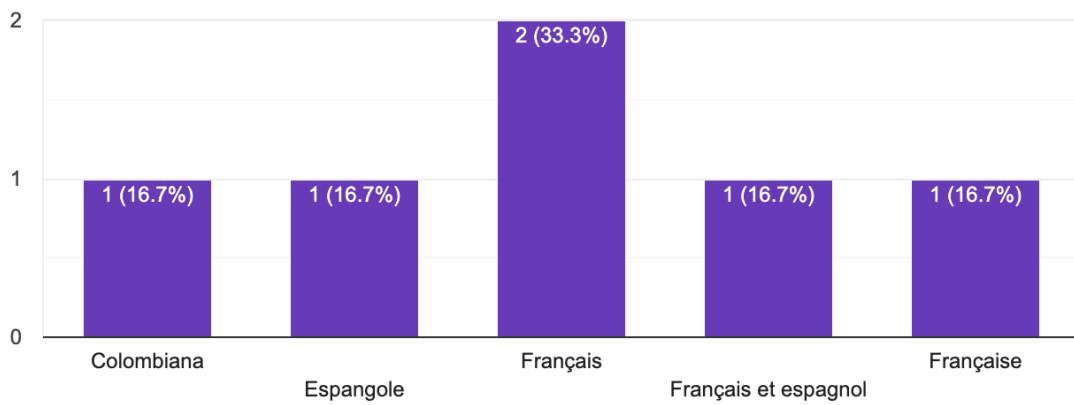**Quel est votre âge ?**

6 responses

23
54
26
48
29
31

Quelle est votre nationalité ?

6 responses

Colombiana	Espangole	Français	Français et espagnol	Française
1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)

Copy

Quelle est/sont votre/vos langue/s maternelle/s ?

6 responses

Espagnol, français	Espagnole	Français	Français et espagnol	Française
1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)

Copy
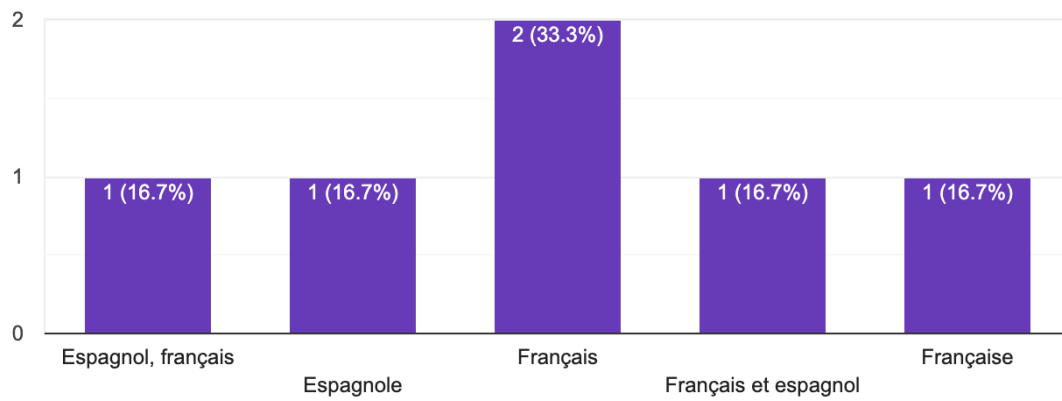
Depuis combien de temps travaillez-vous dans cette entreprise ?

6 responses

1 an	2 ans	3 ans	7 ans	8 ans
1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)

Copy
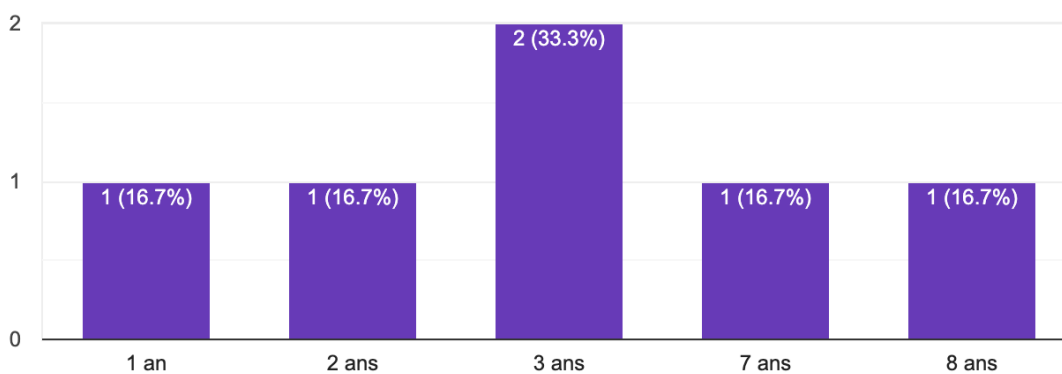
Comment avez-vous connu cette entreprise ?

6 responses

Connaissance

Recherche d'emploi

Offre de stage

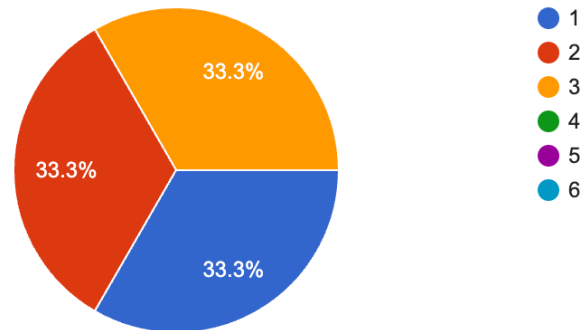Un ami travaillait dans l'entreprise et m'en a parlé

Fiche de poste LinkedIn

Recherche emploi

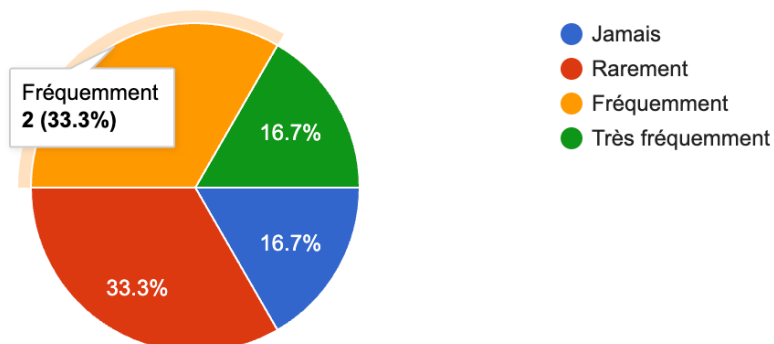## Combien de langues parlez-vous dans votre quotidien au travail ?

Copy

6 responses

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

33.3%
33.3%
33.3%

Avez-vous déjà rencontré des difficultés à vous exprimer dans une langue étrangère dans le cadre professionnel ?

Copy

6 responses

- Jamais
- Rarement
- Fréquemment
- Très fréquemment

Fréquemment
2 (33.3%)

16.7%
16.7%
33.3%

Dans vos relations interpersonnelles avec vos collègues provenant d'une culture différente, avez-vous eu des chocs culturels importants ?

6 responses

Non, aucun

non

Choc au niveau de la langue, au début je ne maitrisais pas très bien le français donc c'était difficile de discuter avec les autres employés et de réaliser les différentes missions mais je me suis vite améliorée

Il est parfois difficile de communiquer avec certains fournisseurs (Asie, Inde) car leur accent est très prononcé et leur vocabulaire est très technique

Non

Non mais c'est intéressant d'évoluer avec des personnes de cultures différentes

Comment décririez-vous la communication avec vos collègues et avec vos supérieurs si votre langue maternelle est différente ?

6 responses

Il peut être difficile d'exposer sa position dans une langue différente et donc délicat d'aborder certains sujets (augmentation de salaires, problèmes de RH, etc.)

Pas de souci particulier, on arrive toujours à se comprendre d'une façon ou d'une autre

Parfois je ne dis pas ce que j'ai envie de dire car je ne suis pas certaine des termes et je ne veux pas dire des choses qui pourraient être mal interprétées

Très enrichissant mais peut parfois créer des tensions. Par exemple dans une situation d'urgence, le fait d'avoir du mal à se comprendre peut créer une tension et rendre difficile et délicat l'échange

-

Pas de problème particulier, il faut juste être compréhensif et patient

Data about Diploma Thesis

Personal number:	**E22001I**	Date of assignment:	December 19, 2022
Name and surname:	**Eveline Desiree Elena FURTUNA**	Expected date of submission:	August 15, 2023
		Date of submission:	
Study programme:	**N6237 Regional and European Project Management**		
Branch:			
Assigned topic:	Multilingualism and Interculturality in International or Interregional Projects and Work Environments		
Thesis status:	Unfinished thesis		

Final thesis details

1. **Main topic**
   Multilingualism and Interculturality in International or Interregional Projects and Work Environments

2. **Main topic in English**

3. **Title according to student**

4. **English title as given by the student**
   Multilingualism and Interculturality in International or Interregional Projects and Work Environments

5. **Parallel name**

6. **Subtitle**
   How do interculturality and multilingualism impact efficiency in the workplace?

7. **Annotation (short thesis description)**

8. **Keywords (separate with comma)**

9. **Annotation in English (short thesis description)**

   This master's thesis deals with the research question "How do employees deal with interculturality and multilingualism in their everyday professional life?". In order to respond to this question, qualitative research has been conducted in the form of survey questionnaires. These questionnaires give a more in-depth look at how employees of a cyber security company deal with the intercultural and multilingual characters of their teams.

10. **English key words (separate with comma)**
    interculturality, multilingualism, teamwork, international teams, lingua franca

11. **Enclosed appendices**
    Screenshots of survey questions, screenshot of email

12. **Appendices bound in thesis**
    illustrations, graphs, schemes

13. **Length of thesis**
    53 p. (83 282 characters)

14. **Language of thesis**
    AN

15. **Defence procedure record**