Multilingualism Management at Work Language Policies, Practices, and Perceptions in German Multinational Corporations. A Case Study.

by

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Abstract

Workplaces are crucial sites for language use within society, where language is linked to economic matters and specific organizational frames. When it comes to multinational businesses, communication is often embedded into multilingual contexts. Against this backdrop, it is very remarkable that the "multilingual workplace" has been considered an "underresearched strategic site" (see Roberts, 2007). This thesis accounts for multilingualism as a societal phenomenon and considers the mechanisms of multilingualism and language choice in a particular organizational setting. It is examined how the phenomenon of multilingualism can affect the domain of workplace interaction, and how multilingualism is reflected in the language practices occurring in multinational corporations. From this perspective, an exploratory case study is conducted with employees of four Germany-based multinationals. The semi-structured interviews resulted in a collection of employees' personal accounts and experiences with multilingualism in the workplace. A qualitative analysis of the data collected revealed employees' degree of awareness toward language use, their reports on their language practices, their perceptions towards language(s), which functions they ascribe to language, and how multilingualism affects employees' working lives. The results of this study include a survey on dominant expressions of multilingualism in the workplace that have emerged from the data, particularly the themes of multilingualism and its interplay with migration, group dynamics, motivation, intercultural encounters, and English as a lingua franca. As the study was conducted within Germany-based multinationals, the role of German for professional life within specific corporate contexts is discussed in greater detail. This thesis emphasizes the prominence of current multilingualism in society in order to further the understanding of language in our ever-globalizing world.

Acknowledgements

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1 Introduction: On the Relevance of Research on Multilingualism in Workplaces

1.1 Motivation

In times of globalization, the exchange of goods and services is not limited by regional or national borders anymore. Instead, local markets grow together and allow trade between nations all over the world. In this respect, international businesses are major driving forces for the advancement of our global economy. Companies which operate in several national markets are called multinational corporations (MNCs). According to the nature of MNCs of being geographically dispersed over various national states, they are affected by a high degree of language diversity (Tietze, 2008; Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen & Piekkari, 2006). Given that "language is almost the essence of international business" (Welch, Welch & Piekkari, 2005, p. 11), multilingualism – in the sense of language diversity – can turn out to be a major obstacle in company-wide operations (see, e.g., Feely & Harzing, 2003; Tange & Lauring, 2009; Ehrenreich, 2010). This is of particular importance since language generally affects core management areas in multinational enterprises, including "cross-cultural communication, international negotiations, knowledge transfer and management, headquarters–subsidiary and subsidiary–subsidiary relations, … control, coordination, and integration" (Welch, Welch & Piekkari, 2005, p. 11). The management of multilingualism thus appears to be a necessary key strategy to ensure an MNC's effective and efficient communications infrastructure (see Feely & Harzing, 2003; Luo & Shenkar, 2006). Against this backdrop, it is remarkable that "most definitions of international management do not treat language as a factor worth considering" (Tietze, 2008, p. 54).

In view of the "multilingual profile" (Angouri, 2013, p. 565) of an MNC's global workforce, it is highly interesting how employees experience multilingualism and how they deal with it in their workplaces. Although workplaces are "some of the most exciting research sites" (Roberts, 2007, p. 408) in terms of language practices, the multilingual workplace is consid-

ered an "underresearched strategic site" (Roberts, 2007, p. 408). Given that a larger proportion of the world's population is considered to be multilingual than monolingual (House & Rehbein, 2004; Weber & Horner, 2012), and that people spend a considerable amount of their lifetime at work, workplaces are significant domains with regard to language use in society. Therefore, my thesis aims at exploring multilingualism in workplace settings, examining how multilingualism appears as part of employees' social realities in multinational corporations. Of particular interest will be the conceptualization of multilingualism management as the interplay between corporate language policies and individuals' language practices and perceptions.

In this sense, the title of this thesis – Multilingualism Management at Work – is ambiguous on purpose. Similar to what Susan Hunston pointed out for her 1998 Edition *Language at Work*, the title can be interpreted in two ways. If "Language at Work" can be "either the language that people use in their workplaces; or the work that language does" (p. iv), then, *Multilingualism Management at Work* can either signify multilingualism management that simply occurs in the workplace, but it can also accentuate that work is carried out through multilingualism. Similar to the papers published in the aforementioned collection, my thesis combines these two interpretations. *Multilingualism Management at Work* thus focuses on the phenomenon of multilingualism in the workplace and how it is managed by employers, by employees, and how it operates in their work-related social realities.

1.2 Outline of Chapters

This thesis approaches the topic of multilingualism from the perspective of its social relevance and examines its embedding into a specific organizational frame, i.e. the workplace. In order to elicit the ways in which multilingualism occurs in the workplace, an exploratory case study has been conducted in four German multinational corporations. Through individual interviews with employees of these enterprises, qualitative data has been collected on how multilingualism is being managed in multinational workplaces. The presentation of the data collected and the discussion of the empirical findings is at the centre of this research.

In the introductory section of this thesis, the importance of research on the topic of multilingualism in workplaces has been pointed out. Hence, the second chapter provides an overview of existing research and theoretical frameworks that are relevant to the study of multilingualism in workplace settings. Key ideas from language policy and language planning research will play a particular role for the discussion of language management, and they will lay the foundation for distinguishing the following two ways of conceiving language management. That is, on the one hand, language from a management perspective, which refers to top-down

strategies put into effect by the management boards of companies. On the other hand, language management can be understood in a fashion borrowed from Language Management Theory, which regards language management to take place on the interactional level between conversational partners as well. After the discussion of these frameworks, an overview on selected studies is provided in order to present their rationales and to identify the instruments and methods that enable empirical research on multilingualism in the workplace.

Chapter 3, then, is dedicated to presenting the explorative case study that has been conducted for this thesis in four German multinationals. First, a statement is made about the methodology that has been applied in order to find an appropriate method for eliciting language policies, practices, and perceptions in the companies. Second, the process of data collection is described, including the participant recruitment phase and the conducting of interviews. Third, the data is analyzed qualitatively. Based on the individual reports of the ten interviewees, language use in the four companies is explored case by case. This is followed by a survey on dominant expressions of multilingualism in the workplace that have emerged from the data, particularly the themes of multilingualism and its interplay with English as a lingua franca, migration, group dynamics, motivation, intercultural encounters, and the role of German.

Data analysis is followed by a discussion of the findings in view of in how far language policies, practices, and perceptions, can be conceptualized as language management in the examined cases. I conclude my thesis with a summary of my results and I emphasize the complex linguistic and social interactions that constitute language management in the four German multinational companies.

2 Theoretical Background: Multilingualism, Language Planning, and Management

2.1 Basic Terminology

2.1.1 Multilingualism

In order to approach the topic of multilingualism in the workplace, it is necessary to lay a solid theoretical foundations by defining basic terms and encompassing which frameworks are helpful for approaching the research topic. First of all, the term *multilingualism*, derived from Latin *multi* ("many") and *lingua* ("language" or "tongue"), basically refers to the mere existence of more than one or two languages. When used with regard to individuals, Bussmann's (1996) *Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics* (the translation of the German original *Lexikon der Sprachwissenschaft*) defines multilingualism as the "[a]bility of a speaker to express him-/herself in several languages with equal and native-like proficiency … [whereby] proficiency in one language usually dominates" (Bussmann, 1996, p. 317).

Hence, this first understanding of multilingualism refers to individual multilingualism. Usually, this definition applies to the more specific terms *bilingualism* or *trilingualism.* It needs to be taken into account that Bussmann's (1996) definition of individual multilingualism assumes very high and balanced competencies in separate languages. There is, however, a second meaning of the term multilingualism, i.e. it denotes a "[c]oexistence of several languages within a politically defined society as, for example, in India, Canada, or Switzerland" (Bussmann, 1996, p. 317).

In this thesis, the expression *multilingualism* is based on this second definition, as it is meant to characterize a particular phenomenon on the societal level. *Politically defined* refers to the traditional notions of being territorially defined by, e.g., a nation state. However, it can also refer to being socially or institutionally defined. Nevertheless, both phenomena, individual and

societal multilingualism, can co-occur and are therefore likely to be discussed in conjunction with one another. In order to avoid terminological confusion, I will use the term *plurilingualism* to indicate the existence of several languages within individuals. Consequently, I will apply the term multilingualism to denote language diversity with regard to a social entity. As the title suggests, this thesis is aimed at discussing the management of multilingualism in multinational corporations. It will be of particular interest how languages are being dealt with by the individuals who are part of the specific social structure, including but not limited to the authorities and the decision-makers of the companies. The field of research that is occupied with language and language use in the context of specific social structures is *Language Policy and Planning*.

2.1.2 Language Policy and Planning

Language planning is defined as the

> [m]easures taken by organizations (usually sanctioned and supported by the state) for the development and dissemination of panregional trade languages. Emphasis may be placed on (a) the transcription of previously unwritten languages; (b) the modernization of the language system (primarily by expanding the vocabulary with specialized terminology), and (c) the expansion of the regional use of a language. (Bussmann, 1996, pp. 264-264)

As defined by Bussmann (1996), *language policy* then refers to

> Political measures aimed at introducing, implementing, and defining the regional use of languages, such as the use of individual languages in multilingual states ... the acceptance of official languages and working languages in international organizations, and regulations and agreements about foreign-language instruction. (Bussmann, 1996, p. 264)

Both concepts, the concept of language planning, and the concept of language policy, are closely interlinked and, therefore, rather difficult to distinguish. According to the above listed definitions, language planning does not necessarily need to be influenced by government institutions, although it "usually" (Bussmann, 1996, p. 264) is, and it is focused mainly on planning a language itself, i.e. documenting a thus far undocumented language, or expanding the lexicon of a language; whereas language policy seems to be more or less exclusively directed at language-external planning processes, for example, at the function and status of certain languages, put into effect by either states or other organizations.

The entry on *Language planning* (Clyne, 2003, pp. 409-412; Baldauf & Ingram, 2003, pp. 412-416) in the *International Encyclopedia of Linguistics* provides a more detailed account on this topic, while no separate entry is enlisted under *Language Policy*. Instead, it is directly cross-referenced with the *Language Planning* entry. Generally, language planning "denotes a deliberate response to language problems—systematic, future-oriented, and based on a theoretical framework" (Clyne, 2003, p. 409). Language planning thus presupposes the existence of and awareness towards "language problems," plus the conscious decision to do something about these problems, i.e. to solve them with the help of some model or other abstraction. As indicated by Clyne (2003), one "still widely accepted" (p. 409) understanding of language planning "included virtually all societal attention to language problems" (p. 409). However, the reaction to these problems is integrated in quite a broad sense into the language planning concept, covering all kinds of attention that occurs on the level of society.

In language planning, a distinction can be made between *corpus planning* on the one hand, and *status planning* on the other. Establishing new or improving existing terminology in a language, dealing with issues of standard/non-standard, or "supporting an ideological cause by eliminating sexist, racist, or militaristic elements in the language," (Clyne, 2003, p. 409) falls under the category of corpus planning. Questions of national identity, language spread, or the status of minority languages are dealt with in status planning (see Clyne, 2003). The following section introduces major concepts that underlie language policy and planning, while key ideas pertinent to this field of research are identified.

2.2 Frameworks

2.2.1 Language Planning Frameworks

There is a considerable research tradition in language policy and planning scholarship. One important preliminary comment that has been made by Ricento (2006b) is "that there is no overarching theory of LP in planning" (p. 10). Hence, the following section aims at summing up major themes and considerations that have been shaping research in this field. This section draws mainly on the substantial volume *An Introduction to Language Policy. Theory and Method* by Ricento (2006). In particular, two chapters by the editor himself shed light on different perspectives on the broad field of language policy.

In the chapter "Language Policy: Theory and Practice – An Introduction", Ricento (2006b) provides an overview on the history of theories and methods in the language policy field. Reviewing western-trained linguists' roles in the newly emerging nations in Africa, South America, or Asia during the 1950s and 1960s (see Ricento 2006b, pp. 12-13) and the critical

reconsideration thereof up from the 1980s, Ricento (2006b) identifies a variety of ideologies that shaped language policy and planning activities in (formerly colonial) contact situations between indigenous and colonial languages. Ricento specifies these ideologies that went hand in hand with "Western-based academic" (Ricento, 2006b, p. 15) language-planning, namely

> ideologies about (1) the nature of language – that is, as a finite, stable, standard-
> ized, rule-governed instrument for communication; (2) monolingualism and cul-
> tural homogeneity as necessary requirements for social and economic progress,
> modernization, and national unity (with stable diglossia as a fall-back, compro-
> mise position); and (3) language selection as a matter of 'rational choice' in which
> all options are equally available to everyone, or could be made equally available.
> (Ricento, 2006b, pp. 14-15)

The author further points out that ideologies such as these "have become widely accepted, commonsense ideas, especially in Western societies" (Ricento, 2006b, p. 15). For the 1990s, Ricento (2006b) therefore depicts the emergence of critical approaches that started to challenge existent sociolinguistic research. A new interpretation of language shift was consolidated, characterizing language shift as "a manifestation of asymmetrical power relations based on social structures and ideologies that position groups – and their languages – hierarchically within a society. (Ricento, 2006b, p. 15). Hence,

> societal multilingualism – not monolingualism – was seen as normal, and its
> recognition and acceptance were taken as an important requirement for the re-
> alization of meaningful democracy, since the constituent groups of the state are
> better positioned to participate as equals when their cultures and languages are
> respected and afforded legitimacy through institutional recognition and support.
> (Ricento, 2006b, p. 15)

In the second half of the chapter, Ricento (2006b) turns to the interlinkage between theory and practice in the language policy field. The author mentions research on linguistic imperialism, including researchers' opposing views about the existence and the spread of "big' languages," such as English or French (p. 17). In this respect, Ricento points to research by Phillipson, a chapter by whom is contained in the same edition (see Phillipson, 2006), and which deals with "language rights," or "linguistic human rights" (Ricento, 2006b, p. 17). The gist of linguistic human rights research is summed up by Ricento (2006b), which is that "an individual's right to use and learn his or her native language is as basic a human right as that to the free exercise of religion, or the right of ethnic groups to maintain their cultures and beliefs" (Ricento, 2006b, p. 17).

Theoretical aspects to language with view on language policy and planning are dealt with in

Ricento (2006c). Central to much work in the language planning field is an understanding of language as "a code with various forms (written, spoken, standard, non-standard, etc.), functions (usually expressed in terms of domains and relative status within a polity), and value (as a medium of exchange, with particular material and non-material qualities)" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 3). The conceptualization of language as a "fixed code" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 3) contrasts with the idea of languages as "discourses" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 4). Ricento (2006c) illustrates this mind-set with the example of English and its role in connection to linguistic imperialism.

There, the understanding of English as a "discrete code" is seen as "simplistic and deterministic" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 4). Instead, a conception of "Englishes" is preferred, where "'English' serves a variety of symbolic and practical functions in the diverse settings where it is used; [and where] it does not adhere to any particular cultural or socioeconomic perspective" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 4). Thus, the evaluation of a language especially in situations of language contact, "will be based largely on extra-linguistic factors related to theories of what constitutes the social 'good,' including minimal criteria necessary to facilitate socioeconomic equality and fairness" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 4). According to the author, this perspective has a significant impact on the question of "language status," which is described as

> the perceived relative value of named language, usually related to its social utility, which encompasses its so-called market value as a mode of communication, as well as more subjective features … The value(s) attached to or associated with a language, therefore, do not depend exclusively, or even necessarily, on any official or legal status conferred by a state through its executive, legislative, or judicial branches. (Ricento, 2006c, p. 5)

It is pointed out that language status is heavily influenced by mythology, aesthetics, and ideology, and that "language-policy goals which seek to enhance or modify in some way the social role(s) and functions of language(s) cannot override the effects of what Schiffman calls a society's linguistic culture (Ricento, 2006c, p. 5). As language ideology plays a major role in view of language status, it needs to be considered in theories about language policy and planning. With regard to Hornberger's (2006) chapter in the same volume, Ricento (2006c) points to the fact that language planning is usually embedded into diverse multicultural settings "in which planning for one language has repercussions on other languages and ethnolinguistic groups," particularly on power relations and socioeconomic conditions (Ricento, 2006c, p. 5-6). Therefore, the triad of ideology, ecology, and agency is relevant to exploring "how and why things are the way they are, and also to evaluate whose interests and whose values are being served when language plans and policies are proposed, implemented, or evaluated" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 6). According to Ricento, this orientation in language policy and planning requires new conceptualization of common categories, such as the "nation-state," or the power of state

governments. Ricento points to the works of political scientists that deal with questions that can help us approach language policy conflicts. Besides issues such as identity politics, the tension between equality and inequality is necessary to understanding problems that emerge from language policies (see Ricento, 2006c, p. 6). The author illustrates this with an example from the US:

> In the US context, assimilationists believe that the key to equal opportunity for non-English speakers is a shift to English as rapidly as possible; therefore, according to assimilationists, policies that might encourage non-English speakers to continue to rely on their native languages, such as bilingual education, bilingual ballots, etc., are actually *hindering* their chances of achieving social equality. On the other hand, pluralists believe that the US has always been a multilingual society, even though English has always been the dominant language. For pluralists, the relation between language and social equality and mobility is less clear cut, and they argue that the achievement of equal opportunity should take into account the country's fundamental ethnolinguistic diversity. [original emphasis] (Ricento, 2006c, p. 6)

Ricento refers to the political scientist Will Kymlicka, who is a supporter of the pluralist view, and who puts the "well-being of the individual self" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 6) at the core of the community. For "cultural communities" it is therefore "important to preserve the[ir] structure … in order to preserve meaningful choices about 'the good' for the individual" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 6). Thomas Ricento further points to research that deals with majority languages and their advancement of social mobility, earnings, and cultural assimilation (see Ricento, 2006c, p. 7). A branch of research that deals with the economic effects of language on other social domains is is the field of *economics of language*, where economic models are applied to linguistic entities with the objective of deducing testable generalizations (see, e.g., Grin, Sfreddo & Vaillancourt, 2010).

Ricento lists several topics from economics of language research, such as "language and earnings, language dynamics, language and economic activity, and the economics of language-policy evaluation" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 7). What is significant is that "while mainstream economic models and analyses can provide useful data for policy-makers to help guide their decision-making, when it comes to arguments in support of language diversity, almost every type of 'market failure' occurs" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 7). Ricento reports on the position of economics of language scholar François Grin, who says that, when that point is reached, "state intervention on behalf of language diversity is both justified and necessary" (Ricento, 2006c, p. 7).

From the presented overview on theoretical approaches to language policy and planning,

Thomas Ricento draws several conclusions. Of particular importance is the following:

> Language-policy debates are always about more than language. Insights from political, economic, and social theory can provide scholars in LPP [Language Policy and Planning] research with the tools to explain what is at stake, why it matters, and what effect particular policies or policy approaches might (or might not) have on such debates. (Ricento, 2006c, pp. 7-8)

Also, the author emphasizes that "ideologies about language generally and specific languages in particular have real effects on language policies and practices, and delimit to a large extent what is and is not possible in the realm of language planning and policy-making (Ricento, 2006c, pp. 7-8). Ricento (2006b) aimed at illustrating the broad range of theories and models that are influenced by various disciplines and that have shaped language policy research. The author himself acknowledges that the actual "practice of language planning, that is, the development, implementation, and evaluation of specific language policies … is an understudied facet of LP research" (Ricento, 2006b, p. 18), which is due to a lack of "clearly articulated models for analyzing and comparing different policy approaches in defined contexts, and ways to evaluate the outcomes that can be applied in different settings" (Ricento, 2006b, p. 18). In this vein, he emphasizes how important it is that empirical evidence is collected to justify language policy measures.

Given that "the LPP field is rich in frameworks and typologies," Hornberger (2006) attempts to bring these manifold perspectives together while reconsidering "one integrative framework" (2006, p. 28) that she has already proposed in earlier work. The framework consists of a two-dimensional[1] conceptualization of language policy and planning (see Figure 2.1), which organizes LPP along the axes of society—language ("LPP types") and form—function ("LPP approaches") (see Hornberger, 2006, p. 28). On the vertical axis, types of LPP comprise the areas of 1) Status planning, 2) Acquisition planning, and 3) Corpus planning.

Hornberger suggests that "[w]e may think of status planning as those efforts directed toward the allocation of functions of languages/literacies in a given speech community; corpus planning as those efforts related to the adequacy of the form or structure of languages/literacies; and acquisition planning as efforts to influence the allocation of users or the distribution of languages/literacies" (p. 28). Approaches to language policy and planning are allocated along the horizontal axis and categorize "Policy planning approaches" vs. "Cultivation planning approaches" (Hornberger, 2006, p. 29), the former being oriented toward the form of language itself, the latter on the function of language. Central to this framework is the display of about

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[1]Although the framework proposed by Hornberger (2006) is conceptualized along two spatial dimensions, the author paradoxically entitles it to have four or even six dimensions (see p. 30). Later on, the term "dimensions" is used interchangeably with "cells of the framework" (see p. 30).

Types	Policy planning approach (on form)	Cultivation planning approach (on function)
Status planning (about uses of language)	**Officilization** **Nationalization** **Standardization of status** **Proscription**	**Revival** **Maintenance** **Spread** **Interlingual communicaiton –** International, intranational
Acquisition planning (about users of language)	**Group** **Education/School** **Literary** **Religious** **Mass media** **Work**	**Reacquisition** **Maintenance** **Shift** **Foreign language/second** language/literacy
	Selection Language's formal role in society *Extra-linguistic aims*	Implementations Language's functional role in society *Extra-linguistic aims*
Corpus planning (about language)	**Standardization of corpus** **Standarization of auxiliary** codes **Graphization**	**Modernization** (new functions) **Lexical** **Stylistic** **Renovation** (new forms, old functions) **Purification** **Reform** **Stylistic simplification** **Terminology unification**
	Codification Language's formulates *Linguistic aims*	Elaboration Language's functions *Semi-linguistic aims*

Figure 2.1: Language policy and planning goals: an integrative framework. Reprinted from: "Frameworks and Models in Language Policy and Planning," (p. 29) by N. H. Hornberger, 2006, In T. Ricento (Ed.), *An Introduction to Language Policy. Theory and Method*, Malden: Blackwell.

30 LPP goals that have been suggested in language policy and planning literature. The author further refers to research that has been adding critical perspectives to language policy and planning research, providing an outlook on directions that the LPP field may take, such as language ideology or language ecology (see pp. 34-35).

2.2.2 Language Management Frameworks

Language ideology also plays an important role in the language policy framework suggested by Spolsky (2004). In his book *Language Policy*, Spolsky (2004) presents a model of language policy that is build up on the three components language ideology and beliefs, language practices, and language management and planning. *Language beliefs and ideology* refers to the

sets of beliefs about languages and language use, while *language planning* refers to interventions towards language use or the manipulation of it. *Language practices* refers to the choice of languages or varieties of languages in a speech community. Spolsky (2004) views these three branches as interlinked entities which influence each other. The terms *language planning* or language policy are used synonymously with the term *language management.* In his monograph *Language Management*, he prefers the term *language management* over the previously utilized one, *language policy.* Spolsky (2009) emphasizes that language management is a "social phenomenon" (p. 2) that occurs in speech communities, or social domains, e.g. the family, the school, the military, or the workplace. However, within Spolsky's (2004) framework, it can be considered "management only when we can identify the manager" (p. 6). In a later publication, he thus defines *language management* as the "efforts by some members of a speech community who have or believe they have authority over other members to modify their language practice, such as by forcing or encouraging them to use a different variety or even a different variant" (Spolsky, 2012, p. 5). Hence, this framework has a rather top-down perspective on language management as it presupposes the existence of an identifiable managing authority.

Transferred to the business realm, language management would then be exercised performed by a company's decision makers, i.e. the members of the corporate management. In a similar top-down fashion, the business scholars Lauring and Selmer (2012) specify language management as the "conscious management decisions about policies, practices, and reward structures that relate to organization members' use of language" (Lauring & Selmer, 2012, p. 157; see also Lauring & Selmer, 2011). Multinational corporations can choose from a range of management options (see Yuan, 2013), in order to "overcome the language barrier" (Andersen & Rasmussen, 2004, p. 233).

Feely and Harzing (2003) provide an overview on this topic in their article "Language Management in Multinational Companies." In that publication, the authors approach the question of how to ensure effective global corporate communications, and address problems that arise due to the so-called language barrier. The language barrier in companies and organization can have costs that go beyond expenses for translating or interpreting, as the barrier "distorts and damages relationships, which ultimately relates to issues such as "Buyer/Seller Relationships, Foreign Market Expansion, Joint Ventures, HQ-subsidiary Relationships, or Staffing policies (see Feely & Harzing 2003, pp. 41-42). Hence, the authors suggest a list of options for a multinational company to manage language. The Lingua Franca method basically means "to rely on ones native tongues," (p. 43), although the authors (Feely & Harzing, 2003) admit that this is "realistic only for English speaking companies" (p. 43). Furthermore, Feely and Harzing (2003) point out that

reliance on a single language is a strategy that is fatally flawed. It makes no allowance for the growing trend in Linguistic Nationalism where buyers in Asia, South Ameria and the Middle East in particular, are asserting their right to 'work in the language of the customer.' It also fails to recognise the increasing vitality of languages such as Spanish, Arabic and Chinese that over time are likely to challenge the dominance of English as a lingua franca. ... Finally, the total reliance on a single language puts the English speaker at risk in negotiations. Contracts, rules and legislation are invariably written in the local language, and a company unable to operate in that language is vulnerable. (p. 43)

Functional Multilingualism is characterized through "relying on a mix of languages, pidgins and gestures to communicate … [whereby] such a shared effort to make one another understand might be considered an aid to the bonding process with the frustration of communication being regularly punctuated by moments of absurdity and humour" (Feely & Harzing 2003, p. 43). The authors consider this method to have similar disadvantages as the Lingua Franca method, plus that it can facilitate a "cognitive divergence" between speakers (Feely & Harzing 2003, p. 43).

Similar to the Lingua Franca method, but not limited to English, is the option of a "Corporate Language". It allows for the company to choose one language for the entirety of their communications which means that formal, as well as information, communication is conducted in the chosen corporate language. This is expected to simplify processes related to reporting, documentation, to add to a feeling of corporate culture, and, generally, to "focus the management of language problems" (Feely & Harzing 2003, p. 45). The authors (Feely & Harzing 2003) point out that the implementation of this method, however, is a long-term process, second, that it sometimes is "impossible to adopt a single language for all circumstances," (p. 45) in particular "if there is a large body of corporate personnel lacking competence in the chosen language" (p. 45). This could be solved through the Selective Recruitment option, that focuses on the hiring process and relies on the language skills employees already possess when they become a part of the company (Feely & Harzing, 2003, p. 46). However, this approach only affects new employees, and it presupposes that individuals with "the right level and mix of language skills" are available (Feely & Harzing, 2003, p. 46).

The option of "External Language Resources" comprises the services of translators and interpreters which is not only quite expensive, but it is very likely to be connected to a lack of knowledge of the subject matter, misunderstandings, or the "loss of rhetorical power ... [such as] persuasion [or] humour" (Feely & Harzing 2003, p. 44). Another translation-based approach is option J) Machine Translation, where computers are entrusted with translation work (see Feely & Harzing 2003, p. 49). The authors mention Controlled Language to be

another language management option which is characterized by a simplified version of a language regarding vocabulary or syntax – especially helpful in combination with Machine Translation – but whose uses are "clearly limited to conveying operational detail" (Feely & Harzing 2003, p. 50).

Under the circumstances of a lack of necessary language skills among current employees, companies are likely to employ the method of "Language Nodes," i.e. that "key personnel ... establish themselves as the default communications channel between the company and the external world" (Feely & Harzing, 2003, p. 46). This approach has been evaluated to have major disadvantages, such as: preventing the language node persons from carrying out their regular tasks, overburdening them with challenging technical translations, or triggering power imbalances through language nodes as "communication gatekeeper." Special applications of the Language Node strategy is expatriation or inpatriation of personnel.

Feely and Harzing (2003) have emphasized that it is important to identify language barriers, and they have suggested a variety of options to strategically manage language. Although the presented set of tools sheds light on the various aspects of language diversity that affect communications and possibly hamper processes in multinational companies, it links language management only with processes that are controlled for by the executives and the management board of the firms. This understanding of language management does not suffice to understand the social implications that relate to multilingualism in an organizational context. In order to grasp the phenomenon of multilingualism in a multinational organization, it is helpful to incorporate concepts from language policy and planning research that do not take a top-down perspective on language management only.

A framework that is to be considered very fruitful for the exploration of multilingualism, and which provides the basis for the understanding of management displayed in this thesis, is Language Management Theory. Rooted in the theory of language correction suggested by the Czech scholar Jiří Neustupný in 1978, Language Management Theory (LMT) has developed as an enhancement to existent approaches on language planning (see Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003). Neustupný and Nekvapil (2003) commented on LMT:

> In this theory the word *Management* refers to a wide range of acts of attention to 'language problems'. In the language planning theory of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s 'language problems' were principally problems of language in the narrow sense of the word. Current Language Management Theory aims to incorporate not only the whole of language, defined in the traditional narrow sense, but a wide range of additional problems implicating discourse, politeness, communication in intercultural contact situations, matters arising in proof reading, speech therapy or literary criticism. [original emphasis] (p. 185)

As has been already determined for the definition of language planning, there is an orientation toward problems that are given some kind of attention. New to this conceptualization is the expansion to problems beyond the linguistic system as such, towards a problems related to language in use. In the LMT framework, a distinction is made between forms of simple management and forms of organised management (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003). The former, simple management, refers to "management of problems as they appear in individual communication acts; for example, the problem of spelling a particular word, or the problem of how to redress the use of an expression that a speaker has just uttered but now considers as not sufficiently polite" (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003, p. 185). The latter, organised management is present if "more than one person participates in the management process; discourse about management takes place; [and if] thought and ideology intervene" (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003, p. 185).

The framework assumes these two forms of management as two opposite poles with "gradual transitions between the two extremes," an prototypical example of "highly organized management" being language reform (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003, p. 185). Furthermore, the basic idea underlying LMT is that "in principle, language problems originate in simple management, and from there they are transferred to organised management" (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003, p. 185). The transition is assumed to be carried out through five consecutive stages, as explained by Neustupný and Nekvapil (2003), it all

> "commence[s] with the [perceived] *deviation* from a norm … Following the deviation stage, the deviation may be noted, a noted deviation may be *evaluated*, and subsequently an *adjustment plan* selected. In the last stage the plan may be *implemented.* [original emphases]" (p. 185-186)

In addition to this proposed segmentation of the language management process, a hierarchy is established with regard to the domains which are affected by language management at large. These domains are "Socioeconomic Management" at the top, after that comes "Communicative Management," and then "Linguistic Management" (p. 186), while this hierarchization is meant to indicate that changes to a subordinate category are only fully implementable if processes related to the higher ranked domains is also taken care of (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003). A small example is provided, illustrating that "removing gender-loaded forms of language" (p. 186) requires actions with regard to the communicative practices and therefore actions to change socioeconomic conditions (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003). An important feature to LMT is the provision for dynamics of power which influence language management processes in social communities (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003).

One of the great advantages of Language Management Theory that makes the framework very valuable for this thesis, is that its scope reaches beyond traditional entities of language plan-

ning and policy. LMT does not only deal with processes on the governmental level of states. Instead, "Language Management Theory emphasizes management at a number of levels: the individual, associations, social organisations, media, economic bodies, educational institutions, local government, central government, or international organisations" (Neustupný & Nekvapil, 2003, p. 186).

Similar to the distinction between simple and organized management, Nekvapil and Nekula (2006) in their study on language management in Czech multinationals discuss the macro and micro perspective on language management. Emanating from traditional language planning, the term macro planning applies to language planning which "tak[es] place at the level of the state or … [is being] performed by state/governmental institutions" (Nekvapil & Nekula, 2006, p. 307). Accordingly, language planning activities enforced by social entities below the state level are sometimes referred to as micro planning. This would include language planning actions through a variety of institutions, such as "banks, companies, libraries, schools, shops, hospitals, courts or services" (Nekvapil & Nekula, 2006, p. 308). However, Nekvapil and Nekula (2006) challenge this utilization of the macro-micro terminology when stating:

> [W]e should not ignore the fact that both macro and micro language planning are conceptualised here on the same basis – they merely operate within social structures of different complexity. 'Macro' and 'micro' represent extreme limits of social space ('continuum'), which could be further subdivided into 'macros' and 'micros' of various complexities. (p. 308)

Instead, the authors turn to a different conceptualization. On the basis of the sociological distinction of macro, i.e. social structure, and micro, i.e. interaction, Nekvapil and Nekula (2006) define their position as one where "the relation between macro and micro is dialectical" (see p. 308). This means that both dimensions, macro and micro, are interwoven, and phenomena occurring in either one are mutually dependent.

> What this means is firstly that in particular interactions the participants recognisably orient themselves towards social structures and thereby reproduce them, and secondly, that in particular interactions the participants contribute to the transformation of these structures. (Nekvapil & Nekula, 2006, p. 308)

Similarly, Sherman and Strubell (2013) distinguish between the "organisational perspective," and the "individual perspective" to language diversity (Sherman & Strubell, 2013, p. 511). From an organizational perspective, it is usually examined how language diversity is being dealt with in a top-down fashion, i.e. from the company point of view. Relating to the individual perspective, then, makes it possible to "examin[e] the ways in which the presence of multiple languages in the workplace is managed by employees" (Sherman & Strubell, 2013,

p. 512).

Yet another conceptualization of language policy is presented by Shohamy (2006). Where Spolsky (2004) argues for language policy consisting of the components planning, practices, and ideologies, Shohamy sees language policy in the space between language practices and language ideology. Shohamy (2006) argues that

> the real LP of a political and social entity should be observed not merely through declared policy statements but rather through a variety of devices that are used to perpetuate language practices, often in covert and implicit ways. Moreover, it is claimed that these devices, which on the surface may not be viewed as policy devices, are strongly affecting de facto policies, given their direct effects and consequences on language practice. Thus, it is only through the observations of the effects of these very devices that the real language policy of an entity can be understood and interpreted. (p. 45-46)

Thus, the *hidden agendas* (Shohamy, 2006) behind language policy need to go beyond what is stated explicitly in official documents, such as in legislation. Eliciting "real" (p. xv) policy requires to examine its underlying mechanisms. Both "overt" and "covert" mechanisms (p. xv) influence and control how language is being used. *Language practices* are seen by Shohamy (2006) as the outcome of these mechanisms. These covert, or implicit, language policies refer to "de facto practices" (p. 50) where dominant language behaviour is anchored in, e.g. a society's linguistic culture (see Shohamy, 2006, p. 51).

As has been shown, there is indeed a variety of different understandings of language management. Although clearly originated in language policy and planning, there are several concepts to language management that differ from previous LPP research. Therefore, it is highly interesting to see how these theoretical conceptualizations of language management have been applied for studies on multilingualism in workplaces and international businesses. For this purpose, I provide an overview of three significant studies by Angouri (2013), Kingsley (2013), and Tange and Lauring (2009).

2.3 Overview of Selected Studies on Multilingualism in Workplaces

Angouri (2013) has examined the "multilingual reality of the multinational workplace" through an analysis of the interplay of language policy and language use in three multinationals. The author (Angouri, 2013) draws on existing research on language in the workplace, and depicts

that concepts from language policy and planning research can help to study multilingualism in companies. In particular, it is referred to Language Management Theory and the work by Nekvapil and Nekula (2006), who have analyzed the multilingual situation in a Czech subsidiary of a multinational company, under consideration of the micro-/meso-/macro levels of language policy and planning. Also, Angouri (2013) makes reference to the works by Spolsky (2004) and Shohamy (2006), whose frameworks incorporate the aspects of language ideologies and power structures into the study of language policies. Angouri's (2013) study

> aims to take an exploratory approach and focuses on employees' understanding of processes of language choice in their workplace and subsequently the implications of language policy for their everyday practices. (p. 568)

As emphasized by the author, employees' perceptions towards multilingualism in their workplace are foregrounded throughout the study. In order to approach this object of research, both qualitative and quantitative data has been collected in European multinationals over a period of three years. Three main findings have emerged from Angouri's (2013) study. First, bottom-up policies, i.e. de facto language policies are much more powerful than "real" official policies in MNCs. Since contemporary organizational change in work contexts transforms how "employees assume roles and responsibilities for standardising practices in their workplace" (Angouri, 2013, p. 577), this leads to languages policies being rather "flexible" (p. 577).

Second, it is suggested that the issue of language policies and language use should be considered in the context of human resources and strategic management, as "language use reflects and may reinforce pre-existing divisions" (p. 577) among employees or organizational units. The third, and main, conclusion that has been drawn from the study is that multilingualism is being "constructed … as an 'opportunity' and a 'given reality.'" Language diversity and language choice is found to strongly affect personal relationships between employees, with English having an exceptional position as it is being perceived as "the 'safest option' for including employees in both work and social talk" (p. 578). In conclusion, the work by Angouri (2013) encourages further research on language policy and language use in workplaces.

Kingsley's (2013) work on "Language choice in multilingual encounters in transnational workplaces" examines the configuration of multilingualism within an international banking context in multilingual Luxembourg. The study (Kingsley, 2013) is directed at "explor[ing] employees' overall language practices in Luxembourg as a part of a policy analysis in multilingual workplaces" (p. 536), which indicates a strong interlinkage between the concept of language policy, and the concept of language practices. In that study, the term "language policy" is applied to two different perspectives on language use. "Explicit official language policy" is used to refer to top-down management of language practices, whereas "implicit policy" indicates employees' practices and employees' beliefs towards language practices (see Kingsley,

2013). Kingsley's (2013) study operationalizes this second understanding and focuses on the variety of ways that language is practised at work by an "ethnolinguistically diverse work-forc[e]" (p. 539), with regard to different communicative genres.

The study (Kingsley, 2013) draws mainly on theoretical frameworks by Spolsky (2004) and Shohamy (2006), which provided a basis for studying explicit and implicit language policy. Other frameworks facilitated a more detailed analysis, especially the ethnography framework has helped to explore language practices (see Kingsley, 2013). However, ethnographic observation was not conducted for the study due to limited access to the banking environment from the outside. Instead, Kingsley (2013) in her study of three multinational banks in Luxembourg has focused on "employees' reported language choices and practices … rather than actual practices," hence taking a more "macro-level perspective" on the issue of multilingualism in the workplace (Kingsley, 2013, p. 535). The study shows which languages are used, while accounting for both "broad language use trends" and "bottom-up pressures on language choices" (Kingsley, 2013, p. 536). Findings of the study included the unique role of English as a lingua franca, and the forces that affect flexible negotiations of language choice. Those forces have been specified to be employees' nationalities, linguistic competencies, and particular communicative functions and goals, while English has been found to have a special role for "the relational goals of inclusion and fairness" (p. 545). Kingsley's (2013) study has portrayed the relationship between language policies and practices, and that it is reasonable to take a bottom-up perspective on actual practices when considering suitable language policies in multinational companies.

Tange and Lauring (2009) have examined how language diversity is related to specific communicative practices in Danish workplaces. With reference to the "social dimension of language" (p. 219), the authors conducted a large-scale qualitative case study, and found language diversity to be linked to certain "communicative barriers" (p. 228). How such linguistic boundaries can have isolating affects regarding social behaviour is illustrated by excerpts from interviews that had been conducted interviews with non-native speakers of English employed in multilingual Danish organizations. Tange and Lauring (2009) explain their choice in favour of semi-structured interviews as these "provide an in-depth and multidimensional understanding of the setting, as well as a valuable insight into implicit issues such as language usage and communication practice" (Tange & Lauring, 2009, p. 223). It was found that Danish employees generally evaluated multilingualism positively, especially with regard to the implementation of English as a corporate language. However, the authors assume that people "may be unwilling to admit to any linguistic weaknesses, fearing perhaps that this reflects badly on their professional competence" (Tange & Lauring, 2009, p. 224).

Against this backdrop, Tange and Lauring (2009) show the negative implications of language diversity. The two major findings from the study are how language diversity leads to language clustering and thin communication. *Language clustering* refers to how an employee's proficiency in the organizational language(s) decides about his level of participation in communicative processes and social activities, leading to social marginalization and the formation of language clusters (see also Welch, Welch & Piekkari, 2005; or Tange & Lauring 2009). *Thin communication*, then, is a negative result of implementing "a non-native, corporate language" (Tange & Lauring, 2009, p. 220), since communication in a non-native language often involves a reduction of features of informal communication, such as humour, certain rhetorical figures. This can cause rather "formal, task-oriented communication" (p. 227), which is assumed to have a negative impact on knowledge exchanges (Tange & Lauring, 2009). The authors indicate that even speakers who render themselves competent speakers of the corporate language, still feel more comfortable in their L1, and point out how employees, with regard to "work-related problem[s], prefer to consult someone from their own speech community" (Tange & Lauring, 2009, p. 225). Tange und Lauring (2009) emphasize that these outgrowths of multilingual communication have a strong influence on the employees' comfort within their working environments.

3 Case Study: Language Policies, Practices, and Perceptions in four German Multinationals

3.1 Methodology

Given that research on multilingualism in German workplaces is very scarce (see the overview on "Multilingualism in the Workplaces" by Gunnarsson, 2013), the aim of this study is to discover how multilingualism is being managed in multinational corporations in Germany. So far, language management has been discussed in view of the theoretical frameworks it originated in. From the review of relevant literature and selected empirical studies, it was shown which theoretical assumptions guide research on language and multilingualism in specific social contexts. Taking these as a foundation, this section serves to discuss methodological considerations, such as the research questions and the method employed for this study. Also, a detailed description of the data collection process is provided, including participant selection and recruitment, and the conduction of interviews.

In this study, the term language management is understood to take place on both the micro and the macro level of social structure (as discussed by Nekvapil & Nekula, 2006). I assume it to be very helpful to examine the phenomenon of multilingualism in view of the aspects of language policy, language practice, and language ideology (see the discussion of Spolsky, 2004, 2009 in section 2.2.2). As top-down regulations and bottom-up social changes and practices are mutually dependent (see Ricento, 2006b), I furthermore assume the existence of implicit and explicit policies, which influence how language is being dealt with (see the discussion of Shohamy's framework in section 2.2.2).

I conceptualize multilingualism management as the negotiations of language diversity by individuals, groups, authorities, etc. within a specific social structure. With regard to workplaces and companies, this means that I assume that language is potentially managed by everyone and in various contexts, both consciously and unconsciously. Language behaviour

is expected to be strongly influenced by explicit language policies, such as official corporate documents. Also, it is expected that employees are aware of these official policies and, to a certain degree, also aware of their own and their colleagues' language practices.

Moreover, I expect individual employees to perceive and judge these policies and practices in a certain way. Therefore, I assume the main factors that shape multilingualism management to be language policies, language practices, and language perceptions. *Language perceptions* refers to the ways of how individuals reflect about language use and how it is evaluated. The term is related to what has been called *language ideology* in previous research. However, given that ideology can be connected to larger systems of thought, I prefer the comparatively small-scale term of language perceptions.

In order to explore multilingualism management in multinational corporations, I have chosen an exploratory case study approach. Against the backdrop of the methodological framework introduced above, I address the following research questions throughout my study:

(1) How and to what extent does the company manage multilingualism?

(2) What do employees report on multilingual practices in the workplace?

(3) What are employees' perceptions of these multilingual practices?

(4) What do managers report on language practices in the workplace?

(5) Does top-down language management match actual language practices?

(6) What is the current role of German for corporate communication?

A promising way to perform this study was to choose semi-structured interviews with flexible questions, while at the same time taking a rather ethnographic perspective. A major advantage to this method is that it is "a useful means of gaining in-depth descriptions and explanations which can capture complexities, contradictions, and consequences," helping "to discover how people use language, what they believe about language, and why, as aspects of socially constructed reality" (Heller, 2008, p. 250).

Accordingly, this approach facilitates a deeper understanding of multilingualism in the workplace as a social phenomenon. In this context, two important remarks have to be made regarding the employed methodology. First, the conceptualization of language applied for this study is that of a rather stable system, "Einzelsprache" (*tongue*), such as German, English, French, or the like. During the interviews, terms such as "Muttersprache," *(mother tongue)* or "Fremdsprache" *(foreign language)* may be used. Although this is a very "simplistic" view of language (as put by Ricento, 2006, p. 4; see the discussion in section 2.2.1), this is a suitable starting point for collecting employees' accounts on diversity and language use. Second, it

needs to be noted that the interviews result in reports about what people think how they use language, which is not necessarily in agreement with their actual behaviour. However, interviews indeed provide an opportunity to discover how people reflect on how language is being used and how it is being evaluated within a specific social domain.

3.2 Data Collection

Prior to the conduction of interviews, several preliminary steps were necessary. First of all, a formal application had to be sent out for ethics review. As is required for all research involving human participants, my project has received full ethics clearance by a University of Waterloo Research Ethics committee.

Second, the recruiting of study participants needed to be organized. In order to be eligible for study participation, it was necessary for the companies to meet a range of specific criteria. Relevant theoretical considerations were as follows:

I The company has to present and understand itself as a German company.
II The company has to have subsidiaries abroad and has to operate internationally.
III The company is not active in the "Language Industry," i.e. language itself is not being dealt with as a product or a service.
IV The companies selected for study participation need to be as divergent as possible from one another, i.e. they should be structurally different and active in different industries.

Rather practical considerations that have guided the selection process were the following:

V The company should be a medium-sized enterprise, as those are expected to have less complex chains of responsibilities that would ultimately authorize study participation.
VI The company should not be a business consultancy, as those are expected to be rather unwilling to speak about their communication processes.
VII The company should have its headquarters or a subsidiary in an economically strong and culturally diverse region, as I expect multilingualism there to be more prevalent in workplaces.

According to these criteria, I compiled a list of eligible companies. Information about the companies was gathered through browsing their web sites. Recruitment took place via e-mail and telephone in February and March 2014. Out of 19 attempts of initial contact, that often entailed a number of follow-up messages or calls, four companies agreed to participate in the study. Five companies declined, whereas the remaining ten did not reply or could not forward me to a person authorized to decide on participating in my study. All in all, I have accomplished to conduct 10 individual interviews in four multinationally operating German

Company	Sector	Informant ID
C_1	IT	C_1M_1
		C_1M_2
		C_1M_3
		C_1M_4
		C_1M_5
C_2	Construction	C_2M_1
C_3	Agriculture	C_3M_1
		C_3M_2
		C_3M_3
C_4	Materials business	C_4M_1

Table 3.1: Overview of Companies and Interviewees

companies. The selected sample of companies and participants is not representative in a statistical sense. Nonetheless, a diversity in terms of industrial sector, company size, and primary markets was considered.

In the following, I provide brief overviews on each of the four participating companies. The four participating companies, henceforth labelled C_1 through C_4, differ in terms of size, structure, and the industries they are operating in. C_1 is a company providing IT services; C_2 is active in the construction industry; C_3 operates in agriculture; and C_4 is active in the materials business (see Table 3.1). Except for C_4, which is a large company, all the other companies are medium-sized enterprises.

The interviews have been conducted in March and April 2014. The interviews have taken place in office locations suggested by the interviewees, and were characterized by a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. Initial interviews have been conducted with personnel who were authorized to grant organization permission for study participation and/or who were able to obtain permission, and who brought me in contact with further study participants. The interviewees were provided with sufficient information about the study and the interview procedure. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants. The interviews have been audio-recorded and resulted in 5,5h of qualitative data. As the interviewees' schedules were sometimes more, sometimes less tightly organized, the available time slots for the interviews varied, ranging from 16min to 59min.

These one-on-one interviews have been organized around three main areas of investigation, covering (a) general questions about employees' language biographies, (b) employees' knowledge or beliefs about language practices and policies in the company, and (c) employees' own language practices and perceptions regarding multilingualism at work. Additional questions for participants with managerial responsibilities have included questions about their knowl-

edge or beliefs regarding (d) the company's language policy, (e) the employees' language practices, and (f) employees' perceptions towards multilingual language practices and policies within the company (see appendix for the interview schedule).

The interviews have resulted in a collection of employees' personal accounts and experiences with multilingualism in the workplace, including statements about their degree of awareness towards language use, their reports on their language practices, their perceptions towards language(s), which functions they ascribe to language(s), and, most importantly, how multilingualism can generally affect employees' working lives. Also, the role of German for professional life within a specific corporate context has been addressed.

3.3 Method of Data Analysis

In order to facilitate careful content analysis, the interviews needed to be transcribed in the first place. For this purpose, I have made use of a simplified and adjusted version of transcription conventions that is loosely based on the Jeffersonian transcription conventions utilized in Conversation Analysis (see Atkinson & Heritage, 1984, see appendix for the adapted character repertoire). Subsequently, the data collected needed to be examined and analyzed. For the examination of the interview data, the data has been analyzed qualitatively. For my data analysis, I already had major themes in mind as according to my research questions. These themes also served me as a strategy to organize the interview schedule.

Since I only intended to use these themes as an orientation and since it is my goal to explore the facets that emerge from these broader topics, I tried to explore the data in a very open-minded manner with a minimum of further presumptions, in order to let new perspectives and topics emerge. In this manner, I started to code thematic aspects I found in the data. Further, I grouped similar codes into key concepts, which then helped to establish relevant categories. Data analysis has been performed with the help of a freeware edition of a qualitative data analysis software. The tool facilitated the management and manual coding of the interview data at hand.

In the following, I will present the four cases and report on what the interviews have revealed about multilingualism management in German multinational corporations. The following section will present rather descriptive accounts of the companies and the cases, in order to provide a thorough illustration of how the interviews were conducted and how they contribute to my understanding of the four cases. Based on this, I will then move to major categories that have emerged from the data and that will show how multilingualism is connected to specific social contexts. Finally, I will provide a discussion of the findings included

in this study.

3.4 Data Analysis: Language Use in four German Multinationals

3.4.1 C1

Company C1 is a medium-sized IT-services company with locations in Germany, North-America, and Asia, including a very recent one. The majority of C1's employees are Germans who work in the German subsidiaries. However, personnel in C1's international locations are predominantly recruited on-site. As a provider of IT-services for large corporate customers, C1 works in close connection to their clients. Throughout the five interviews conducted at a C1 subsidiary in Germany, one major client is repeatedly referred to (henceforth tagged C1X). This peculiar structural condition has consequences for the linguistic landscape in C1, as will become evident in the analysis.

Informants: Informant C1M1 is a human resources manager at company C1. Informant C1M2 is department head at C1. Although he sometimes travels on company business, he is mainly occupied with in-house activities. Due to the close collaboration between C1 and their client C1X, the informant works in a C1X environment most of the time. Informant C1M3 is a technician employed at C1. However, as he and many of his colleagues work mainly at C1X, he reports to have more insight into the typical workday at that company. Informant C1M4 is one of the managers at C1 and can, therefore, provide a particularly valuable overview on language use at C1. He is responsible for the international business at C1, and predominantly occupied with C1X operations. Informant C1M5 is mainly occupied with internal operations. Only a small proportion of his job consists of external activities such as communication with manufacturers. It is to be noted that C1M5 works mainly for the major client C1X and usually works in their facilities.

A variety of languages is used in company C1. According to informant C1M4, German is the main language in Germany; Mandarin is spoken by the Chinese colleagues; in India, English and the local dialects; in the United States they use English plus they have one Spanish-speaking colleage for customer support in South America; and Japanese support for Japanese customers. Additional languages in Germany are Turkish, provided by a Turkish colleague, Portuguese, and Russian too are provided by a few colleagues. Interestingly, when informant C1M4 is asked whether C1 has a company language, he declines. However, he points at how the use of English is *something very normal* ("was sehr Normales") in C1, especially due to

the close interaction with company C1X. Hence, English is the most important language, as everything is in English on the international level.

Informant C1M5 positions C1 to be a clearly multilingual company. In the coffee lounge or the smokers' room, he reports to encounter nearly *all languages*.

AC1M5: Wenn ich hier unten sitze zum Beispiel in der Kaffeeküche oder im Raucherraum, höre ich ähm, denke ich mal, alle Sprachen.

The communicative frame for work-related contents is illustrated as follows:

AC1M5: Wenn ich eine Mail schreibe, oder eine Antwort auf eine Mail gebe, habe ich in der Regel ein oder zwei ausländische Kopienempfänger mit drin, das heißt ich verfasse diese Mails in der Regel in Englisch. Ich denke mal achtzig Prozent der Mails des Mailverkehrs den ich schreibe sind Englisch. […] Mündlich ist es so, dass die meisten Telefonate eigentlich intern geführt werden, das- das also intern des Teams um sich abzustimmen in der Koordination mit Außenlokationen, und dass diese Korrespondenz dann auf Englisch per Email erfolgt. Es kann auch mal auch sein dass irgendwelche akuten Probleme da sind dass man da auch direkt auf Englisch spricht, oder dass man Mitarbeiter einfach mal in eine TelKo [Telefonkonferenz] schaltet, und da dann halt jemand sitzt in Saudi Arabien der dann halt auch Englisch spricht. Wo das dann gefragt ist.

Correspondence with recipients outside Germany is in English. As e-mails are usually sent to recipients abroad as well, the major part of email correspondence is in English. When problems occur that need to be discussed with colleagues in other locations, they are usually dealt with via email, and only urgent matters are discussed via telephone. However, most telephone calls are team-internal, which means that oral communication is mainly in German.

The multilingual situation at C1 is strongly influenced by the use of English. In the context of English being considered the language of international communication, informant C1M1 states how the IT sector is in itself already an international business. Hence, English is also considered the language of IT, as described by informant C1M1 as follows:

AC1M1: Das ist rein Englisch. (Das) hat einfach damit zu tun dass Sie im internationalen Konzern-umfeld, brauchen Sie halt eine gemeinsame Basis. […] Das kommt natürlich auch aus der Situation raus dass die IT Branche von vornherein sehr international angelegt ist, (und) dass die allgemeine Sprache in der IT allein schon von den technischen Begriffen her, eben Eng-lisch ist.

Moreover, it is relevant to mention that C1 provides services for major clients, which act on a global scale. Those clients themselves are usually international corporations and, there-fore, use English as their company language. Those companies' personnel is used to utilizing English for specific purposes, *some things are simply done in English*:

AC1M1: So und wenn Sie Großkundenbetreuung machen das ist ja unser Geschäft, Service für Groß-kunden ähm dann sitzen die ja in der Regel über mehrere Länder verteilt sodass die Kon-zernsprache (dieser) Kunden in der Regel Englisch ist, und die Mitarbeiter dieser Konzerne es gewohnt sind Englisch, für bestimmte Dinge zwangsweise zu nutzen. Das ist jetzt nicht

negativ gemeint zwangsweise sondern das ist halt (könnte man so sagen) bestimmte Dinge werden einfach in Englisch () in Englisch gemacht.

Hence, when it comes to work-related communication, only German and English are relevant at C1. German for working with Germans in Germany, whereas English at work is related to internationally active clients, who predominantly employ a policy of English as corporate language.

AC1M1: […] Das heißt diese Englischthematik am Arbeitsplatz das ist rein bezogen auf internationale Kunden die für sich auch definiert haben #Unsere () Konzernsprache ist Englisch.# Und damit muss auch der Lieferant, in der Lage sein wenn er für uns was tut, wo er auch auf Daten von uns zugreift (über die) quasi in unser System eingreift, und das tun die Servicedienstleister, notwendigerweise, müssen dann halt in der Lage sein Englisch zu können. Und das war's dann auch schon. Mehr Sprachen werden da nicht verlangt.

Service providers, such as C1, simply have to be able to adapt to the established English language practices in the business. Hence, only German and English are required for business at C1. As put by informant C1M1, *that's it. More languages are not required.*

Interestingly, this is exactly what constitutes C1 as a multilingual company. The perceived multilingual environment at C1 is characterized by the role of English as their main working language, especially for the cooperation with international teams. This is illustrated by informant C1M2:

QC1M2: Meine erste Frage an Sie. Würden Sie sagen, dass Sie () in einem mehrsprachigen Unternehmen arbeiten?

AC1M2: Jap.

QC1M2: Inwiefern?

AC1M2: Inwiefern, also bei uns ist Englisch eigentlich so die, also in dem Bereich wo ich jetzt tätig bin ist Englisch eigentlich so, ja die Hauptarbeitssprache.

Similarly, when informant C1M2 is asked in how far he is dealing with several languages at work, he states that C1 operates on a global scale, and English is spoken everywhere.

AC1M3: […] Ohne Englisch keine Chance.

Without English – no way! Accordingly, the informant uses English on a daily basis as well. Interestingly, he notes that all languages could be employed, but, in fact, it is English only:

AC1M3: Ähm verschiedene Sprachen, also es ist schlussendlich hauptsächlich Englisch, wenn ich das damals nicht haha so oft geschwänzt hätte Französisch könnte ich auch einsetzen, ja also wir haben auf der ganzen Welt Kollegen, (Asiaten) schlussendlich auch aber es wird überall Englisch gesprochen. Also man könnte alles mögliche noch einsetzen aber es ist nur Englisch.

However, services for major customers that operate internationally, simply require C1 to do that business in English. Work assignments in that business require employees to process written notifications, and to be able to resolve them verbally over the phone, in English.

AC1M1: […] So aber im Großkundengeschäft […] müssen Sie egal WO Sie sitzen also auch hier in Deutschland XOrtsnameX in Englisch soweit fit sein, dass Sie das was da GeschRIEben wird verstehen können und daraus auch eigene Arbeiten ableiten können, ähm und teilweise ist es eben so dass solche Tickets nicht einfach nur ähm schriftlich KOmmen, also als Meldung und sie schreiben einfach eine Antwort dazu wie Sie das Problem gelöst haben und was derjenige jetzt machen soll, sondern teilweise müssen sie auch zum Telefonhörer greifen und den der das Ticket aufgemacht hat auch mal anrufen und mit dem mal durchgehen was er jetzt tun soll um das Problem wieder zu lösen.

One of those areas of work are reported by C1M1 to be the issue tracking systems. This means that incidents that need resolving are issued by the client, and then processed by the service provider C1. The client company's employee, regardless of his global location, issues a problem, which is subsequently to be resolved by C1's staff currently active in the respective time zone. With reference to the topic of language, this is illustrated by informant C1M1 with the following situation: a Polish employee of C1's client faces a problem, issues a a problem in the client company's corporate language English, which is then processed by a C1 employee.

A technician's job at C1 can look like as follows:

AC1M1: […] Sie sagen #OK ich kümmere mich jetzt um dieses Ticket,# versuchen rauszufinden was da los ist, ähm und ((man)) muss also lesen können was der da schreibt, dazu kommt dass viele die diese Tickets aufmachen keine nATive speaker sind, das heißt Sie haben dann vielleicht einen Mitarbeiter eines Kunden der in Polen sitzt, der aber aufgrund Konzernsprache Englisch (jetzt) dieses Ticket auf Englisch formulieren muss was da gerade seiner Meinung nach passiert ist, und am anderen Ende sitzt dann zum Beispiel ein Mitarbeiter von uns der jetzt verstehen MUss was der Betroffene damit meint.

C1M1 reports how the processing of tickets and work assignments at C1 are dependent on the different time zones. As jobs are administrated during regular working hours, the time difference over the globe enables C1 to offer support day and night. Hence, it's possible that a ticket issued in Poland is maybe being dealt with by an American C1 employee:

AC1M1: […] aber rein theoretisch kann's dann auch für die amerikanischen Kollegen sein dass ein Ticket aus Polen eben auftaucht, weil da jemand schon besonders früh angefangen hat zu arbeiten, oder Spätschicht dort arbeitet oder dort irgendwie ein Notfall ist und jemand dort lange arbeitet, und dann sieht der jemand zu seiner normalen Arbeitszeit dass in Polen ein Problem aufgetaucht ist beim Kunden und dann muss der das auch bearbeiten können. Er hat jetzt den Vorteil er ist Native Speaker, als Amerikaner, weil der Pole ja wieder in Englisch schreibt, hat jetzt eher das Problem rauszufinden wie gut ist das Englisch des Polen was meint der damit, könnte also schon ein Problem sein dass der Native Speaker da ganz anders drangeht als der Nicht Native Speaker aus Deutschland, der vielleicht eher ein Verständnis dafür hat welche Probleme der englischsprechende Pole mit der englischen Sprache hat, ja, weil ja oft viele Engländer und Amerikaner oft dieses Gefühl ja nicht haben weil für die es halt die Muttersprache ist, und sich nicht vorstellen können welchen Fehler können, also welche (Formulierung) könnte da jetzt mit bestimmten Worten da auftauchen. […] vor ORt sitzen jeweils Native Speaker. Das heißt in Asien haben wir ja in der Regel asiatische Mitarbeiter sitzen und in den USA amerikanische Mitarbeiter.

Hence, all participants in this trouble-shooting process need to have sufficient command of

English, the client's employee needs to clearly state the problem, and C1's technician to understand it. Informant C1M1 reports that although oral English skills do play a role, it is generally of less importance than written English communication at C1.

Informant C1M2 reports on the language-related dealings with written communication, e.g. technical documentation that, in his former department, it was obligatory for all documentation to be in English, as teams all over the world had to have access. In his current department, the informant reports, documentation is still mainly in German, although this is being changed as well.

When informant C1M4 is asked in how far certain languages are used for certain purposes at C1, he reports that all e-mails, documents, i.e. all written communication with teams or clients outside Germany are in English. Certainly, within Germany, e-mails are composed in German, and especially German clients are *happy* to get a reply in German.

AC1M4:   Ähm (pause) ja also wie gesagt, alles was, Deutschland verLÄSst auf jeden Fall in Englisch, in keiner anderen Sprache, ähm es lässt sich nicht vermeiden dass besonders hier in Deutschland, natürlich deutsche Emails geschrieben werden, ähm (pause) dass teilweise auch bei dieser Meldungsbearbeitung für die Kunden, für den deutschen Kunden, der ist natürlich happy wenn er auch eine deutsche Antwort bekommt. Also werden deutsche Antworten reingeschrieben, aber das macht's natürlich dann schwierig, wenn die Meldung mal, aus'm zeitlichen Raum von Deutschland rausgeht, nämlich wenn zum Beispiel aus einer, wir haben da so eine Priorisierung von Tickets, low medium high, very high, sobald aber ein Ticket very high wird, dann muss es auf Englisch geführt werden, weil dann wird vierundzwanzig mal sieben gearbeitet, und dann geht's eben abends zum Beispiel an die US Kollegen, oder wenn's nachts bearbeitet wird zu deutscher Zeit, wird's aus Asien vielleicht bearbeitet. Und dann muss alles in English sein

Thus, tickets do get written in German, which becomes a problem when it is not possible for German colleagues to process the ticket anymore, for example overnight. Hence, tickets with high priority always have to be operated in English in order to ensure they can be processed outside of Germany. However, sometimes tickets start out with low priority, hence in German, then they develop into an issue of higher priority, and then, someone needs to switch to English at some point. Accordingly, the whole message history also needs to be translated or summarized into English in order for non-German speaking colleagues to be able to further process the ticket. Nonetheless, tickets are prioritized through the customers, and employees only know that it is necessary to switch to English once the ticket has becomes an issue of very high priority.

Informant C1M1 states that for the individual employee, this means that he has to have sufficient command of English in order to discuss technical issues, to attend meetings, and to participate actively. However, language skills above this level are usually not required, i.e. employees are not expected to have very high language skills. Informant C1M1 reports that language skills are usually not mentioned in C1's job listings. The main reason for this is

that language skills did not use to be of major importance for most jobs at C1. However, this situation has been changing due to the fact that C1 provides services in the IT sector. It is important to mention that, however, working knowledge of English is already required for jobs at a lower level of qualification:

AC1M1:   […] Aber es wird nicht verlangt, auch bei uns nicht verlangt dass es verhandlungssicher ist, es wird auch nicht verlangt dass es sehr gutes Englisch ist, es wird verlangt dass man sich verständigen kann, die technischen Begriffe sind eh kein Problem, und was ganz wichtig ist bei UNs, lesen können. Wegen dieser Tickets. Und das geht schon los auf einer relativ niedrig qualifizierten Ebene. […]

When directly asked about language policies at C1, informant C1M1 responds that there are none. Neither language policies, nor other guidelines that in any way regulate communication or specify a corporate language, exist at C1. When asked whether the issue, then, somehow takes care of itself, the informant refers to the personnel selection process. Informant C1M1 reports that language competencies a particular position requires are discussed beforehand:

AC1M1:   […] wir haben natürlich bei der Personalauswahl () wir wissen ja wofür wir die Leute einstellen. Und das heißt wenn wir Stellen besetzen, dann sagen wir den Leuten auch schon, also wir reden dann auch über die Fremdsprachenkenntisse, und haben ja aber auch ein Gefühl dafür was muss der tatsächlich auf dem Arbeitsplatz können.

The informant points out that for positions at C1, an applicant's résumé is discussed, including former occupations. Interestingly, he reports that English competencies are discussed during the interview, but that they are not being tested for, as they *do not start to converse in English during the interview*:

ACM1:   […] So wenn wir hier Leute einstellen, ähm dann klar, dann wird natürlich darüber gesprochen wie gut ist sein Englisch, was hat er vorher so gemacht, manchmal sieht man's ja aus der Historie seines bisherigen Lebenslaufes was er so gemacht hat, ähm aber wir gehen jetzt nicht hin und fangen an während des Vorstellungsgesprächs Englisch miteinander zu reden.

This is reported to be due to the fact that the main focus when it comes to English is technical terminology. English is predominantly used to document individual procedures. English learned in school up to grade 10 is sufficient to process and to keep record of tickets at C1. Hence, there is no need to test applicants for their foreign language competencies. The interviewee furthermore suggests that, should anyone happen to have a language-related problem, there are always colleagues at C1 competent enough in English who can help out.

AC1M1:   […] Die Erfahrung bei uns zeigt dass das Englischlevel was jemand in der Regel hat reicht um Tickets bearbeiten zu können und um dokumentieren zu können. Und wenn er sich unsicher fühlt gibt's innerhalb der Teams immer Leute die gut genug sind. Wir sind ja selbst auch international besetzt bei XFirmenname1X, ähm sodass man immer sagen kann es gibt jemanden der gut genug Englisch kann um jemandem unter die Arme zu greifen.

When informant C1M1 is asked about what he thinks which languages are spoken by C1 employees, he assumes that it clearly is German and English. Other languages come into play due to immigration and different family histories, such as Indian languages, or Russian.

With regard to the application procedure for his job, informant C1M5 reports that he was asked about his language competencies, and was temporarily switched to English to discuss a technical topic.

Informant C1M4 is asked about the job application process in the Asian subsidiaries. He reports that, for example in India, all employees have a university degree and, hence, very high English proficiency. Although those Indian colleagues speak the Indian English *dialect* ("der indische Dialekt") which is perceived to be sometimes difficult to understand, it is generally easy to communicate with the Indian colleagues. In China, the job requirement is English competency, and English skills are being tested for during the job interviews. Informant C1M4 states that, usually, if speaking skills are available, writing abilities are not a problem either. However, the informant mentions that vice versa, certain barriers exist to start speaking a language.

Considering that C1 is a German company, with subsidiaries in Germany and a majority of employees being German, the role of German for C1's communication is of particular interest. Informant C1M1 reports that C1 does not require their employees at locations outside Germany to speak German. When asked to what extent German is generally used at C1, the informant reports that a large part of C1's business is regional, located in Germany. The informant reports that as long as information is being dealt with among German speakers only, communication takes place in German. Therefore, there is no need to use languages other than English. However, as soon as information has a chance to become relevant to non-Germans, the language is switched to German. Hence, it is very possible that documents that are composed in English are being discussed in German by German-speaking employees, as the informant reports:

AC1M1: […] Und wenn Sie eben XFirmenname2X eben nehmen, ähm dann müssen auch die Leute die hier zum Beispiel in Deutschland arbeiten von XFirmenname2X die haben natürlich auch Dokumente in Deutsch. Also die Dokumente mit denen sie selbst arbeiten, die sie vielleicht noch mit Kollegen untereinander austauschen oder von Abteilung zu Abteilung, die sind natürlich in Deutsch. Aber in dem Moment wo Sie, wo es sein kann dass irgendwelche Informationen auch für Nicht-Deutsche wichtig sind gehen die halt nur in Englisch. Das heißt es kann eben passieren, dass Sie in ein Meeting bei XFirmenname2X reingehen wo drei Deutsche zusammensitzen die aber nur Unterlagen besprechen in denen alles auf Englisch geschrieben ist.

When informant C1M2 is asked whether C1 has a company language, the informant reports that for teams that are based in Germany only, the working language is German. However, once an external team is involved, he assumes the working language to be English. Oral

communication is reported by informant C1M2 to be *always*in English, as is a large part of email communication. Regarding his own workday, informant C1M2 is asked to indicate how often he uses German at work. Interestingly, he answers that in his current location, all of his colleagues are German.

QC1M1: Und () wie oft benutzen Sie Deutsch bei der Arbeit?

AC1M2: Also hier im HAuse eigentlich (pause) hundert- also was heißt hundert Prozent, wenn ich mit Kollegen spreche die hier im Hause sind, sind das Deutsche momentan.

In this job environment, it is a prerequisite to have knowledge of English. When asked whether there are any employees at C1 who have no English skills at all, Informant C1M4 reports how this applies particularly to some of the older employees. As reported by informant C1M2, it is predominantly older colleagues, especially those from the former GDR, who lack English competencies and that are particularly referred to in this context. In certain areas of work it is possible to be employed with minimum knowledge of English, mainly in the area of technical infrastructure, where a large amount of directives are given in non-linguistic form, e.g. through numbers or other coded identifiers. If problems with English texts happen to occur, this is translated by the team lead or other colleagues. When informant C1M2 is asked in how far the company has considered to do something about this situation, he states the problem as follows:

AC1M2: Ja wir haben's auf der Agenda. Also wir werden's wieder anbieten wollen, dass wir Englischkurse anbieten, das Problem ist immer man muss ja verschiedene Leistungsstufen anbieten.

Although company C1 is aware of the necessity for language trainings, there are certain obstacles to offering courses to employees. Interestingly, informant C1M2 exemplifies these difficulties while contrasting language courses with technical on-the-job-trainings. With technical matters, the ones who are versed in the relevant area do not need to attend the courses in question, the ones who are not familiar with the subject, better attend the courses.While these technical courses are relatively simple to offer, language trainings require different levels of language competency. In contrast, problems occur when it comes to determining employees' capabilities in the four skills of language, i.e. reading, writing, listening, speaking, in order to pick suitable courses for them. When asked in how far languages other than English play a role in the informant's work environment, he indicates that other foreign languages are not necessary:

AC1M2: Ist nichts notwendig hier. Weil einfach, jetzt im Sinne von XFirmenname2X ist Englisch die, die gemeinsame Konversationssprache, da gibt's keine anderen ().

Regarding issues of translation or interpretation, informant C1M2 is asked whether there are employees who lack English competencies and who therefore experience language problems. Informant C1M2 reports that there are indeed employees with little or no knowledge of English. As the tickets are usually in English, there are hence certain problems arising with the

ticketing system. The informant reports that this is being dealt with through intermediates who prepare the tickets for further processing. Basically, what they do is they extract the technical information and embed it into a German template:

AC1M2: Ja. Also wir haben in, in einem Team gibt's schon sag ich mal Mitarbeiter die haben mangelnde oder keine Englischkenntnisse, und da haben wir (eben dann sag ich mal eine Instanz weiter drangesetzt), also wir kriegen zum Beispiel unsere Aufgaben per Tickets, aus einem Ticketsystem, die sind eigentlich im Regelfall immer Englisch, und da haben wir dann für DIEses Team haben wir halt eine, äh, sag ich mal eine Menge von drei (Qualitatoren?) vorgeschaltet, die quasi erstmal die Tickets so aufbereiten. Also a die machen dann ein deutsches Tickettemplate draus und packen auch alle Infos nur (ein bisschen zusammen) damit die Leute es entsprechend weiter bearbeiten können.

Although there is not much linguistic text in those tickets, it is still necessary to process the tickets in order to make them workable for the non-English speaking colleagues.

QC1M2: [...] Gut, da ist jetzt kein- nicht viel Sprache drin da werden nur die technischen Parameter rausgezogen und halt auf ein deutsches Template geschrieben.

When informant C1M4 is asked whether he would assume employees to be interested in language trainings, he reports that English training is requested by employees who go abroad and collaborate with local personnel, for example when setting up the IT infrastructure at international fairs. The informant emphasizes that for these employees, it is of major importance to improve their spoken conversational skills in order to be able to communicate better on location. In general, company C1 benefits from language training opportunities that are offered at C1X, as their employees are eligible to attend those trainings as well. Informant C1M4 states that C1 employees generally have the chance to attend evening classes or the like, and that C1 have had considered in-house English trainings in the past. However, too few employees were interested.

Informant C1M3 has a favourable opinion on languages, and would like to be able to speak French, Spanish, or an Asian language. However, he evalutes language learning to be laborious, and very time-consuming, especially if one wants to meet his own high demands. Informant C1M3 further reports that possible occasions for him to use languages other than English would be limited to workshops with colleagues from a variety of work areas. For job-related matters as such he would not make use of other languages. Especially for email correspondence, *this is not possible*:

AC1M3: [...] Also so bei der Arbeit eher nicht. Auch der ganze Mailverkehr, es sind auch vielleicht auch verschiedenen Ländern auch Leute mit in einem Mailverkehr drin, da geht das eh nicht. Also Englisch ist das was jeder versteht und ansonsten.

C1M3 reports that the use of German is limited to conversing with colleagues in his team. As he communicates with colleagues all over the world, *nearly every email* is composed in English. Sometimes e-mails are even written in English if sent to colleagues in the German

location, simply because this allows for forwarding messages without prior translation.

Informant C1M5 reports how, for example, technical documentation can be expected to be in English in the majority of cases, while it less likely available in German. In the IT sector, everything is reported to be very international and, therefore, in English. In contrast to that, the role of German is important in spoken communication. However, this is described to be limited to conversing face-to-face with colleagues, whereas the language utilized for the telephone hotline is English:

AC1M5: Also für die Korrespondenz mit Kollegen ist es wichtig, klar, was über'n Tisch läuft in unserem Achterbüro, ähm ich bin ja quasi in einem Zweierteam drin aber ich sitze unten in der Hotline, und in Hotline selbst sprechen die eigentlich ähm alle Englisch.

Furthermore, informant C1M5 illustrates his multilingual office environment as follows:

AC1M5: […] Ähm, der Kollege links neben mir ist Deutscher, der Kollege links vor mir ist Portugiese, kommt aber eigentlich aus Afrika, ist Angolaner, das heißt der spricht mit dem Praktikanten den wir haben der Mexikaner ist, auf, er spricht mit ihm Spanisch, nein Portugiesisch, der Spanier spricht mit ihm Spanisch, damit sie untereinander die Sprachen lernen […]

What is remarkable in this context is informant C1M5's reply to the question in how far the company makes use of these internal language ressources, i.e. in how far the company accesses the language skills of, for example, the Mexican or African colleagues. C1M5 reports that he cannot recall them having made use of their native languages for job-related matters:

AC1M5: Mhja die können da sicherlich drauf zurückgreifen, aber in der Regel, ich hab sie glaube ich noch nie wirklich im Arbeitsalltag ihre Muttersprache benutzen hören. Also so dass sie Portugiesisch oder Spanisch gesprochen hätten, also das geht alles zurück wieder mal auf Englisch. Sie sprECHen dann zwar die dritte Fremdsprache, klar, aber die benutzen sie nicht. Genauso wenig wie ich Französisch benutze.

Accessing employees' linguistic capabilities other than English is not reported to be a process that is controlled for by C1. During the job application process, applicants' English grades are determined and sometimes tested in an interview. C1M5 does not know whether English language training is offered to employees. However, informant C1M5 expects Englisch courses to be provided by company C1X, as he perceives C1X to be *generally multilingual* ("grundsätzlich mehrsprachig"). C1M5 indicates he has very good to native-like knowledge of English, and medium knowledge of French. C1M5 would hence appreciate the opportunity to improve his French language skills, and to learn Spanish, but he would not consider this to be important to his current job, as everyone he speaks to knows English, more or less. Language training would be for his personal benefit only.

C1M5's answer to the question if he can recall a very successful multilingual encounter is very interesting. C1M5 reports on a global project that entailed installing hardware i many different locations, two thirds of which in non-German-speaking countries. The project was

implemented from afar, through postal delivery, email, and telephone. However, considering the above illustrated situations, this was done in English only.

3.4.2 C2

Company C2 operates in the construction business and has more than 30 subsidiaries and plants. A large part of their facilities are located in Germany. Since C2 not only constructs, but also produces and delivers building elements to the construction sites, it is not profitable for them to operate on a global scale. However, they have locations in several European countries. Therefore, the main language for C2 is German, but they also have quite an international workforce. Employees' countries of origin have been specified to be, for example, Russia, Poland, or Spain. It is important to note that C2 is positioned as a family business, a circumstance which has certain implications for their business strategy, as we will see later on.

Informant: Informant C2M1 is employed in C2's human resources management.

During the interview, informant C2M1 clearly positioned company C2 as a German enterprise, which is characterized by it being active mainly in the German-speaking countries, while also having many international employees. Besides Russia and Poland, that have been specified as countries of origin for a considerable part of their staff, Spain has been denoted to play a particular role. Due to the current economic situation in Spain which makes it difficult for young people to find employment, many qualified people go abroad, and many of them go to Germany. The informant values the Spanish employees highly, as they usually are highly-skilled and have high language competencies in English and often also in German. For C2 personnel working in Germany, it is a precondition to have a very good command of the German language, as all dialogue with clients takes place in German *of course*. Throughout the (German) subsidiaries, the informant specifies German to be the *official language*. In subsidiaries outside of Germany, personnel is recruited locally, and hence the local languages are used for communication. In view of subsidiaries in countries other than Germany, the informant emphasizes that C2 focuses on close cooperation with partners on location. The reason for this lies in their experience that it does not work if a company simply enters a foreign country, a new market in a foreign culture. In order to be successful, it is necessary to possess cultural knowledge, to know the traditions, and, moreover, to know the language.

AC2M1: […] wir machen meistens so'n Joint Venture sowas in der Richtung, oder ähm genau agieren dann wirklich mit den Partnern vor Ort, weil wir wirklich die Erfahrung gemacht haben dass es nicht funktioniert wenn man aus- aus der Kultur mit der man kommt wirklich in ein fremdes Land hineingeht und versucht wirklich da zu agieren, man muss da wirklich auch die- die ähm ja so die Kultur kennen, man muss die Sprache, auch so die Gepflogenheiten

kennen, und das funktioniert nicht wenn man da- einfach bauen möchte und dann da einfach daherkommt, sondern man muss wirklich sich Partner dann vor Ort suchen. Und so ist es dann immer so dass man dann natürlich wenn man da vor Ort ist die Sprache beherrschen muss. Genau.

In view of conditions of employment for new construction site managers for an operation in the United Kingdom, this means for example that English proficiency is usually tested during the job interviews. Very good knowledge of English is therefore necessary to act on location, and it is an asset if the employees also have knowledge of British traditions and customs. However, it is accentuated that the person should not be focused on Britain, as it is possible he/she is expected to go to another country afterwards, to Turkey for example. Although English remains the *most important language*, knowledge of the local language is helpful. The informant states that, for Turkey, it is especially important to know about the local customs and also about the particular manners and modalities of *how to communicate*.

AC2M1: […] also in der Türkei zum Beispiel ist es so dass man nicht einfach so daherkommen kann als Deutscher und dann dort agieren kann, sondern dort ist es ganz ganz wichtig dass man auch die Gepflogenheiten kennt. Und auch die Art und Weise wie man da kommuniziert, dass man das genau kennt.

AC2M1: […] Aber ich glaube ähm, da kann, in der Türkei kann man nicht mit Englisch ankommen grundsätzlich sondern da muss man auch […] ein Stück weit die Landessprache mitbringen.

When asked about to what extent the company takes certain measures to deal with such conditions, the informant mentions personnel record cards every employee fills out, which also includes a question on language competencies. It is notable that this seems to only serve to ask employees about knowledge in the the *basic languages* ("Grundsprachen") such as English, French, or Spanish. One follow-up question on this topic was asked to elicit what the informant assumes which languages are mostly spoken among C2 personnel. English is *of course* ("natürlich") the basic language that many have a command of; apart from the mother tongues are likely, namely German, Polish, Russian, Spanish, or French *of course* ("regulär natürlich").

AC2M1: Kann ich Ihnen nicht ganz konkret sagen, weil das Thema ähm in der Personalverwaltung liegt, aber gefühlt würde ich sagen dass natürlich Englisch so die Grundsprache ist die wirklich viele beherrschen, ansonsten sind es vielfach vielleicht auch eine Muttersprache, eine andere Muttersprache als die deutsche, wie zum Beispiel Polnisch oder Russisch zum Beispiel, ähm das sind- noch andere Sprachen die vertreten sind, oder Spanisch zum Beispiel, genau. Und dann regulär natürlich auch Französisch. Aber über die Verteilung kann ich da nichts sagen, mhmh. […]

Mother tongues with the majority of speakers among C2 personnel are indicated to be Spanish and Russian. When asked about the linguistic situation in the German subsidiary during, for example, lunch breaks, the informant reports that everyone speaks German and it is very rare that one hears a language other than German at work. In this context, the informant reflected

on the people of Russian descent, and admits that it is possible that Russian competency is much more prevalent in C2. Those employees have such good knowledge of German that nobody notices they originally come from Russia, and only private conversations about their background reveals this. Nonetheless, the informant does not label Russian one of the *basic languages*. However, regarding the record card, the following is stated:

AC2M1: […] Aber es ist natürlich so dass, mit diesem Personalbogen, dass wir uns auch in diese Richtung entwickeln möchten, und dass gefördert wird dass man Englisch sprechen soll. Also ich zum Beispiel für unseren Personalbereich ist es so dass wir auch Englischkurse in Anspruch nehmen können […]

It is remarkable that, in this context, it is mentioned that employees are encouraged by the company to speak English. English training is offered and provided by external language schools. This refers to training in the technical language, whereas training in the colloquial or everyday language is not necessary as *most of them* [the employees] *already know it very well*. Also, training is offered in other languages, as long as it is related to an employee's area of work. For example, training in German is offered for employees whose mother tongue is not German, namely for the Spanish employees who are based in Germany. This is also said in connection with technical language.

For positions in Germany, German proficiency is a precondition, and it is such a matter of course that it is not mentioned in job postings at all. This is also the reason why C2's online career portal is completely in German, although the company's website is available in several languages. The informant describes this as a conscious decision and an indirect strategy in order to filter out possible applicants who do not have sufficient knowledge of German.

AC2M1: […] Bei den meisten Stellen die hier wirklich in Deutschland angesiedelt werden, sagen wir dass die deutschen Sprachkenntnisse natürlich da sein müssen, die werden aber nicht ausgeschrieben, das verlangen wir einfach auch. Wir haben zum Beispiel auch ähm uns deshalb auch entschieden dass unser Karriereportal ähm also das ist das Portal auf dem unsere Stellenanzeigen stehen, ähm dass das nach wie vor auf Deutsch ist. Weil wir einfach auch sagen #Jemand der kein Deutsch versteht () der kann bei uns auch nicht zurechtkommen# Das ist leider so. Man muss diese Grundkenntnisse verstehen. Ähm, es gäbe ja auch die Entscheidung dass man sagt #Das Karriereportal kann auch auf Englisch sein# Genau. Und wir haben uns bewusst dafür entschieden dass es auf Deutsch ist, und dass (nur) Teile auch übersetzt werden, aber das Karriereportal ist auf jeden Fall auf Deutsch und, meistens werden die Sprachkenntnisse nicht abgefragt, weil es nicht erforderlich ist, indirekt natürlich schon weil man sagt #OK deutsches Karriereportal, (Mann) du musst halt entsprechend unsere Sprache sprechen können# […]

However, for international positions, language skills, mainly very good English skills, are explicitly stated requirements. Interestingly, the requirement of basic English skills for positions where English is not necessary for everyday tasks, also happens to be omitted in C2's job listings. Even job listings for human resources representatives do not necessarily include information about English skills. Knowledge of English basics is always assumed. This is re-

markable as the human resources personnel are the ones who, at least from time to time, need to conduct partly English job interviews to test applicants' English language competencies.

Hence, English skills are of major importance at C2. Knowledge of German and/or English is sufficient for the majority of C2 employees. Also, documents and company information materials are usually in German, a few central documents are also provided in English. Corporate presentations to, e.g. groups of foreign visitors and students, are held in English.

What has been important throughout the interview is the positioning of C2 as a family-run business in a *very sensitive* industry. This is why the company is careful in entering new markets and prefers to be a steady and slowly growing venture. Therefore, local customs and cultural differences are acknowledged, including the role of local languages.

3.4.3 C3

Company C3 is a German corporation with several subsidiaries and subcompanies in Europe and Asia. C3 produces agricultural products such as foods or agricultural machinery. A large number of their production facilities and offices is located in Russia. However, their parent company is located in Germany. Hence, C3 has a multinational workforce dispersed over several countries. In C3, three interviews have been conducted with informants who are all proficient in the three languages that are most important in C3, German, Russian, and English. These interviews are exceptionally interesting, as they provide a multifacetted insight into the interrelation between corporate multilingualism and individual plurilingualism in the workplace.

Informants: Informant C3M1 is assistant to the management. Informant C3M1 possesses language competence in Russian, German, and English. Informant C3M2 is a jurist and occupied with the legal business in company C3. Informant C3M2 is proficient in Russian, German, and English. Informant C3M3 is an office manager at company C3, with both internal and external responsibilities. However, she is away on business quite often, but for about two thirds of her working time, she is at the office. Informant C3M3 speaks three languages, her first language Russian, plus German, and English. Informant C3M1 positions the company clearly as a multilingual enterprise which becomes evident on a daily basis. All her colleagues speak Russian; the Russian colleagues almost exclusively speak Russian, German very rarely, and recently some of them have started utilizing English. She reports job communication in C3 to be trilingual, as she communicates with the German manager in German, he speaks English with the Russian colleagues, and she herself uses Russian with the Russian colleagues. Informant C3M2 sees C3 as a clearly multilingual company. When asked to decide whether C3 has some sort of a company language, both German and Russian are reported to serve this

function.

AC3M2: […] Also ich kann jetzt nicht nur sagen, deutsche Sprache weil, wenn ich äh überlege, also fünfzig Prozent der Email sind in deutscher Sprache fünfzig Prozent in russischer Sprache, also Englisch jetzt auch, aber äh ja. Das meiste, VerTRÄGe, viele zweisprachig, ja, deutsch russisch, und die muss ich dann auch anpassen. Wenn es zu schwierig ist weil, manchmal trau ich mir nicht so ZU wirklich äh richtige Übersetzung von einem Vertrag in () russische Sprache anzufertigen. Und deswegen werden wir dann halt ähm vergeben wir dann eben Aufträge Übersetzungsaufträge .hh an die Übersetzer die auch juristische Fachkenntnisse haben. Ja.

Informant C3M3 clearly positions company C3 as a multilingual company. In Germany, she reports, German and English are mostly used. The location of C3 where the interview took place is where customer relationships are being managed. Also, communications with colleagues in Russia are dealt with in English or Russian. German as working language would not be possible:

AC3M3: […] ganz besonders wenn Sie eine Email abschicken und da in Kopie jemand, also meistens die Kollegen aus Russland stehen, die mEIstens Englisch oder Russisch sprechen, oder UNsere Manager die wiederum entweder Deutsch ODer Englisch sprechen, kein Russisch, sodass nutzen wir praktisch Englisch als Hauptsprache in dieser Kommunikation. Wiederum intern, die meisten hier sprechen Russisch. Wir haben eigentlich nur EInen externen Mitarbeiter, der als Topmanager immer unterwegs ist, also der kommt auch ab und zu ins Büro, und der wiederum er hat zwar ein bisschen Russischunterricht bekommen, aber kann sich leider nicht so frei ähm innerhalb dieser Sprache bewegen. Sodass wir wenn wir wenn er in Kopie ist, auf jeden Fall Englisch verwenden.

Hence, informant C3M3 assigns English and Russian to communication with colleagues in Russia, and German or English to communication with the managers. However, when she contacts her Russian colleagues in Moscow, the interviewee converses in Russian, in both spoken and written communication. When asked about how she perceives the situation that the managers do not have strong Russian skills, the interviewee reports that it has never been a serious problem so far, although it can be somewhat complicated at times. However, this refers primarily to technical language.

When informant C3M1 is asked about the existence of corporate language policies or a corporate language, she negates this and comments that every employee utilizes the language he feels comfortable with:

QC3M1: Wow. Haben Sie da äh, ich sag mal, Richtlinien? Also hat ihr Geschäftsführer gesagt #Das ist jetzt unsere Firmensprache#? Oder hat-

AC3M1: Nein. Nein. Es gibt keine Firmensprache, also jeder unterhält sich in DEr Sprache die für ihn also beQUEm ist.

QC3M1: Ahaa. Also das wird- man weiß, nach dem Motto, wer welche Sprache spricht und dann unterhält man sich.

AC3M1: Genau.

In general, language choice is based on who speaks which language. For example, it is reported on one of the managers that he simply knows who to talk with in which language, because he is acquainted with many employees.

AC3M1: Er kennt ja natürlich nicht jeden, aber die die er kennt- dann weiß er welche Sprache er spricht oder welche Sprache die spricht. Und ähm wenn er zum Beispiel weiß dass die Person nur beDINgt Deutsch Englisch versteht, also ich sag Deutsch Englisch weil, ich würde das nicht unterscheiden das ist. Also beide Sprachen sind im Einsatz. Täglich. Und er setzt in Kopie die die für, also Übersetzen verantwortlich sind ja.

Since translating plays an important role in C3, the corporation maintains own translators and interpretors, but from time to time the informant does provide summaries of Russian correspondence for her boss. Interestingly, for her job position, knowledge of Russian was welcome, but no requirement. Especially for business trips to Russia, it is reported to be advantageous. However, it is not absolutely necessary. When it comes to e-mails, for example, the translators who are competent in the languages in question are usually sent a copy as well. Informant C3M1 evaluates this procedure positively, and reports that *everything goes well* ("Klappt alles gut").

One question was directly asked about to what extent the informant considers company C3 to be successfully *coping* ("Bewältigung") with the multilingual situation. Informant C3M1 reported that she assumes problems rather occur in subsidiaries in Russia, sometimes colleagues in higher positions, who speak neither German nor English, experience problems in communicating with one of the German managers. The informant explains that they have translators or interpretors for similar cases, and that problems not occur too often. Again, she comments that *everything goes well* ("Alles gut").

External communication with colleagues in Russia is a central part of everyday business. Considering informant C3M2's work duties, oral and written proficiency in Russian is necessary, since only a few of the colleagues in Russia speak English, and hardly any of them German. In general however, e-mails are sent on a daily basis in all three languages, German, Russian, and English. About fifty percent of all e-mails at C2 are written in German, fifty percent in Russian, and a few in English. Which language is utilized in which case, is a variable decision. For e-mails to Russian colleagues, the informant uses Russian, for German colleagues in German, for e-mails sent to Russian and German colleagues, English is used.

Other texts, such as contracts, are often available in German and Russian. Informant C3M2 works with these texts, and for reliable translations of modifications to the Russian copies, trained translators are involved in the process. As skills in languages other then Russian are not taken for granted in Russia, they also have translators at hand. When asked about the amount of languages used in everyday business, the informant reports that mainly German and Russian are used, English is used not as much, while Russian remains the language

employed for oral communication.

In C3, language choice generally depends on the addressees. For example, the management in Russia is reported to have only a very limited command of Russian, which is why e-mails addressed at the German manager and the other colleagues in Russia are composed in Russian, and below the same text is is included in German. In a sense, more effort and time is needed for a single email under these circumstances. However, the informant perceives this as a regular part of daily business, and as an essential part of the job. Knowledge of German and Russian, and also of English, is necessary; otherwise, the management would have to employ a translator simply for this position:

AC3M2: Das ist Zusatzaufwand. Aber, ja, damit kann ich eigentlich ganz gut umgehen. Es gehört dazu. Also ich meine, ohne das kann ich ja nicht arbeiten.

QC3M2: Ja. Also man könnte hier, Sie könnten Ihre Arbeit ähm nicht machen wenn Sie nur eine von den drei Sprachen könnten.

AC3M2: Nein. Nein. Also dann wäre ich fehl am Platz, sag ich (ehrlich). Weil ich meine, dann dann bräuchte die Geschäftsführung äh einen Übersetzer, für mich persönlich.

Informant C3M2 generally enjoys the multilingual situation at work. However, it would also be absolutely fine for her to work in German only. Thus, the multilingual plurilingual situation is neither a necessity, nor a drawback, but it is *fun* ("mir macht es Spaß").

As informant C3M3 reports, qualified personnel in Russia do usually not have knowledge of languages other than Russian. Hence, this leads to certain problems regarding communication between offices in Germany and in Russia. The informant reports that it happens frequently that, e.g., documents need to be discussed in order to clarify the contents and further procedures.

AC3M3: […] Und das führt dazu dass wir wirklich ganz gute Fachkräfte haben, die zum Beispiel Buchhaltung betreuen oder Logistik, also wirklich Fachleute, die aber keine einzige Spr- Fremdsprache sprechen. Äh und sie sind dann gezwungen, ich meine dadurch dass diese ständige Kommunikation zwischen den deutschen Büros und russischen Niederlassungen stattfindet, sind sie gezwungen aus so einem Papier ((zeigt auf ein Dokument)) zum Beispiel irgendwie schlau zu werden. Und äh es führt schon teilweise zu Missverständnissen oder, wir wiederum irgendwie fühlen uns verpflichtet ihnen dann alles irgendwie auseinanderzunehmen. Mit der Praxis geht's ja alles, also irgendwann mal wird's schon klar welchen Teil der Rechnung man bezahlen soll und was das eigentlich alles heißt, aber, solche Schwierigkeiten gibt's hier permanent.

Informant C3M1 reports that she notices certain imbalances regarding her own language competencies. For her, interpreting from Russian (L1) into German works very well. Into the other direction, she has literally *no vocabulary*:

AC3M1: Aber, also wenn ich zum Beispiel dolmetschen muss oder übersetzen muss, also übersetzen fällt mir leicht. Dolmetschen also, da muss ich sagen also, wenn ich vom Russischen ins

> Deutsche übersetze, alles super. Umgekehrt habe ich keinen Wortschatz. Obwohl ich Russin bin, ich kann mich nicht so gut ausdrücken wie ich das im Deutschen kann. Also so fließend meine ich. Ich weiß nicht woran es liegt, vielleicht daran dass ich Bücher auf deutsch lese, Fernsehen nur auf deutsch höre sehe, und ja. Was noch.

In this respect, the lack of technical terms and terminology in her first language, Russian, is perceived to be problematic to a certain extent. In these cases, she usually tries to find someone who has the relevant terminological knowledge.

> AC3M1: [...] Wenn wir aber in Russland sind, und, da muss ich sein, ja (wenn) er zum Beispiel an die russischen Kollegen überbringen, da hab ich schon Probleme. Da muss ich manchmal jemanden finden der das für mich macht. Weil ich äh. Also ich habe- diesen Wortschatz einfach nicht. Ich verstehe schon was man sagt, aber ich kann es nicht- Ja die Kollegen müssen mir manchmal helfen wir man sich im Russischen ausdrückt. Klingt vielleicht blöd, aber, (pause) Hab ich festgestellt genau.

When asked in how far the company provides the opportunity to attend language trainings, C3M1 reports that trainings are offered. The informant herself was send to a Goethe Institut[1] class which she recalls having been an interesting experience. As she already has very high language proficiency in German, she would have wished for improvement when it comes to linguistic details. However, this was not achieved through the course. The informant reported that she received confirmation of her language level, and then commented on that in a rather ironic manner, *"I have received confirmation that I am able to speak German"*:

> AC3M1: Ich hab's auch bestätigt bekommen dass ich Deutsch sprechen kann.

Informant C3M3 considers it a very reasonable measure to offer language training to employees, especially if the company presents itself as multicultural. With regard to a lack of German skills in Russia, the informant illustrates that problems arise with banking or legal documents that the company in Germany automatically receives in German, which makes professional translations necessary, and these are very expensive. Informant C3M3 comments on language learning in general, that it is easiest while being abroad, as one is forced to utilize the foreign language in the foreign country. Regular course-based language trainings are perceived by C3M3 to be rather theoretical, which leads to problems in practically utilizing the language outside of the classroom. With regard to C3, the informant points out that not a single member of C3's management has managed to learn Russian on a level high enough to carry on a *fully-fledged conversation* ("vollwertige Unterhaltung"). For that reason, it apparently is a regular habit to switch to English if necessary, or to put an attendee into the position of interpreter.

> AC3M3: [...] Ganz normales, also Smalltalk ja, aber Sie wissen ja ganz genau das geht ja im Wesentlichen weiter, wesentlich weiter und tiefer, und dann steht man dann plötzlich vor einem

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[1]The Goethe Institut is an association that is active in promoting German culture and contributing cultural exchange. It operates world-wide and offers German language trainings.

> Problem, da, dass man entweder ins Englische wechseln muss oder jemand bei den Anwe-
> senden sitzt und dolmetscht, macht entweder konsektiv oder simultan.

In general, informant C3M3 reports that this works very well. The website of C3M1, the German holding, is reported to be in German and English. The website of the Russian sub-company is available in Russian and English. When asked about the decision-making process for these language pairings, informant C3M1 reports the following:

AC3M1: Mhmm. Mhmm. Ja weil in Russland sprechen Leute entweder nur Russisch, oder noch teil-weise Englisch. Aber Deutsch wird nicht so gesprochen wie wir das gewünscht hätten viel-leicht. Ja und deswegen Englisch UND Russisch Und Englisch. Und in Deutschland da brau-chen wir auf jeden Fall eine deutsche Seite und eine englische für die die Englisch sprechen oder für die die Russisch sprechen. Weil äh wie gesagt die Russen sprechen Russisch und manchmal auch Englisch.

It is remarkable that C3's website is not available in Russian. C3M1 assumes that the reason for that is simply the costs and expenses this would have, as the web designers who built their website do not speak Russian.

AC3M1: Also, sage ich mal so. Also wenn eine- ein Deutscher die Homepage anschaut dann kann er Deutsch lesen. Und wenn er Englisch spricht kann er auch Englisch sprechen. Aber Russisch spricht man meistens, also […] wenige Deutsche sprechen Russisch. Und wenn die Russisch sprechen, die sind sowieso Deutsche, die können sowohl Deutsch als auch Englisch sprechen. Wozu brauchen die eine Russische. Und wenn- die Russen unsere Homepage anschauen, also wenn die überhaupt die finden ja, dann können wir auch Eng- oft Englisch lesen, wenn sie kein Deutsch () sprechen.

Interestingly, the corporate newsletter is available in both English and Russian. One question was directed at why C3 corporate texts are available in English at all, as a simplified view sug-gests that clients in Germany know German, and clients in Russia know Russian. However, C3M1 assumes that this is due to the circumstances that many foreigners live in Germany, and that German or Russian companies have clients or suppliers from English-speaking countries:

AC3M1: Weil in Deutschland ganz viele Ausländer wohnen, und außerdem ich glaube auch deutsche Firmen oder russische Firmen, die haben entweder Kunden oder Lieferanten aus englisch-sprachigen Ländern […]

What is reported by C3M1 is that at international trade fairs where C3 is represented, the lan-guages spoken are German, English, Russian; and French on very rare occasions. Sometimes it happens that, for example, a German company recruits a Russian employee for working at the fair, as a large amount of visitors to fairs are Russian, *the Russians are everywhere* ("Die Russen sind überall. haha"). C3 also sends English-, German-, and Russian-speakers to their stand. However, this procedure is not included in any policy documents or the like.

When asked about a successful or peculiar multilingual situation, informant C3M3 responds that, due to the fact that the staff in the German C3 office concerned is plurilingual, these multilingual situations are ever-present:

AC3M3: Es ist für uns hier leider keine #besondere# Situation. Das erleben wir tagtäglich. Das was bei manchen Menschen ja einmal im Jahr passiert, das sie vielleicht in einem Raum auf mehrsprachige Personen treffen, also das ist eigentlich für uns eher die Regel als Ausnahme. Daher so an eine besondere Situation mich zu erinnern, also (pause) wohl kaum.

Informant C3M3 addresses the issue of globalization and emphasizes how *nowadays everything is globalized*. According to informant C3M3, increasing bilingualism or multilingualism, i.e. plurilingualism, is omnipresent and nothing special anymore:

AC3M3: Wissen Sie, also ich finde man findet heutzutage weil alles ja so globalisiert ist, also mehr-also diese Bilingualität oder gar Mehrsprachigkeit wirklich wo drei vier Sprachen gesprochen werden, das ist teilweise schon keine Ausnahme.

3.4.4 C4

Due to C4 being an international corporation, it is positioned as a multilingual company *in every respect*. The informant points at C4's workforce coming from many different countries, which makes it obligatory for them to speak English, or their colleagues' languages. With their globally dispersed locations, not everyone is able to speak German, *logically* ("logischerweise"). Hence, English is stated as the corporate language, and as the language of everyday work experience.

QC4M1: Würden Sie sagen, Sie haben eine Firmensprache?

AC4M1: Englisch definitiv.

QC4M1: Ahaa? Und in Ihrem konkreten Arbeitsalltag?

AC4M1: Englisch.

QC4M1: Englisch ahaa?

AC4M1: Also viel Deutsch natürlich, die internen Sachen sind (natürlich) alle Deutsch, zum großen Teil zumindest, und aber (pause) also sobald halt jemand von einem Werk außerhalb oder einem Standort außerhalb anruft, ist es Englisch.

In fact, German is *of course* utilized much, especially for internal purposes, at least with regard to the German subsidiary where the informant is employed. For communication outside that subsidiary, English is the language of choice, unless communication takes place with a location where many German-speakers are employed. For example, incoming telephone calls that display a foreign country code, are usually answered in English, but it is switched to German when a German-speaker is on the other end of the line:

AC4M1: Mit- (pause) Also es gibt bestimmte Leute, zum Beispiel in Brüssel haben wir viele, die auch Deutsch sprechen, da weiß man es einfach mit der Zeit, da pendelt sich's- dann ein. Aber grundsätzlich, wenn ich sehe, es ist eine ausländische Nummer, ich sage zwar dran, sage #XFirmennameX, XNachnameX# ganz normal wie immer, also, aber man merkt ja dann sofort ob das ein, ha, deutschsprachiger Mensch ist, ansonsten- direkt halt auf Englisch.

In C4, language for oral or written communication is reported to be freely chosen by the employees. The informant however emphasizes that in the department, there are individuals who do have no or poor knowledge of German, thus e-mails and circular letters are *automatically* written in English, especially when they are sent out to other departments as well.

AC4M1: Im Grunde kann ich das frei entscheiden, nur wenn (pause). Also jetzt, Beispiel, wenn wir jetzt innerhalb der Abteilung ein Rundschreiben machen, also wir haben in der Abteilung Leute, die einfach kein Deutsch sprechen, oder (pause) nur gebrochen, dann MUSS ich's automatisch auf Englisch schreiben, einfach dass es halt jeder versteht. Auch wenn 90% der Abteilung eigentlich Deutsch spricht haha ähm, ist es einfach um wirklich alle abzudecken, dass man halt nicht noch irgendwie noch eine extra Mail schreiben muss an die, die es nicht versteht, macht man es einfach grundsätzlich auf Englisch. Und so ist es eigentlich auch Konzern-weit, also wenn es auch mal (pause) andere Abteilungen betrifft, in der Regel machen wir alles auf Englisch einfach um sicherzugehen, dass es auch jeder versteht.

The informant reports on her everyday language use at work that about one half of the communication is dealt with in German, the rest in English, with French having a marginal role. However, English is entitled to be the *main language*:

AC4M1: (pause) .hh Ich würde sagen, 50% Deutsch (pause) und der Rest ist dann doch Englisch oder teilweise dann auch mal Französisch oder so, aber das ist eher geringfügig. Englisch ist schon die Hauptsprache, in der man kommuniziert.

When asked about how this multilingual situation is perceived, the informant shows a very positive attitude, and it is perceived as *really great* ("Ganz toll!"). The informant generally exhibits a very positive attitude towards multilingualism, while at the same time being aware of the possibility that for other people multilingual situations may be annoying, too, since these usually take more time. However, the informant has never experienced conversations that have been tense due to the multilingual situation. Therefore, the informant would not see why or how the corporate management should take any measures in order to prevent misunderstandings or communicative breakdowns in multilingual conversations. The informant generally sees no reason why someone would be bothered by multilingualism at work. In an international corporation, it is necessary to adjust oneself to other cultures and other languages.

AC4M1: […] Also ich verstehe es nicht warum manche irgendwie Probleme damit haben. (pause) Man ist in einem internationalen Konzern und da muss man sich einfach- da muss man sich einfach bewusst sein, dass ist international, da muss man sich auf andere Kulturen und Sprachen einstellen. Punkt. Da gibt es für mich gar keine Diskussion.

However, the follow-up question on whether it is actually the case that other languages can be used at work, especially when communicating with members of other cultures, the informant puts it into perspective again:

QC4M1: Und ist das ähm bei Ihnen auch so, dass Sie auch andere Sprachen verwenden können? Vor allem in Kontakt mit anderen Kulturen, wenn Sie-

AC4M1: Leider nicht SO sehr, also mit den Kollegen in Brüssel kann man natürlich auch Französisch reden, klar, (pause) gut, Kollegen in Afrika theoretisch auch wobei ich mit denen relativ wenig Kontakt habe, (pause) Aber bei den anderen, also Indisch kann ich halt nicht .hh da bleibt's halt bei Englisch und ähm Amerikanern sowieso- Also leider leider kommt's halt nicht so häufig vor, Spanisch hin und wieder noch, aber- also muss ich sagen es ist schade, dass es doch hauptsächlich Englisch ist.

So basically, the informant reports on the theoretical option to utilize French with African colleagues, although they only have rare contact. With colleagues from India or America, it is always English. Sometimes Spanish can be utilized at work, but English is the language mainly utilized. The informant reports on herself having competencies in French, English, Spanish, and Portuguese, which she would all like to develop further.

AC4M1: Also ich kann vier Fremdsprachen, also Französisch, Englisch, Spanisch und Portugiesisch […] Also ich würd's auch gerne ausbauen, ich würd auch gern mehr lernen, also ich find Sprachen toll, nur halt wie gesagt im Alltag braucht man eigentlich fast nur Englisch.

The interview ended with an anecdote about multilingualism at work:

AC4M1: Also ich hatte mal ein interessantes Gespräch mit einer Kollegin aus Spanien, die Deutsche ist, was wir aber alle, also wir wussten nichts voneinander, meine Eltern sind ja aus Portugal, also ich spreche deswegen Portugiesisch […] also ich habe sie angerufen, wir haben auf Englisch angefangen, dann irgendwann habe ich dann irgendwas auf Spanisch einfach gesagt, weil Sie dann auch mit den Kollegen auf Spanisch gesprochen hat haha, dann war sie wieder überrascht dass ich Spanisch sprech, dann ist ihr aber wieder eingefallen, dass sie ja mit Deutschland spricht, dann könnte man ja auch auf Deutsch sprechen, und dann ist ihr aufgefallen dass mein Name ja NICht Spanisch ist sondern Portugiesisch, weil da kannte sie sich aus […] Dadurch ähm- Also im Endeffekt haben wir mindestens in drei Sprachen gesprochen, ich weiß gar nicht das war ein komisches Durcheinander, weil irgendwie auch andere daran beteiligt waren, die dort dann Spanisch und hier haben wir dann auf Deutsch, und dann ging's aber auf Englisch, und irgendwie hat sie dann noch was auf Portugiesisch gesagt weil sie meinte, wegen meinem Hintergrund, hat man sich da- also das war eigentlich haha ganz amüsant, vor allem völlig verwirrend, weil man dann irgendwie von einer Sprache zu anderen geswitcht ist und, also mir persönlich (pause) Also zwischen Deutsch und Englisch hab ich gar kein Problem, also da kann ich hin und herspringen, bin ich's gewohnt. Aber als sie dann noch mit Spanisch und Portugiesisch angefangen hat, da kommt man dann doch plötzlich durcheinander und weiß gar nicht mehr in welcher Sprache soll man jetzt eigentlich sprechen haha Das war doch eigentlich ganz amüsant, das stimmt, ja.

3.5 Expressions of Multilingualism in the Workplace

3.5.1 Multilingualism and English as a Working Language

A major and recurring topic throughout all interviews is the role of English for corporate communication. In all workplaces, English is reported to play a considerable role. Certainly, it is

not very surprising that English is repeatedly mentioned in the context of international business, considering the role of English as a lingua franca. However, there are certain qualities to the perceptions of English that are of central importance to understanding the embodiments of multilingualism in German multinational workplaces.

First of all, the case of C1 shows that English competency is considered a fundamental skill in the IT sector, where it is required in all areas of occupation. Informant C1M5 summarizes this as follows:

> AC1M5: Ähm sagen wir so, das ist in dem IT Bereich in dem ich arbeite eigentlich, grundsätzlich, wird das vorausgesetzt und jeder weiß es. […] ALles in dem Bereich bricht auf Englisch herunter. (Das ist) alles komplett international. […] Im IT Bereich. Und das ist tatsächlich so. Also das komplett ähm globalisiert Englisch.

The international character of the IT realm in a globalized world is constructed as inextricably linked to English. The informant presents this as a mere fact which everybody knows about. Furthermore, English is highly valued for its function as a lingua franca. For example, informant C1M2 illustrates in this context how wonderful it generally is for him to have a common language with people from different nations. He emphasizes that through English he can converse with Norwegians, Swedes, or Finns, and overall, he evaluates English as a lingua franca very positively:

> AC1M2: Sag ich mal, es ist schön eine gemeinsame Sprache zu haben überhaupt. Also jetzt kommen beispielsweise auch Leute aus, Norwegen Schweden Finnland. Ja, die können vielleicht ein paar Brocken Deutsch, aber können halt gut Englisch. Wir können Englisch also haben wir eine gemeinsame Sprache. Ansonsten müssten wir uns mit Dolmetschern behelfen. Irgendwas in der Art.

Interestingly, this answer was given when he was in fact asked to provide an example of a successful multilingual encounter. As a consequence, the above stated example refers to a presumably very multicultural encounter. The situation was perceived as successful because of the chance to collectively choose a common language that everybody had knowledge of. However, on the surface, this encounter is in fact a rather monolingual one.

In the same vein, informant C1M2 reports on his perceptions towards the practice that meetings are conducted in English. When asked about how the participants decide on which language is employed for communication, the informant responds that they basically have only one option:

> AC1M2: Ja gut, wir haben nur eine Option. Also wir können (nicht sagen) #Ach wir nehmen heut mal Französisch oder Spanisch oder Italienisch#. Also Englisch ist eigentlich so, so der gemeinsame Nenner für alle, (in) ihrem Sprachgebrauch.

Hence, a shared repertoire of English leads to its perception to be the *common denominator* for international communication. Apparently, there is no other way of handling the situation.

Informant C1M2 further describes how in an international environment, participants from many different nations are involved, and he states that it would not be possible to always have the corresponding language skills at hand:

AC1M2: Sagen wir mal so. Es ist manchmal hilfreich weil da die Teams, also wenn's international wird, so bunt gemischt sind, also da wird's schwierig. Da müsste man sagen, ok ich müsste jetzt Indisch können, dann müssten (sie) fragen welchen Dialekt aus Indien ja, weil die haben ja glaube ich auch elf oder dreizehn Dialekte in Indien, in China das gleiche Spiel, kann ich Mandarin kann ich was auch immer. So mit USA wird's einfacher, die sprechen Englisch mit einem Dialekt aber, mit den Teams mit den verschiedenen, wird's halt schwierig. Dann vielleicht noch Mexiko dabei, dann, gut Singapur, die sprechen halt auch gut Englisch, (pause) Aber je nach dem- Also zu sagen ich habe jetzt die passende Sprache für jeden, das funktioniert nicht, also.

Furthermore, the informant is asked whether he has experienced situations where he felt the need for skills in a particular language, for example with a colleague from India, where he had wished to communicate in a language other than English. From his perspective, it would not *make any sense.*

QC1M2: Haben Sie da persönlich auch äh, jemals gesagt dass Sie da eigentlich ein Interesse hätten, dass Sie beispielsweise sehr eng zusammengearbeitet haben mit Kollegen aus, sagen wir mal konkret Indien, aus einer bestimmten Gegend, und wo Sie dann sagten #Eigentlich, mehr als Englisch wäre jetzt cool.#?

AC1M2: Nein. Macht keinen Sinn. […] Also wie gesagt, ich kann Englisch, die können Englisch, also es macht es jetzt keinen Sinn. Also, (man) könnte ja auch sagen #Warum lernen die kein Deutsch?#

As informant C1M2's colleagues from abroad speak English, and he himself does, too, he sees no point in employing languages other than English for work-related matters. This shows how the informant perceives language choice in favour of English as a simple matter of course, with English being chosen as the default medium of communication. This is also reflected in the everyday practices of C1 employees. Informant C1M2 illustrates that when a meeting consisting of thirty Germans takes place and an English-speaking non-German colleague joins them, the language of communication is automatically switched to English:

AC1M2: Ja, also das ist ja auch vom Programm- Also wenn da ein Meeting ist mit, dreißig Deutschen, einer kommt dazu der Englisch kann, wird auf Englisch geswitcht,

What becomes apparent is how English is being seen as the unrivalled working language in international teams.

In this context, informant C1M2 is asked whether he has experienced moments that would have gone differently in a German-only meeting. The informant confirms this without any reservation and reports that he perceives language use in non-native communication to be of a different nature than in a native speaker environment. This can have an influence on work-related activities, as informant C1M2 exemplifies when speaking about the contrast

between one's limited vocabulary in a second language versus one's vocabulary in one's own native language. In this context, the informant mentions that in C1's subsidiaries abroad, it is always possible to converse in one's native language, German, on the management level:

AC1M2: Ja. (pause) Also es macht schon was aus ob man, sag ich mal, ein eingeschränktes Vokabular hat, oder ob man wirklich aus, aus einem muttersprachlichen Topf schöpfen kann (zur Kommunikation). Also wir haben's auch gehabt jetzt bei XFirmenname1X wenn wir, Auslandslokationen haben, sind eigentlich immer deutsche Geschäftsführer vor Ort, dass wenn man dann auf Führungsebene sich unterhält, da sich auch in der Muttersprache unterhalten kann.

A major difference between mother tongue language use and from language use in other languages is pointed out by informant C1M2. Apparently, he perceives difficulties arising in the context of criticizing others:

AC1M2: [...] Aber sag ich jetzt mal so, es wird immer dann kritisch wenn man irgendwas kritisieren muss. Weil man einfach so die, die NEGativ Worte im englischen Vokabular nicht da sind wie im Deutschen zum Beispiel.

Regarding the aspect of negative vocabulary that is less available in the additional language in contrast to one's first language, informant C1M2's report indicates how *strong language* ("Brachialworte") is associated predominantly with native speaker language:

AC1M2: (pause) Sagen wir mal so, wenn ich manche Meetings auf Deutsche höre wie da manche mit sag ich mal Brachialworten um sich werfen- Gut, ich seh's am Muttersprachler. Ich hab gestern ein Meeting gehabt mit einem, äh mit einem amerikanischen XFirmenname2X Topmanager, und wie oft da die Wörter #shit# und #fuck# gefallen sind, will ich jetzt gar nicht weiter ausführen, also. Ja, das würde ich mir auf Englisch, nie rausnehmen. [...] Also ich denk wenn's in Richtung Fluchen geht, da sind die Muttersprachler klar im Vorteil.

This accounts for the imbalances that are perceived when native and non-native uses of English occur simultaneously. This phenomenon is further addressed when the informant reports on how he perceives English native speakers differently from speakers of English as an additional language:

AC1M2: Ja. Wenn ich mit () Englischmuttersprachlern rede, reden die sehr oft auch sehr schnell. Also die gehen davon aus jeder kann Englisch auf der ganzen Welt. [...] Also wenn es Amerikaner sind zum Beispiel die sprechen dann sehr schnell und sehr flüssig und mit sehr vielen Fremdwörtern (sag ich mal), wenn das jetzt kein Muttersprachler ist dann sag ich mal, ist der Wortschatz schon eingeschränkt, aber die VerSTÄNDnisebene ist auch höher. [...] Wenn beide nicht Muttersprachler sind. Das heißt die verstehen sich dann besser weil, wenn der eine vielleicht zehn zwanzig Prozent der Wörter gar nicht versteht die der andere verwendet, oder aufgrund der Geschwindigkeit kaum mitkommt, was der andere, so erzählt, da ist da schon wieder Verlust da.

Native speakers of English, for instance, Americans, are attributed to speak very fast, very fluent, and with many (presumably) elaborated words. Non-native speakers are associated with a limited vocabulary but, what is interesting, is that the informant points out that com-

munication between non-native speakers of English is characterized by a better mutual understanding. As the interviewee puts it, there is more *loss* of information in conversations between native and non-native speakers of English. Hence, pure lingua franca communication is evaluated to be more successful in general.

These imbalances are put into context with certain obstacles that can occur with using an additional language. Interviewee C1M4 reports on employees of more than 50 years of age that there are certain insecurities regarding the use of English, especially in conversations when native speakers of English are involved. This can lead to communicative barriers. Informant C1M4 is aware that similar constellations can be an impairment to information transfer:

> AC1M4: […] besonders vielleicht eben Conference Calls wo dann eben native speakers dabei sind, sind sie dann auch zurückhaltender weil sie irgendwie merken, ähm ja #Ich kann mich nicht so ausdrücken# und dann lässt man sicherlich auch einiges an Informationen vielleicht nicht raus, oder meldet sich nicht, weil man sich nicht getraut mit diesem englischen Level in dieser Runde aufzutreten, wo jetzt Amerikaner, und Engländer was weiß ich, native speakers dabei sind.

However, the informant points out there is a certain *barrier* ("Hemmschwelle") to use English. One major factor influencing the use of English is speaker age. Younger people, especially those who come from academia, are considered to be accustomed to English language environments. For example, informant C1M4 states how younger people are increasingly familiar with and competent in the English language:

> AC1M4: […] Generell denke ich, je mehr junge Leute wir haben im Unternehmen desto besser ist natürlich, sind die Englischkenntnisse.

Although informant C1M1 is aware that English as a corporate language can cause employees to feel certain impositions towards speaking the non-native language, he comments that this phenomenon is on the decline due to the ageing structure in the company.

Considering the fact that a large proportion of English language communication at C1 is in written form, informant C1M5 mentions some very interesting points regarding lingua franca communication in the written realm. At C1, written communication is mainly taking place via email, but their software also offers instant messaging services:

> AC1M5: […] wir benutzen ein Telefonsystem […] Da sieht man, ist der Gesprächspartner online, wenn er online ist kann man den direkt anchatten, ähm und das wird eigentlich relativ häufig benutzt anstatt das Telefon zu nutzen, dann kriegt man halt mal per Chat eine Anfrage von einem Südafrikaner ob ich mal checken könnte ob in seinem System alles in Ordnung wäre. Und so läuft das dann ab. Und dann halt auch umgangssprachlich per Chat halt, das äh erreicht einen Status das äh dem Telefonieren gleichkommt, denk ich mal. Das wird relativ häufig benutzt, und da die meisten Leute sehr viel fitter im Schreiben sind als im Sprechen, der fremden Sprache, (das) ist ja für die Südafrikaner auch eine fremde Sprache das Englisch, ähm, wird dann halt kurz angeschrieben.

Short and immediate contact through the software allows for a form of communication that is perceived as very much comparable to talking over the telephone. The informant assumes the majority of people to have higher competencies in written language. He suggests that this the reason for the frequent use of this medium, as this supports many colleagues in employing their non-native language English for work correspondence. Informant C1M5 reports that, in his view, this instant messaging service is being utilized in a much more open and easy manner than email. He assigns different qualities to certain communicative media when describing how email is associated more with official and verifiable correspondence, and how telefon conversations requires a very high competence in the language, whereas the instant chat as a hybrid form combines the advantages of both: instant messaging is an easy way to communicate fast and in a casual fashion, without feeling the need to be very fluent in oral communication. The informant reports on the phenomenon that some people have *inhibitions* when they have to use a foreign language, which is connected to a certain degree of discomfort:

AC1M5: Ähm, die fremde Sprache erstmal zu benutzen. Ich denke mal wenn Sie erstmal anfangen in einer fremden Sprache zu reden, und das auch benutzen MÜSsen, dann sind die Hemmnisse ganz schnell weg. Dann sprechen Sie ganz schnell und versuchen auch sich mit Händen und Füßen dann, zu verständigen. Aber bis DEr Punkt gekommen ist dass Sie wirklich frei sprechen können in einer fremden Sprache ähm, (pause) ist ein gewisses Hemmnis da.

In his view, many people have such inhibitions in the beginning. Starting to switch from one language into the other one considered a necessary skill. C1M5 perceives this *threshold anxiety* ("Schwellenangst") as a major problem in a company where people only just start using another language, in this case, English. However, once people learn to overcome this initial anxiety, they deal with it in a normal way.

In company C3, English skills are also considered to be a central skill. Informant C3M2 reports in view of job postings, that very good oral and written command of English is a regular requirement. The informant commented on this in a rather humorous way that, in the future, it is possible that cleaning staff will also be required to speak English.

AC3M2: Äh, wenn man die Ausschreibungen schaut, nach irgendwelchen Stellen, da steht #Englisch, in Wort und Schrift fließend.# Ja, egal welche Ausschreibung. Ich kann mir vorstellen, dass-mit der Zeit wird sogar eine Putzfrau englische Sprache sprechen.

Thus, additional problems that come into play regarding English as an international language is that linguistic issues are influenced by national language policies, or the lack thereof. Informant C3M3 reports on Russia, that the majority of the population does not have competencies in languages other than Russian, unless they have received linguistic training in the philology programs. Informant C3M3 points at the typological distance between Russian and English, and emphasizes that it is much more difficult for native speakers of Russian to learn English than it is for German native speakers. The informant further contrasts how English skills are

taken for granted in Germany, whereas in Russia, this is not the case. In contrast to German, English in Russia is *really a foreign language*:

AC3M3: Leider ja. Es kommt immer wieder vor, zum Beispiel es ist leider spezifisch für Russland, dass die meiste Bevölkerung wenn sie nicht gerade für Sprache ausgebildet sind, wenn sie zum Beispiel nicht Germanistik Anglistik studiert haben, dass sie gar keine Fremdsprache kennen. Und zwar das hat damit zu tun dass Russisch erstmal aus einer anderen Sprachgruppe kommt, es ist ja, ich sag's mal so, für die Deutschen selbstverständlich Englisch zu können. Weil das ist ungefähr so wie wenn ein Russe zum Beispiel ukrainische Sprache lernen würde. Da sind so viele mh gemeinsame Regeln, gemeinsame grammatikalische Strukturen, daher im russischen Sprachraum ist es ganz anders. Also Englisch das ist dann WIRklich Fremdsprache für sie. Deutsch schon ja dreimal weil Deutsch mehr Ausnahmen hat. Also Deutsch ist schwieriger. […]

The importance of language skills in general and the role of plurilingual competency for professinal life is emphasized by informant C3M2:

AC3M2: […] Und ich meine jetzt, äh zur Zeit, zu sagen #ich studier nur Jura und damit krieg ich (einen) normalen Job, ohne mehr, ohne Sprachen, zu beherrschen# ist halt ähm, eine veraltete Denkweise. […] Die Konkurrenz ist groß, da muss man mehr bieten als man jetzt einfach im Studium gelernt hat. […] aber ich finde zur Zeit egal (ob) man- egal in welches Land man geht, ja, es wird einfach Mehrsprachigkeit gefordert. Fertig.

It is remarkable how the informant identifies language skills as key aspects to a sucessful career. A degree in law without further training in languages is reported to be not sufficient for finding even a normal job. This is perceived as a clearly out-dated mindset, and *nowadays* ("heutzutage") multilingualism, in the sense of plurilingualism, is required. Interestingly, the reason for the above mentioned increasing requirements is reported to be the increasing competition for jobs among graduates. In this sense, it is important to be able to offer more than the others, to offer more than one has learned in school. In this context, the benefits of competencies in English and other languages are mainly associated with an increasing competitive advantage. However, even if individual employees have competencies in several languages, this does not necessarily entail that they will have the chance to apply their skills at work. An example is provided by informant C4M1. She reports on herself:

AC4M1: Also ich kann vier Fremdsprachen, also Französisch, Englisch, Spanisch und Portugiesisch […] Also ich würd's auch gerne ausbauen, ich würd auch gern mehr lernen, also ich find Sprachen toll, nur halt wie gesagt im Alltag braucht man eigentlich fast nur Englisch.

QC4M1: Würden Sie sich denn wünschen dass seitens Ihres Arbeitgebers da mehr Möglichkeiten geboten würden, dass Sie beispielsweise Ihre Fremdsprachenkenntnisse anwenden und auch verbessern können?

AC4M1: Also ich würd's mir wünschen, muss aber sagen, in der Praxis ist es extrem schwer umzusetzen, weil es halt einfach- natürlich wenn man einen Anruf kriegt und irgendwas lösen muss, dann möchte man's natürlich auch schnell tun. Und da ist natürlich Englisch viel einfach, oder man ist da viel viel schneller drin, beziehungsweise also kann man sich auch schnell auf diese Sprache einigen weil man einfach weiß, der andere spricht sie auch. Bei denen

in Brüssel ist es so oft so, dass die natürlich auf Englisch anfangen oder teilweise auch auf Deutsch je nach dem, und wenn man dann Französisch reden will muss man's von sich aus tun. Weil die ja auch selbst gar nicht davon ausgehen dass man selbst Französisch kann. So ist das immer. Oder auch mit den Spaniern, wenn ein Spanier mich anruft .hh erstens Mal sind die Gespräche oft sehr kurz sodass man sich gar nicht Mühe macht auf Spanisch umzu-switchen, weil es einfach nach drei Sätzen eh erledigt ist, (pause) Und ja, es ist halt einfach die Einfachheit, die es einfach auf Englisch reduziert.

The informant illustrates how in everyday business life, English is almost the only necessary language. Moreover, an increased use of several languages is considered extremely difficult to be put into practice. Regardless of her language skills in French, Spanish, and Portuguese, she does not actually use them in the workplace, even if communicating with colleagues in Spain, or Belgium. This is due to the fact that English is considered the default for international communication. The choice for English is associated with and also motivated by the basic concept of simplicity. In the business, communication is always a matter of time, and English permits fast and easy arrangements. Sometimes, it would be possible to use languages other than English just as well, but as these are usually not assumed by the interlocutors, English is initially chosen and the conversations simply continue in English.

An anecdote provided by informant C1M2 shows what can happen if sufficient knowledge of English is not available in an international work setting. One of the C1 colleagues was sent to Shanghai in order to train a new local team of C1X. Language of instruction was English, and every day after class, one of the Chinese participants translated the English presentation slides or class notes into Chinese. The informant underlines that the Chinese attended all the sessions, but in the end they actually studied the course content on the basis of the translated Chinese materials:

AC1M2: […] Zu China fällt mir jetzt noch eine Anekdote ein, wir hatten letztes Jahr mal einen Kolle-gen von uns vier Wochen in Shanghai, der hat dort ein neues () Team ausgebildet, technisch, auf Englisch, da saß dann immer so am Ende des Tages saß einer der Chinesen da und hat das ganze in Schriftzeichen abgetippt. Also, die haben zwar alle zugehört, genickt, aber es hat dann einer in keine Ahnung Mandarin getippt, und hat das dann dokumentiert abgelegt zum Nachlesen für die anderen. Weil die lieber das in Chinesisch lesen, das schonmal besser verstehen als Englisch.

When informant C1M2 is asked whether he thinks such courses actually make sense, con-sidering the fact that the participants do not have sufficient knowledge of English to follow the course presentation, he expresses his doubts. Apart from pressure of time and a lack of practical orientation, these trainings are heavily impaired by both the *language barrier* and cultural misunderstandings.

AC1M2: Es gibt viele Dinge die keinen Sinn machen. Die irgendwer entscheidet dass es so ist. Das ist auch, die müssen in vier Wochen ausgebildet sein, wofür wir normalerweise ein halbes Jahr brauchen. Und da sag ich, der Zeitdruck ist viel zu groß, die Sprachbarriere ist da, es ist kein Praxisbezug da, also (da hat man) vom Grundansatz her schon ziemlich schlecht

gewählt. Aber im Prinzip, wir gehen halt hin, erzählen denen vier Wochen die Themen. Ob die's verstanden haben-.

Clearly, this inadequate reliance on English as a lingua franca has added to the meaninglessness of this training module. The inefficacy of this rather monolingual encounter shows how English as some sort of panacea for international business works only as long as all parties involved have sufficient competencies in English. However, knowledge of additional languages other than English does not seem to be highly valued.

Reports from C1 show how other languages remain important, especially in contexts where English is not accepted as a language of business communication. Informant C1M1 reports on his experiences in a different company, where management trainings for staff in Latin America were organized, and where *international experience* was assumed to imply English competence. However, it turned out that managers did not automatically have good English skills, as Spanish is in fact the common trade language in that regional context:

AC1M1: […] zum Beispiel die Kollegen aus Mittel und Südamerika, die haben alle angegeben, dass sie SEhr viel Erfahrung im internationalen Geschäft haben. Das ist natürlich schonmal so (eine) Grundvoraussetzung, dass Sie sagen #Ja ist ja super, ne, da ist ja Englisch kein Thema.# So. Ja. Und dann kamen die zu diesem Programm, und die Erfahrung war haha die konnten alle kein GUtes Englisch. Die konnten alle super Spanisch […], weil eben alle anderen Spanisch reden, und dann hat sich herausgestellt, naja deren internationale Erfahrung heißt, als chilenischer, Manager habe ich viel mit meinem peruanischen Kollegen (zu tun).

With regard to Asia, Informant C1M4 describes the particular role of Japanese for their customer support in Japan:

AC1M4: Beziehungsweise Japanisch muss man, vielleicht noch eine Besonderheit, japanische Kunden wollen eben wirklich nur in Japanisch bedient werden, das heißt den Rest der Welt kann man den Kunden immer auch mit Englisch, bedienen, aber die japanischen Kunden wollen nur Japanisch, das heißt das- die japanischen Tickets gehen auch immer über Übersetzer. Also wenn unsere zum Beispiel, unsere eigenen Leute NICht vor Ort sind die Japanisch sprechen, weil, ich sag mal während der Nachtzeit zum Beispiel in Asien, sind jetzt unsere Kollegen hier in Deutschland oder USA aktiv, dort ist natürlich Japanisch nicht vorhanden, das heißt die bearbeiten dann die Tickets, schicken's zu einem Übersetzer der XFirmenname2X, der übersetzt das Ganze, ins Japanische, und dann geht's an den Kunden. Dann kommt das Ticket wieder zurück, in Japanisch, wird wieder übersetzt, ins Englische, und ähm dann können unsere Leute weiterarbeiten. Das heißt die haben also diesen Japanischsupport wirklich nur während der Businesshours, in der Region Asien.

Apparently, Japanese clients only accept Japanese as their working language. Thus, support of Japanese clients is primarily performed by C1's three Japanese-speaking colleagues. Else, for example outside business hours in Asia, the tickets are send to Japanese-English translators located Europe or Asia, then processed by the colleagues, then again translated, and then send to the client in Japan.

Nevertheless, the availability of competencies in languages other than German and English

can be indeed beneficial for a German company, even in their German location, as shows the report by informant C2M1. One example is is the instance of a group of Algerian visitors to one of C1's German locations, where French was utilized for communication. Arabic was helpful for hosting a group of Saudi visitors, although the official parts where still conducted in English. It is important to note that these language skills that have been used for corporate purposes, could only be accessed through the employees' personal contacts.

Someone who knew about the expected visit knew someone or talked to someone who in turn knew that someone in the company had skills in, for example, French or Arabic. C2 does not have a database available with this kind of information, and it does not utilize language skills strategically in similar situations. The reason for that which is given by the informant is C2's corporate structure, with flat hierarchies and an everyone-knows-everybody mentality, although it is acknowledged that this situation could change in the future.

3.5.2 Multilingualism and Migration

Several aspects about multilingualism emerged from the data that are related to migration and social diversity. Although it is tempting to take certain linguistic environments and conditions for granted, there are additional factors that should be taken into consideration when discussing multilingualism in the workplace.

Against the backdrop of the English as Lingua Franca discussion above, it is interesting to see how it is handled if communication cannot take place within the usual frame of German and/or English. Informant C1M1 states for company C1 that they benefit from having personnel at hand who possess knowledge of other languages. This refers to situations when colleagues from abroad visit the German subsidiary. The informant recalls an incident where a colleague from abroad came for a visit, and where German and English did not suffice for communicating with each other. As the informant reports, such incidents happen very rarely. However, if they do, they are *lucky* to have an employee at hand who is a native speaker of the language in question and who can help translate.

The informant reports on how a Russian colleague visited a C1 subsidiary in Germany. That colleague did not have sufficient knowledge of English or German, and it was very helpful that a C1 employee on location happened to have very good knowledge of both German and Russian:

AC1M1: Das war Russisch. Das war in dem Fall ein russischstämmiger Kollege, der eben nicht in Russland gearbeitet (hat) sondern in einem anderen Land, und der aber noch nicht so gut Englisch konnte, und da () konnte zum Glück jemand unterstützen der eben hier aus dem Haus ist und sehr gut Russisch, konnte, und sehr gut Deutsch. Und (das) dann immer zwischen Englisch Russisch Deutsch so, (mal kurz besprechen).

Hence, the Russian-speaking colleague employed at the C1 location in Germany operated as a linguistic link between the local team and the visitor. This is similar to what has been reported for C2, where an Arabic-speaking colleague helped to host a group of Saudi visitors (see section Refsubsectionenglish. In a sense, the C1 employee with knowledge of Russian was thus employed as a communicative resource. Informant C1M1 acknowledges that for the visiting colleague, this has been a convenient and very comfortable situation. The existence of a linguistic resource, i.e. having a speaker of both German and Russian at hand, has added to the external colleague's well-being and his experience of his visit at C1:

AC1M1: War aber Zufall. () War gut, klar, aber weil auch der Kollege sich dann angenehmer fühlte, weil er dann natürlich sagte #Super ich jetzt hier nicht irgendwo und muss nach Worten suchen, sondern habe noch einen anderen Kollegen hier der ist auch Russe#, oder Kasache in dem Fall, #und da erzähle ich dem mal auf Russisch was ich meine und der kann das dann mal übersetzen.# War in dem Fall Zufall aber es ist natürlich, gut.

However, the informant explicity states that this was pure coincidence. On the part of the company, there are no guidelines or arrangements available for such cases. Hence, C1 relies on German and English for communication only. Note that this also becomes apparent through the way the informant has portrayed the situation, especially when he speaks about the colleague who could not speak good English *yet*.

A different, but not in any way less interesting account of the interplay between migration and multilingualism at work is provided by informant C3M1 in the context of company C3. When informant C3M1 is asked about how she perceives the multilingual climate in her work environment, she comments on her personal background and how it is involved in her perceptions of her multilingual workplace. The informant herself is Russian, and she has been living in Germany for several years. Although she learned both German and English in school and in university, German is her *favourite language* ("Lieblingssprache"). Paradoxically, now that she is living and working in Germany, she misses speaking German:

AC3M1: […] Also ICH. Ich bin Ausländerin ja. Ich komme aus Russland ursprünglich, ich bin schon seit zehn Jahren in Deutschland und äh, Deutsch ist meine Lieblingssprache haha. Obwohl ich sowohl Englisch als auch Deutsch gelernt habe an der Uni, in der Schule auch, also mir fehlt es dass ich äh Deutsch also ganz wenig spreche. Die- alle Kollegen sprechen Russisch und auf Deutsch unterhalten wir uns GAr nicht. Nur (pause) ja. Die Chefs sind wenig im Büro die sind öfter auf den Dienstreisen und deswegen ((wird)) nur Russisch gesprochen. Und mir fehlt ((dieses)) Deutschsprechen …(also) zuhause spreche ich auch Russisch, deswegen, ich wohne in Deutschland aber, ich habe keine Möglichkeit hier Deutsch zu sprechen […]

Reason number one is the fact that her and her colleagues never converse in German, as they are all speakers of Russian. The second reason is that Russian is also the language she uses at home with her husband. Strikingly, she states that she is enjoying our interview as this is an opportunity for her to actually speak German. Informant C3M1 perceives the linguistic situation at work to be rather unsatisfying. Although she enjoys her job as such, she indicates

that she sometimes ponders whether she maybe needs to *look for a different one*:

AC3M1: […] deswegen freue ich mich jetzt zum Beispiel dass ich haha Deutsch sprechen kann. Also das ist, das ist wirklich so. Und manchmal denke ich #Mhmm, die Arbeit macht mir schon Spaß# Aber dass ich Deutsch nicht verbessern kann, oder nicht äh sprechen kann, also (pause) Da denke ich manchmal ob ich eher was anderes suchen muss. Also sag ich …ehrlich.

Although the informant reports that her boss knows about this situation, she states that there is *nothing he could do about it* ("er kann ja auch nichts tun"). When asked whether it is possible that this situation might change if one or two German, non-Russian-speaking employees would be integrated into the team, informant C3M1 reports she has taken similar aspects into consideration. Even if only one team member spoke only German, the linguistic constellation is assumed to be considerably different than it is now:

AC3M1: Genau. Aber (ich habe überlegt) wenn wir jemanden …hätten der Deutsch spricht, dann wäre das alles anders.

This episode from C3 illustrates how a generally multilingual workplace can be perceived rather monolingual for an individual, depending on his personal migration background. The story of another C3 employee, informant C3M2, adds yet another quality to the perceptions of the multilingual workplace. Informant C3M2 reports on how she perceives multilingual situations at work as *sometimes difficult* ("manchmal schwierig") or even *annoying* ("lästig"), for example when e-mails could have been written in two sentences in one language only, or when summaries of contracts need to be composed before they can be submitted for signature. This linguistic encoding of similar information into several languages causes *higher expenditures* ("doppelter Aufwand"), as her colleage C3M3 put it. However, in this context, a very interesting advantage is specified by the informants, namely the fact that language use in the workplace facilitates the advancement of linguistic skills. Informant C3M2 reports that her jobs have been a central way not to forget her Russian skills since emigrating to Germany:

AC3M2: […] Aber ich sehe das auch so, durch äh dadurch äh perfektioniere ich meine russische Sprache. Sonst, mit dreizehn kam ich hierher, ja, und ähm ich habe schon während der Unizeit versucht als Übersetzerin nebenbei zu arbeiten […] Genau. Das habe ich auch dann halt gemacht. Weil, ich wollte die russische Sprache nicht zu () vergessen, oder in Vergessenheit geraten lassen. Das wäre schade.

Similarly, informant C3M3 identifies multilingualism at work as a practice that helps to keep all three languages, namely Russian, German, and English, activated. In this sense, she values this as a way to get language practice on a daily basis. From her perspective, multilingual communication has become an automated process:

AC3M3: […] die Sache ist aber noch die, nur so hält man alle drei Sprachen aktiv. Das ist so eine gewisse Übung, die man sowieso immer tagtäglich macht. Und äh mittlerweile das ist, das macht man so automatisch. Ich weiß nicht was die anderen Kollegen berichten hahaha, aber aus meiner Sicht, das läuft einfach von alleine.

When informant C3M3 is asked how her current linguistic situation would contrast with a monolingual work environment, she states that the multilingual atmosphere has more advantages than disadvantages. She perceives it as a chance to practice language, since linguistic skills weaken if they are not applied on a frequent basis. The use of several languages at work helps to prevent someone to *slip off into passive language.* This is illustrated by the interviewee as follows:

AC3M3: Es hat mehr Vorteile als Nachteile. Das- So empfinde ich das. Weil, das ist wiederum so dass jede Sprache, sie braucht Praxis. Sie werden ganz schnell in die Passivsprache abrutschen wenn Sie Englisch zum Beispiel nicht tagtäglich verwenden. Und zwar dieses Gesprochene. Oder Schriftliche. Was das Gehirn sowieso immer wieder gerne aufnimmt, (und) verschiedene Art und Weise WIE man die Sprache verwendet. Und so, wir sind dann in allen Bereichen aktiv, das heißt es wird nachgedacht in der Fremdsprache, es wird in der Fremdsprache kommuniziert, ich meine jetzt mündlich, und es wird teilweise schriftlich viel erledigt. SO hält man- sich einfach in drei Sprachen fit, und das finde ich, das ist nur vorteilhaft. Wenn es im Unternehmen geboten wird, zumal was ich auch festgestellt habe, manche Bereiche die teilweise wirklich ins Passive rutschen, dadurch dass man sie selten verwendet, das frischt man sehr schnell auch auf. Und ich finde, also mir persönlich, gefällt es. Sonst hätte ich wahrscheinlich Englisch schon längst vergessen. haha

Her job position that allows her to apply her skills in three languages helps her to stay linguistically fit. The different ways of making use of one's linguistic competencies in various domains, be it in written or spoken communication, and the general cognitive demands on using languages at work are evaluated very positively by informant C3M3.

Thus, the multilingual workplace demands of employees to constantly apply language skills and to utilize several languages in a very flexible way. It is important to remember that language does not only have the mere function to transfer factual information, but that it is also of major importance for identity construction. Thus, the multilingual workplace creates spaces where language as a form of cultural heritage can be lived. This connection between migration, language, and cultural heritage is also mentioned by the C1 employee C1M1. Having been asked which languages he thinks are mainly spoken by C1 employees, he states that it is predominantly German and English, with other languages coming into play due to employees' backgrounds of migration. What informant C1M1 remarks in this context is that *it is a pity if people lose their language and cultural heritage over the years*:

AC1M1: Ähm, also klar, die Masse Deutsch und Englisch, und dann je nach dem wo die Leute ursprünglich mal herkommen, oder deren Familien, manche leben ja schon in der xten Generation in Deutschland, haben sich aber ihre Sprachkultur ja auch bewahrt, was ich immer hoffe, weil ich's schade finde wenn man's dann verliert mit der Zeit. Ähm, dann wird's natürlich Leute geben die sagen #Ja ich komme ursprünglich aus Indien# und die (können dann) Indisch. Oder Leute aus, quasi ehemalige Sowjetunion, also Kasachstan, Russland, klar die reden immer Russisch, […] Also untereinander wird Deutsch gesprochen. Und dann wenn's ins Geschäftliche kommt dann eben auf Englisch

Whatever linguistic heritage employees bring along, for communication at work, German is

used, and for business-related topics, English is also relevant. When informant C1M1 is asked whether he thinks that the workplace should be a space to honour one's linguistic heritage and a space to employ languages other than German or English, the informant immediately establishes a connection between language use and the danger of social exclusion through language. How exactly this is described, will be discussed in the following section on the effects of multilingualism on group dynamics.

3.5.3 Multilingualism and Group Dynamics

Informant C1M1 reports that he has experienced how feelings of social marginalization were triggered by language choice. He recalls a situation that took place among colleagues in a rather casual setting. In that particular situation, a few colleagues, who all had some sort of with migration background, were conversing in their native language. The interviewee expresses how, as soon as *a speaker of another language* ("ein Anderssprachiger") joins the group, he would expect them to code-switch to that shared language. If they do not do that, then the one who joined the group *feels stupid*:

AC1M1: haha Man muss natürlich aufpassen dass man da keine Ausgrenzung betreibt. Also ich habe es auch schon erlebt (pause) das war jetzt mehr privat, dass Leute also Kollegen die aus einem bestimmten Land kamen zusammensaßen und in ihrer Heimatsprache gesprochen haben, wo ich jetzt erwarten würde, was ich jetzt eben gesagt habe, wenn jetzt ein Anderssprachiger dazu kommt, dass man dann eben auf eine gemeinsame Sprache switcht, da habe ich auch schon erlebt dass es NICHt getan wird. Ähm dass man sagt man redet seine Sprache weiter und der der jetzt mit am Tisch sitzt kommt sich vielleicht bisschen dumm vor. Habe ich auch schon erlebt ist aber die Ausnahme. […]

Through his illustration, it becomes apparent that the individual has certain expectations towards how language is supposed to be used in group contexts. If these expectations are not met as the group does not switch to the language intelligible to all, the person concerned is very likely to perceive this as a violation of underlying social rules. As a consequence, the individual can feel communicatively isolated and socially marginalized. It is obvious that this negatively effects the social climate.

However, the informant states that, although he has experienced similar situations, these are rare. The default procedure is that the language of conversation is automatically switched to a shared language. Informant C1M1 illustrates this with the example of a group of colleagues visiting from Russia who, for example in the cafeteria, sit at the table together, and as soon as a non-Russian speaker joins them, they immediately switch to English. According to the informant, they have internalized this practice completely:

AC1M1: […] wenn Sie eine Gruppe von russischen XFirmenname2X Kollegen haben die hier gerade zu einer Tagung sind, dann sitzen die natürlich und reden Russisch miteinander, aber in dem

> Moment wo ein Nichtrusse zu denen an den Tisch kommt wird sofort auf Englisch geswitcht ja. Also das ist, das ist bei denen schon so drin.

The same applies to speakers of other languages. For example, meetings are conducted in German, but once a person who does not speak German enters the room, they switch to English.

AC1M1: […] Das wird natürlich auch erwartet dass jetzt […] wenn wir in solchen Meetings drin sind auch im Prinzip, wenn da nur Deutsche sitzen wird nur Deutsch gesprochen aber sobald der erste Nichtdeutsche reinkommt wird sofort auf Englisch geswitcht

Similarly, informant C1M2 reports on language situation in his former department to have been exactly the same. Large meetings used be conducted *always in English.* Regarding the fact that the majority of employees at C1 is likely to be German, it is interesting that, nonetheless, the language is automatically switched to English as soon as a *foreign language speaker*, i.e. a non-German speaking colleague, joins the meeting:

AC1M2: Gut sobald halt ein Fremdsprachler dabei ist, wird halt auf Englisch umgeswitcht.

Although language is usually automatically selected, C1M1 points out that he has in fact experienced incidents where active intervention with regard to language use was necessary:

AC1M1: […] Und in ein oder zwei Fällen habe ich es auch schon erlebt dass EIner aus der Gruppe extra nochmal drauf hingewiesen hat dass ab jetzt bitte die Sprache gewechselt wird. Also nicht der der an den Tisch gekommen ist, ja weil für den kostet es ja auch ein bisschen Überwindung zu sagen #Hier sprecht mal bitte so dass ich's auch verstehe# sondern dass einer aus der Gruppe gesagt hat #So jetzt stopp, ab jetzt reden wir Deutsch Englisch keine Ahnung was die Sprache die wir alle kennen.# […]

In that situation, someone asked the group to switch the language. However, it is important to notice that this was requested by an in-group member. The interview emphasizes how this was not requested by the one who joined the group, as this is would have *cost quite an effort.*

Informant C1M2 recalls a situation he experienced within the context of German and Russian language use in a team that consisted of three people. While two colleagues in this team were of Russian descent and fluent in Russian, the third team member had no knowledge of Russian at all. The informant describes how the two team members were having a private conversation in Russian in the presence of the other team member. Thereupon, other colleagues intervened and pointed out that the use of Russian in the office is unacceptable, and that the language of office communication is German. This was to prevent others, especially the third team member, from feeling isolated. The informant reports that similar situations have been dealt with in the same vein, regardless of where exactly this is taking place, in the office, during lunch breaks, or the like.

AC1M2: Ja wir haben jemanden, wobei ich weiß nicht ich glaube die haben schon Deutsch als Muttersprache. Wir haben ein paar (sag ich mal) Russischstämmige, die halt auch fließend Russisch

sprechen, von zuhause aus, aber die können auch Russisch und Englisch. Wie gut jetzt deren Englisch ist habe ich nicht jetzt live erlebt, aber da haben wir beispielsweise einschreiten müssen da saßen jetzt irgendwie drei Mann im Team, zwei konnten Russisch einer nicht und haben sich halt privat auf Russisch unterhalten, und (da haben wir) gesagt #No go. Wenn ihr redet im Büro, Deutsch.# Damit der andere Kollege nicht denkt er ist ausgeschlossen. […] Und genauso hatten wir es auch gehandhabt mit englischen Kollegen. Ja sobald einer im Raum ist oder beim Mittagessen dabei oder in der Pause der halt kein Deutsch versteht, da handhaben wir das auf Englisch. Damit er auch mitkriegt was wir erzählen.

This again shows how code-switching is evaluated by an individual as a necessary social act, and how negatively it is is perceived if a code-switch is not carried out. The interviewees present the story in a way that portrays the multilingual situation as imbalanced, which caused colleagues to intervene, *to step in* ("da haben wir …einschreiten müssen"). Here, it becomes apparent how language choices can lead to tense social situations that require active resolution.

However, social marginalization through language is not always connected to active intervention. Informant C1M2 reports that he has experienced situations where no actions have been taken at all. In the illustrated situation, there was someone sitting at the table who was not able to understand the language the others were conversing in, and no one cared about it:

AC1M1: […] Aber ich habe es auch schon erlebt dass, das irgendwie niemanden interessant hat dass da haha jetzt jemand mit am Tisch war und (er) die Sprache die grad gesprochen wird ja mit Sicherheit nicht verstehen wird, ja.[…]

In the context of multilingualism and group dynamics, another very interesting aspect has emerged from the data. As has been shown above, multilingualism takes specific forms in social groups, and dynamics within these groups are important factors that can significantly alter communicative situations. The following illustration of a multilingual dinner situation with colleagues is provided by informant C1M3:

AC1M3: […] Also ich meine wenn dann acht Leute an einem Tisch sitzen und da ist ein Dozent […] der hat einen Kurs gehalten mit dem geht man abends noch essen, ähm und dann reden da zwei drei Leute mit dem, und irgendwo an einer anderen Ecke die sind vielleicht zwei Meter weit weg, ergibt sich gerade ein anderes Gespräch, und die reden alle Deutsch dann braucht da auch keiner auf Englisch reden, er wird's eh nicht mitkriegen weil er in einem Gespräch ist und ähm, wenn's ein Thema ist wo alle reden reden auch alle Englisch das ist auch kein Problem. Aber ähm, ja, es ergibt sich halt irgendwie dann so in dem Moment, ja. Wenn's ein kleinerer Kreis ist, drei vier Kollegen, dann bleibt alles in Englisch. Es kommt auch bisschen auf die Größe der Gruppe an.

The informant reports on how it happens from time to time, for example after trainig courses, that colleagues have dinner with their American, non-German speaking instructor. Accordingly, conversations are conducted in English. The interviewee perceives such rather casual gatherings as opportunities to practice English. However, he points out how the size of a

given group is also relevant for in-group language choice. Apparently, a group of eight people is likely to split into smaller groups and to have separate discussions. Given that the American instructor is then participating in one subgroup only, it is only that group that actually has the need to converse in English. The other group(s) remain with German.

Interviewee C1M3 assumes that smaller groups, consisting of three or four colleagues, do not split and stay involved in one conversation only. Hence, larger groups are more likely to dissociate linguistically and to limit a code-switch to certain participants, whereas smaller groups are more likely to assimilate completely.

3.5.4 Multilingualism as a Motivational Factor

When C1M5 is asked whether he perceives his multilingual workplace differently from a German-speaking environment, he answers in the affirmative. Interestingly, the cognitive aspects that multilingualism entails are mentioned. Moreover, the informant perceives working in a multilingual climate more challenging and much more exciting:

AC1M5: Ja. Definitiv. DEfinitiv. Also, ein Mann ist ja variabel () von der Benutzung der Sprache her, man denkt teilweise auch ganz anders, ähm es ist halt viel herausfordernder als einsprachig zu arbeiten aber auch sehr viel spannender.

Again, a multilingual situation is evaluated very positively. C1M3 evaluates the use of another language at work, i.e. English, as being *appealing*, and he assumes this to be the case for a large part of his colleagues, too. He says that he is aware of the fact that he makes mistakes on the level of grammar, however, he reports that the language *feels good* ("fühlt sich gut an"):

AC1M3: […] und inzwischen, das macht sogar Spaß, also.

QC1M3: Inwiefern macht das Spaß?

AC1M3: […] Ja einfach, ähm, in einer anderen Sprache Mails zu schreiben und zu merken dass einem das relativ leicht von der Hand geht, wenn man mit den Leuten in einem Call ist, über irgendwas redet, bespricht, (wöchentliche) Abstimmung oder so, und dann einfach mit denen redet, vielleicht auch mal einen kleinen Scherz machen kann, oder so. Ja und wenn das einfach ohne groß Nachzudenken so läuft, ja.

When asked where exactly the fun in using another language comes from, C1M3 reports that it derives from noticing one is actually capable of communicating in another language. Realizing that one can easily utilize English adds to one's self confidence. C1M3 illustrates how job-related communication can cause colourful multilingual encounters that add a fun factor to an employee's work experience. A similar observation as been made by informant C1M1.The informants recall situations when colleagues from different European countries meet and employ English as a lingua franca, where non-native competency and collective efforts to, e.g., guess a certain word or expression lead to humorous situations:

AC1M3: Es ist was manchmal vielleicht ganz lustig ist wenn Leute aus verschiedenen Ländern, sei es jetzt Europa zusammenkommen und es spricht- ich sprech kein Französisch, er spricht kein Deutsch, der nächste kommt vielleicht noch aus Italien spricht auch beides andere nicht, bleibt auch nur das Englische und es ist kein native speaker dabei, und ähm schlussendlich es wird auch keiner dabei sein der hundertprozentig die Grammatik auf die Reihe bringt oder irgendwas oder jede Vokabel parat hat, und wenn man dann einfach mal irgendwie wenn wirklich einfach grad mal das Wort nicht einfällt, und man macht so eine Art Pantomime und Leute kommen dann drauf, das ist schon lustig, ja weil dann schon jeder das einfach kennt und weiß, ja, und irgendwo ist es auch normal. […] Ähm und das hab ich noch nicht erlebt dass die Leute nicht drauf gekommen wären, also das ging jedem schon so und das ist ganz lustig. Da wird meistens dann auch gelacht ja haha.

AC1M1: […] Da macht's jetzt nichts wenn ich nicht perfekt bin. Weil, da fast KEin Native Speaker da drin sitzt. (Es) ist keiner perfekt. Es dient sogar manchmal eher der Auflockerung weil alle gemeinsam dann nach dem Wort suchen oder so, das ist eher stimmungsfördernd so.

The absence of English native speakers in mixed groups of speakers of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) may include metalinguistic contemplations, which can in fact facilitate a relaxed atmosphere. Hence, a shared experience of English as a lingua franca can foster a positive mood in work meetings. Positive emotions with regard to multilingualism in the workplace have also been mentioned in the context of utilizing the interlocutor's native language. Informant C4M1 is asked whether she sometimes makes attempts to use languages other than English at work, and she reports on predominantly positive reactions to it:

AC4M1: […] also auch wenn ich dann mal eine Mail schreibe und die dann auf Spanisch oder Französisch schreibe, dann kommt immer eigentlich freudig irgendwas zurück so (pause) ja…. Es wird positiv angenommen.

QC4M1: Denken Sie, dass das auch einen Einfluss auf, ich sage mal, den Inhalt des Gesprächs haben kann sowas?

AC4M1: Ja gut, man ist halt positiver gestimmt. Also wenn der andere natürlich überrascht ist, dass man jetzt die Sprache spricht und er jetzt in seiner Muttersprache sprechen kann, klar dann ist er in dem Moment positiver gestimmt, ob das jetzt auf das Ergebnis oder so Einfluss hat wage ich zu beZWEIfeln, aber (pause) die Grundeinstellung ist glaube ich dann doch etwas positiver ja.

It is conceivable that answering in the interlocutor's mother tongue is supportive to a positive conversational atmosphere. However, the informant doubts that this may have any influence on the result of the conversation.

Informant C1M5, who almost exclusively uses English for communicting with his international contacts, has similar expectations regarding the effects it can have to use his conversational partner's first language. The interviewee reports on one incident when he tried to utilize French in an email, *jokingly* ("scherzhaft"), as his French respondent had only low English skills. Generally, C1M5 considers the French as people who speak mainly their native language and refuse to speak other languages. However, in this particular case, his interlocutor did not switch to French, nor did he address the attempts in any way. Informant C1M5

reports that his code-switching did not have any influence on the nature of the correspondence. However, he suggests that it could have added to a more positive atmosphere, and supposes that this practice may help to *break the ice* ("Dass das, vielleicht ein bisschen das Eis im Gespräch bricht").

In general, the informants displayed a very positive attitude towards utilizing a language other than once's L1 at work. Whereas the use of English for a German L1-speaker can help to boost self-confidence and to mediate a sense of achievement, English when used as a lingua franca can help create a positive atmosphere in meetings and discussions. At the same time, the informants attach positive connotations to using an interlocutor's L1 and expect a similarly positive reaction to it. What also comes into play in the context of multilingualism and motivation is the workplace as a site for intercultural encounters. This has been emphasized by informant C4M1. Informant C4M1 associates the multilingual situation at work strongly with intercultural contacts, and this *togetherness* with other cultures is evaluated as *very exciting and great* ("total spannend und toll"). The informant perceives communication in other languages as motivating and enriching, as it is connected to getting to know new perspectives and mentalities:

AC4M1: Ähm, also ich persönlich empfinde (pause) ja, Kommunikation auf anderen Sprachen spannend wie gesagt, und dadurch motiviert mich das natürlich auch ein bisschen, klar. Würde ich schon sagen. Ich find's auch immer schön, wenn eben Kollegen aus anderen Ländern dabei sind, weil man einfach andere Sichtweisen sieht, andere Verhaltensweisen, andere Angehensweisen auch, also (pause) Ich persönlich empfinde es als motivierend beziehungsweise einfach als bereichernd […]

This shows how the informant associates a multilingual environment with the necessity of adjusting herself to different mentalities of, for example, her American colleagues. Interestingly, an aspect that is particularly mentioned in this context is telephone calls with Indian colleagues. The informant provides the example of telephone conversations with English-speaking colleagues from India, and how she perceives it as *exciting* ("Ich find's spannend") when one is having problems to comprehend them:

AC4M1: Also ich find's spannend auch, wenn dann Inder anrufen und man dann Probleme hat auch ihr Englisch zu verstehen haha

A direct question about in how far this sort of multilingual communication can be considered problematic, triggered the reply that such situations are never perceived as stressful. Instead, it is more amusing and enjoyable. In this context, the Indian colleagues' English pronunciation is stated to be often a cause for funny situations. Communication with colleagues from abroad has a strong intercultural quality, and there are several themes that have been repeatedly mentioned in this regard. Thus, the following section deals with topics that have emerged from the data about multilingualism and intercultural encounters.

3.5.5 Multilingualism and Intercultural Encounters

There are several aspects to international work communication that are heavily influenced by not only different levels of linguistic competencies, but also by perceptions of cultural differences. With regard to regular work-related communication, certain complications may arise on the interactional level that need to be dealt with. When informant C1M1 is asked in how far this is conceivable, he addresses the topic as follows:

> AC1M1: [...] Denn gerade wenn Sie mit Leuten aus andern Kulturkreisen zu tun haben [...] ja, dann haben Sie eben irgendwo jemanden am Ende der Welt sitzen [...], von dem Sie nicht so genau wissen, Sie kennen den ja nicht, Sie wissen nicht wie gut ist sein Englisch, ist das was da steht auch wirklich das Problem, ähm dann setzt es natürlich schon bisschen Erfahrung auch voraus zu sagen was will er mir damit sagen, und wenn ich mir nicht sicher bin muss ich zurückschreiben. Habe ich's richtig verstanden, dass. Das heißt ich muss dann auch in der Lage sein das auf Englisch wieder so zu formulieren, dass er mir eventuell antworten kann #Ja genau du hast's richtig verstanden# oder er sagt #Nee ich habe ja was ganz anderes gemeint.# Und ganz schwierig wird's eventuell wenn Sie sagen #So jetzt greife ich zum Telefonhörer und rufe den einfach mal an,#[...]

At C1, daily business includes work routines that need to be issued and processed worldwide. The informant reports that problem-solving often requires direct interaction. With regard to such instances of interaction, the interviewee points out how individual employees cannot benefit from any real interpersonal knowledge and that they can almost exclusively resort to their technical knowledge when communicating with a colleague abroad. Informant C1M1 points out that the employees' experience and sensitivity is important for understanding an issued problem, and that they need to be able to check back adequately, if required. Certainly, these skills are relevant for both persons involved. When it comes to verbal interaction over the phone, additional linguistic skills become relevant, i.e. structural knowledge of oral communication, abilities to navigate in problem-centred dialogue, and, moreover, sufficient language comprehension and production skills. The informant emphasizes the role of *good pronunciation* and provides an example. Although he admits it to be rather stereotyped, he describes that Germans often have problems to comprehend English-speakers from India. The informant notes that communication between a German medium-level speaker of English and an Indian English-speaker can emerge to be quite *exciting*:

> AC1M1: [...] und Sie haben's vielleicht, Sie selbst haben vielleicht keine so gute Aussprache, ne, und der andere auch nicht, also das heißt das ist jetzt wieder sehr klischeemäßig aber die englischsprechenden Inder sind in der Regel nicht so gut zu verstehen. So und wenn Sie selbst jemand sind der kein so gutes Englisch, als Deutscher hat, dann kann's, schon mal spannend werden.

Such perceptions toward a specific variety of English has turned out to be a prominent aspect of multilingualism in the workplace. In particular, this refers to the German employees' encounters with English spoken by colleagues from India. Another perspective on a Ger-

man employee's perspective on Indian English is provided by informant C1M3. Although he does not seem to assume any fundamental differences between his German and his Indian colleagues regarding their English competency levels, informant C1M3 generally perceives Indian English to be very difficult to understand in oral communication. The informant states that it can be very hard for him to understand his Indian colleagues, which makes communication rather complicated. Interestingly, he speculates that physical preconditions might make it more difficult for Indians to speak *clear English*:

> AC1M3: Und das andere ist ähm, also ich kenn's jetzt nur ganz gezielt und ganz massiv von den Kollegen in Indien, die sind wirklich sehr schwer zu verstehen. Also es gibt durchaus anscheinend, ja äh Länder wo die Sprachen vielleicht, weiß nicht, wo die Stimmbänder ganz anders beansprucht werden und ganz anders benutzt werden, dass die vielleicht- denen fällt's auch nicht so leicht ein klares Englisch zu reden. Und ähm, also das, da hab ich wirklich schon Erfahrungen gemacht dass man sie einfach wirklich nicht versteht. Kollegen aus Indien.

How an unfamiliar variety of English can cause frustration is illustrated by the informant when he recalls a telephone conversation with an Indian colleague. In that particular conversation, he experienced major problems as he was not able to follow his colleague's verbal accounts. Although he was trying to point that out to his colleague, he did not succeed. As a consequence, the situation caused frustration, presumably on both sides. Informant C1M3 reports that he *would have loved to just hang up the phone*:

> AC1M3: […] als ich mehr im Support noch gearbeitet habe, (hab) ich schon erlebt dass das mein Gegenüber aus Indien, ich weiß nicht, nicht akzeptieren wollte oder auch nicht ganz verstanden hat, da hab ich vielleicht fünf Minuten lang gesagt, er hat's immer und immer wiederholt und ich hab (ihm dann gesagt) #Tut mir leid, ich kann's nicht verstehen, ich kann's nicht nachvollziehen, lass uns das doch lieber über den Chat, über eine Mail regeln.# Und er hat es einfach nicht angenommen und hat immer wieder wiederholt und immer wieder wiederholt, und irgendwann, ähm, ich weiß nicht wie wir es dann gelöst haben, keine Ahnung. Also ob wir dann doch eine Mail geschrieben haben, oder ob (er) dann auch irgendwann die Lust verloren hat, aber das war schwierig. Da hätte ich am liebsten einfach aufgelegt. Und hätte dann provoziert dass eine Mail geschrieben wird oder irgendwas, weil es hat nichts gebracht. Null. Gar nichts, (man) hat nichts verstanden. Das, ja. Aber das ist das Einzigste. Ansonsten funktioniert das wunderbar.

According to the informant's report, such situations occur very rarely, but when they do, they can cause serious misunderstandings and communicative breakdowns in work-related interaction.

In this context of Indian English, informant C1M4 points at the relevance of intercultural sensitivity. He reports that the way in which people from India converse is, in Germany, often perceived as being arrogant, in contrast to, for example, the way Americans are perceived. When asked whether such issues may possibly have an influence on the employees' work performance, informant C1M4 states that it is important to inform employees on both sides about such intercultural peculiarities:

AC1M4: Es hat (pause) also ich denke wenn man sich nicht mit wirklich auseinandersetzt, mit dem Thema, sondern das einfach nur so laufen lässt, ähm und das auch nicht von, ich sag mal, von der Managementseite her jetzt, bissl in die Richtung, ja, einer eher Aufklärung bringt und sagt #Das ist nunmal so, in Indien wird so gesprochen.# Dann führt's sicherlich dazu dass das Verhältnis nicht allzu gut ist zwischen den Kollegen, ne…. Dagegen wenn man jetzt wirklich darauf hinweist, dass einfach in Indien () ein gewisser anderer Ton herrscht, sag ich mal, der jetzt bei uns als unhöflich empfunden wird aber völlig normal ist, dann funktioniert das dann auch. Man muss vielleicht natürlich auch die indischen Kollegen darauf hinweisen, dass sie das einfach wissen, diese kulturellen Unterschiede.

Informant C1M4 reports that this is mainly achieved through a lot of interpersonal dialogue, conference calls, and mutual working visits. Company C1 is reported to have an exchange program that allows for all members of international teams to go on location and to meet in person. However, nothing is indicated about specific measures for raising intercultural awareness, as could be provided by, for example, intercultural trainings.

After all, cultural awareness raising is a very important issue that needs to be considered in international communication. That certain quite solid ideas exist with regard to specific ethnicities and cultural groups, becomes evident from the following report by interviewee C1M2, when he shares his views on how the ways of accepting criticism vary between different cultures:

AC1M2: Sagen wir so. Es ist auch immer schwierig den richtigen Ton für die jeweilige Nationalität zu treffen. Weil die Mentalität ist auch unterschiedlich. Also wenn ich jetzt, sage ich mal, einen chinesischen Kollegen kritisiere, der nimmt das jetzt ganz anders auf als ein Inder oder Amerikaner.

QC1M2: Und wie sieht das aus? Wie machen Sie- was passiert dann?

AC1M2: Dem quasi ist es, sag ich mal, egal.

QC1M2: haha okay.

AC1M2: Der Inder ist vielleicht, naja, etwas verschnupft. Der Chinese sagt erstmal #Jajaja# ist aber tödlich beleidigt anschließend, weil offene Kritik ist glaube ich nicht gerne gesehen. Auch Nachfragen ist bei denen irgendwie verpöhnt, also die fragen jetzt nicht oft bei uns nach. […] Wenn der irgendwie ein Problem hat, dann ist es von der Mentalität her so, das ist dann schon eine gewisse Blöße, wenn man dann nachfragt. Und versuchen's erstmal selbst irgendwie …hinzubasteln, in Anführungszeichen. […] Deswegen sag ich mal, sind da nicht bloß Sprachunterschiede sondern auch von der Mentalität her, wie muss ich mich verHALten, das sind ja dann ganz andere Themen. Auch wenn ich die Sprache kenn ist es wieder was ganz anderes, wie ich mit dem umgehe.

Hence, the interviewee is very aware that pure language competence, i.e. knowledge of linguistic forms, is not sufficient to ensure successful communication. Although one language, in this case, English, is utilized for communicating with each other, language use is strongly bound to different pragmatic frames. Cross-cultural pragmatics are therefore a very important topic which are, however, handled on the level of cultural stereotyping.

3.5.6 Multilingualism and the Role of German

From a German Studies perspective, it is highly interesting what is reported about the use of German in a German multinational company. What has emerged from the informants' reports are two major findings. First of all, German is considered the natural choice for German employees to converse with each other, be it in spoken or written communication. However, as soon as written correspondence is likely to be relevant for colleagues abroad, or as soon as some form of personal contact is established between German employees and colleagues from abroad, German loses its communicative value. Instead, English is perceived the only reasonable way for communication with native speakers of languages other than German. Reconsider, for example, the context of company C1, where the language practices in work meetings are reported on as follows:

AC1M2: Ja, also das ist ja auch vom Programm- Also wenn da ein Meeting ist mit, dreißig Deutschen, einer kommt dazu der Englisch kann, wird auf Englisch geswitcht, (da heißt's halt nicht) #Der muss jetzt Deutsch lernen.# also.

The informant reports on how thirty German employees automatically switch to English as soon as a non-German colleague joins the meeting. It becomes apparent that German is not evaluated as an adequate choice for communicating with non-native speakers of German. In this vein, the informant's account has shown how colleagues from abroad are simply not expected to learn German. German is seemingly perceived to be of no use beyond native speaker interaction, as has become apparent from the data on cases C1, C2, and C4. This perspective shows that very little value is attached to German as a working language in international settings.

Furthermore, the data suggests that, in certain areas, language use is not an individual's choice. An example is provided by informant C1M3, who reports on his work-related duties, and illustrates how professional qualification is closely interlinked with an increased use of English:

AC1M3: […] Auch die ganzen Kurse, hier das Buch was ich dabei habe, die ganzen Fortbildungen, ist alles Englisch. Also, gibt's auch meistens nichts Vernünftiges auf Deutsch, also wenn man was findet, also die Übersetzungen sind so schlecht, die Prüfungen die man machen muss wenn man die Zertifizierungen machen will, die sind auf Englisch, die gibt's nicht auf Deutsch. Und wenn man sich auf Deutsch vorbereitet und die Übersetzungen sind schlecht, dann wird man nachher auch ganz schlechte Karten haben. Also, mh. Und schlussendlich, also jede Fortbildung, ist alles auf Englisch.

Similarly, informant C1M4 states that the IT sector is very international, which is why the industry is basically *half English* ("zur Hälfte Englisch"). As a consequence, handbooks and reference works are in English only, and not available in German anymore:

AC1M4: […] dieses ganze IT Umfeld ist eh zur Hälfte Englisch, auch die ganzen Handbücher es gibt

ja also nichts mehr auf Deutsch, alles was man nachliest ist Englisch, dadurch sind die Leute denke ich, da schon sehr offen, das zu machen.

C1M3 reports how in this area of occupation, constant training and qualification is necessary. This goes hand in hand with frequent certification. However, it is not possible to take the examinations in German. Courses and tests are in English only. Moreover, nearly all the materials are available in English only, and although some publishers provide German translations, these translations are generally poor. It is not possible to adequately prepare for the tests on the basis of the German versions. Informant C1M3 admits that the materials would be easier to work with if adequate German versions were provided. Although some of his colleagues sought to acquire German textbooks, there are colleagues who would not even come up with the idea of looking for learning materials in German. The informant suggests that this is due to a lack of demand for materials in German:

AC1M3: Also da scheint die Nachfrage auch einfach nicht so groß zu sein. Die Leute die in dem Bereich arbeiten die sind vielleicht auch einfach naja, ich sag mal, ja die können einfach Englisch und haben sich vielleicht auch schon- die finden sich einfach damit ab. […] [ein Kollege] er hat einfach alles auf Englisch hingenommen und hat das gemacht und, das ist vielleicht auch einfach so. Ja. Aber wie gesagt, ich hab's in keinem Bereich erlebt dass es das () in speziellen Sprachen gab. Vielleicht in anderen Ländern, weiß ich nicht. In Indien oder so gibt's vielleicht, weiß ich nicht. Aber ich denk, die müssen ja dann sowieso alle Englisch dann reden, und von daher wird sich einfach jeder damit abfinden. Das GEht ja auch. Also, das ist halt ein bisschen anstrengend aber, es geht schon.

Self-study and further training is in fully in English is reported to be *straining*. However, the informant points out that it works somehow. Apparently, people simply come to terms with the fact that everything is provided in English only. Informant C1M3 himself seems to have accepted this current situation, too. When the informant is asked to describe what the differences were if it was possible to prepare and to take the exam in German, he points out that it would definitely be much easier and faster to get prepared with a German textbook:

AC1M3: Dann würde ich das deutsche nehmen. Einfach weil es wirklich leichter fallen würde. Ähm, es würde schneller gehen, mh ja, (pause) also das wär's schlussendlich auch schon. Also es würde einfach Zeit sparen und ich müsste nicht nachschlagen, ich müsste nicht- ich meine hier sind Sätze drin die liest man und merkt schon dort versteh ich grad ein Wort nicht, und dann liest man erst den ganzen Satz und hat immer im Hinterkopf dass man eigentlich erst mal noch den Sinn versucht zu verstehen und dann, ja, und das ist einfach viel anstrengender. Und ja, schlussendlich wenn dann der Satz doch keinen Sinn ergibt haha dann schlägt man das Wort halt nach, ähm, und das kostet einfach mehr Zeit. Also das wäre einfacher auf Deutsch definitiv.

It appears that the criteria of considerable time savings, convenience, and maybe even a better understanding of the content, would motivate the informant's clear choice to favour materials provided in German. However, a requirement for that is the adequacy and accuracy of the translated versions. In fact, the availability of materials in English is a lack of choice. In-

terestingly, this is apparently not perceived negatively. Consider the above quotation, where informant C1M4 addressed the topic that handbooks and learning materials are not available in German anymore. The fact that people simply adapt to these circumstances is interpreted as an openness towards using English ("dadurch sind die Leute denke ich, da schon sehr offen, das zu machen"). It is important to emphasize that this potentially devalues German, and affects the status of German as a technical language.

A consequence of the previous reports and perceptions of German are the domains that German is thus associated with in corporate communication. As knowledge of English is apparently required for a variety of work positions in a German multinational, the question arises whether there are any positions where knowlegde of German only is sufficient. With regard to the C1 case, informant C1M5 is asked whether there are employees who do not have any English competencies and who utilize German only. Informant C1M5 believes this to be the case. However, he points out that these employees would primarily work in administrative jobs:

AC1M5: Mhmm, ja. Glaube schon. Die sitzen aber nicht direkt in unseren technischen Bereichen, sondern die machen eher Verwaltungstätigkeiten im Hause.

QC1M5: Und das, das geht dann noch, also die Verwaltung kann ablaufen auf (Deutsch).

AC1M5: Das, das geht. (Mit halt) auch in der Verwaltung ohne tiefe Englischkenntnisse ja.

However, the statement that no English would be required in administration is immediately put into perspective by the informant as he formulates that *no deep knowledge* of English is necessary. Informant C1M5 thus rather assumes that at least little knowledge of English is required in all occupations at C1. This corresponds with what is reported in the context of company C3. When informant C3M3 is asked about her perceptions of German as a working language, she assumes that companies where only German is used are becoming rarer. The interviewee associates German-only work environments with governmental institutions and small enterprises. For her, multilingualism as such has undergone a change, and she believes that, nowadays, multilingualism is perceived to be a perfectly normal phenomenon.

AC3M3: Wissen Sie, also ich finde man findet heutzutage weil alles ja so globalisiert ist, also mehr- also diese Bilingualität oder gar Mehrsprachigkeit wirklich wo drei vier Sprachen gesprochen werden, das ist teilweise schon keine Ausnahme. Sie finden eher ähm, es ist eher schwieriger ein Unternehmen zu finden wo NUR zum Beispiel, das sind meistens so Beamten, Staatsunternehmen sondern Staatseinrichtungen wo eigentlich ausschließlich Deutsch gesprochen wird. […] und ich schätze mal selbst bei den staatlichen Einrichtungen wie zum Beispiel bei den Ausländerämtern, egal bei welchem Amt, dadurch dass Deutschland sich auch als multikulturelles Land positioniert, ist es immer wichtiger, ich glaube das ist teilweise wirklich allgegenwärtig, es gibt vielleicht kleinere Betriebe wo eigentlich hauptsächlich Deutsch gesprochen wird. Aber auch die sind denke ich mir, sind mit ihren Lieferanten, stehen in Verbindung mit ihren Lieferanten, oder mittlerweile hat fast jedes Unternehmen eine Internetpräsentation, Internetseite, daher denke ich das ist jetzt, das hat sich so gewandelt mit der

> Zeit, dass ja das es total allgegenwärtig geworden ist.

Informant C1M5 notes that Germany positions itself as a *multicultural country*, and she points at the direct link between this positioning as a multicultural nation and the existence of multilingualism. As a consequence, the use of only one language, in that case, German, is constructed as contradicting the concept of a multicultural and cosmopolitan society.

4 Discussion: Language Policies, Practices, and Perceptions as Multilingualism Management in German Multinationals

4.1 Findings

The study explored the ways in which multilingualism occurs in four German multinational corporations. A thorough analysis of the interviewees' reports has revealed the ways in which multilingualism in the workplace becomes evident. Across all cases, multilingualism has turned out to be seen very positively in general. Furthermore, multilingualism has been found to have specific characteristics across the various domains it occurs in. Multilingualism presumably varies from one business sector to the other. The case of C1, for example, suggests that the fields of activity and the specific circumstances in the IT sector entail a different and rather technical use of language. Also, large businesses generally require a common language for company-wide communications. However, there are variable conceptualizations of what is actually considered multilingual.

The question whether a company is multilingual has been interpreted by the interviewees from two divergent, yet interlinked, perspectives. On the one hand, multilingualism in the company has been interpreted as a general phenomenon that occurs automatically if a company is active in several nation states, i.e. if a company, taken as a whole, has employees with differing language competencies. On the other hand, multilingualism was interpreted by the interviewees with regard to their own social reality of their working lives. The former interpretation was favoured, for example, by C1 employees. In this vein, multilingualism was interpreted preferably with regard to the entire company, hence more or less equating "multinational" with "multilingual," even if the individual does not necessarily experience the use of more than two languages. In this context, languages such as Mandarin Chinese, French, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish, or Indian languages have been mentioned by employ-

ees. With regard to the role of English as a lingua franca for work-related communication, English provokes a rather monolingual communicative situation, as becomes apparent in C_1, C_2, and C_4. However, through individual bilingualism or plurilingualism, multilingualism gains a different quality, and it then appears on the surface of communication. Plurilingual competencies have been reported in connection with the languages English, German, and Russian, see particularly case C_3.

However, in none of the examined cases the companies have been reported to have any official language policies. At first glance, none of the companies C_1 to C_4 deal with multilingualism in a regulated and strategic way. What is highly interesting is that while explicit language policies are absent, a range of multilingual practices have emerged from the data that can be interpreted as implicit policies. These implicit policies evolve from the interplay between specific language practices and the employees' perceptions towards these practices. The informants' accounts have helped to gain insight into how multilingualism is reported to be dealt with, and the ways in which this was reported has helped to elicit their individual perceptions and evaluations

As the examined companies C_1-C_4 differ in structure and business sector they are active in, these four cases exhibit particular multilingual profiles in different work environments. The findings on language practices and language perceptions reveal that there are in fact variable ways of handling multilingualism in the workplace. However, the awareness towards these practices is generally not very high, and specific questions with regard to distinct communicative situations were required to attain relevant information.

One major finding is clearly the shared view on English as the language of international business. English is conveyed as the only reasonable and available option to allow for communication beyond international borders (this is in accordance with, e.g., what Angouri has found about English being the "safest option," see Angouri, 2013, p. 578). Particularly in company C_1, English is reported to be the "language of the IT sector," which adds to the construction of English as naturally given and a matter of course. Also, there have been views on English to be the only conceivable option for communicating across borders, while learning other languages for work-related communication has not been considered feasible. One C_3 informant explained the necessity to have competencies in multiple languages with an essential competetive advantage during job search. In the IT sector, as the C_1 case has shown, English is required for almost all levels of responsibilities, and a majority of tasks demands competencies in English, both oral and written. Least use of English is reported by the C_2 informant, whereas English at C_1 is one basic requirement, and it is also used a little less often in the C_3 contexts.

Nevertheless, the perceptions of particular languages are strongly dependent on an individ-

ual's own language biography. This becomes apparent when comparing the situation as described in C1 with the one reported from C3. In C1, German is considered the colloquial language that is utilized by German employees for interacting with their fellow German colleagues, whereas English is considered the language of international work contacts and support of international clients. In C3, the role of Russian is very significant, as the company's activities and production sites are strongly related to Russia, and a large part of the company's workforce is Russian. Hence, Russian is utilized as the working language and the colloquial language of the employees at the C3 interview location. German is relevant for managing the official, legal businesses of C3 in Germany, and it has an important role for communicating with C3's management. English is of less importance at C3, although it is nonetheless used for certain communicative purposes and for communication with clients. However, which languages is utilized for which purposes and to what extent, varies from employee to employee.

In the context of migration and mobility, yet another quality of multilingualism becomes evident. It turns out that multilingualism is perceived as enriching, and as enhancing one's working life. Multilingualism can be conceptualized as something that is practiced on a daily basis, which helps the individual to keep his linguistic resources available. With regard to the situation at C3, the workplace is also perceived as a space where language can be kept "active" through its utilization. The opportunity to maintain one's linguistic skills and to prevent them from fading over time, is reported by C3M3. However, there is also another side to it, for example in the case of the C3 employee who has migrated to Germany, but who is still socialized in a Russian cultural context due to her family and work environment. Thus, multilingual practices in the workplace can also lead to the paradoxical situation that one cannot really utilize the language of the country one has moved to.

In close context with the aforementioned are the various aspects of multilingualism and its connections with particular group dynamics. This is in line with what previous research has shown on the effects of language diversity and social exclusion (see the discussion on Tange & Lauring, 2009, in section 2.3). My study has shown how groups of speakers of the same L1 generally utilize that language for group-internal communication, which is evaluated as perfectly normal and the default practice. However, if individuals who are not identified as speakers of that language come into play, language choice is influenced by the availability of shared linguistic resources. Generally, language is used in a way to ensure communicative inclusion. It is perceived as a matter of politeness and respect to converse in a language that all members of a group can speak or that they have, at least, passive competencies in. Usually, English is reported to be used for that purpose. However, that a common language is utilized, is considered a universal practice. A breach is deemed to generate negative emotions and feelings of social exclusion, which can result in active intervention through open criticism.

Usually, not the person concerned, but an in-group member is expected to intervene. This course of action is reported in a quite precise way by more than one interviewee, which is why it can be considered another example of implicit language policy.

However, under consideration of the group members having sufficient knowledge of one or more particular languages, other languages could also be used for communicating with each other. These additional languages could be employed for communicating with individuals that do not have competencies in the language concerned. As groups tend to split once a particular size and number of participants has been reached (see reports by informant C1M3), conversations are not always conducted with all group members. If this was recognized as a relevant factor, the multilingual perception on the communicative surface could be increased, which would probably contribute to positive experiences of multilingualism.

After all, language can also be utilized in terms of excluding particular groups, as has been shown in the context of company C2. Although their web site is generally available in several languages in addition to German and English, their careers and jobs portal is available in German only. As knowledge of German is indispensable for nearly all positions at C2, it has been a conscious decision to embed the application procedure into a German-only web portal. Hence, this is an example for a language policy on the part of the company. It is not an explicit policy as it is not codified in some kind of policy document, but it can be interpreted as an implicit language policy by C2.

It is to be emphasized that multilingualism is evaluated very positively by most study participants. This refers particularly to multilingualism on the interactional level, where several languages are activated in a communicative situation. A special sense of identity is brought about through the use of "mother tongues," i.e. speakers' L1s. In this context, the symbolic act of code-switching to one's interlocutor's L1 is considered by the informants to trigger positive reactions and to contribute to a positive conversational atmosphere. Although this is not always the case (compare what C4M1 reports as a positive situation with C1M5's unsuccessful attempt), code-switching into the other's L1 has been utilized in anticipation of creating a positive atmosphere.

This employment of the interlocutor's L1 often happens in the context of intercultural encounters. This is also the case when these are not multilingual in the narrower sense but when only one language (langue) is utilized, for example, English. In regard to these encounters, the informants reported on perceiving differences in communicative behaviour. Both linguistic factors, e.g. differences between specific varieties of English, and non-linguistic factors, e.g. mentalities, traditions, and manners, play important roles. However, the two dimensions are strongly interrelated, as becomes evident with respect to, for example, the discourse-pragmatic side of language. That language is culture-specific at all, was accentu-

ated only by few informants.

What the data has revealed regarding the role of German for corporate communication is also highly interesting. German is used for communication among Germans, and it is used for matters that stay in Germany and that do not leave Germany. Furthermore, work environments that can rely exclusively on communication in German are perceived to be, nowadays, limited to the areas of administration or public authorities. With regard to the situation at C3, the workplace can be conceptualized as a place where language is actively practised. Although this can refer to all languages, it is of particular relevance for migrants who have moved to Germany and who would benefit from practising German in their Germany-based workplace.

What has also become evident is that the highest value has been put on German by the C3 informants, who are non-native speakers of German. L1-speakers of German, for example C1 employees, apparently do not consider German a language that colleagues from abroad would like to acquire. None of them have reported on cases that international colleagues have started to learn German for work-related purposes. However, as meetings are automatically conducted in English when non-German colleague attend, no direct communicative need to learn German is created in the first place.

In general, multilingualism is perceived very positively by the interviewees, with English having an exceptional position as a lingua franca for work communication. At the same time, certain problematic implications of multilingual work interaction have also emerged from the data, such as social marginalization through language, imbalances in native speaker vs. non-native speaker interaction, or higher expenditures and annoyance due to the necessity of translations. However, these aspects were not immediately addressed, but emerged in the course of the interviews.

4.2 Implications

These findings on how multilingualism is being managed by German multinational companies and their employees suggest that there are certain implications to multilingualism in the workplace on the cultural, the social, and the political level.

First of all, the specific role of German in international business should be a major cause for reflection. Although there is a strong research tradition on German in professional and technical communication, especially in the field of *Angewandte Linguistik*, emphasis has usually been on studying language in the narrower sense, i.e. on the level of linguistic structure. Within the field of German Studies, there is not much research available that examines the

current status of German for international communication and its usage in multinational workplaces (one of the rare exceptions to this is the publication *Mehrsprachigkeit am Arbeitsplatz* by Kameyama and Meyer, 2007).

However, as is known from sociolinguistics or sociology of language scholarship, there are highly relevant extra-linguistic factors to language use that shape how languages occur and how they are being dealt with in our social world. The observed dynamics to the use of the German language in German workplaces, including the use of German and the attitudes towards it, suggest that currently a lot of change is taking place. Changes in perceptions about German seem to be shifting, by both speakers and non-speakers of German, which implies that the status of German is altering.

Certainly, the former needs to be discussed in the context of English as a lingua franca. That English is of major importance in the international business was an expected result. However, the study has shown how English is being seen as the only reasonable way of handling international communication beyond native speaker interaction. Interestingly, the interviewees did not challenge this concept in any way, and it is seen as some sort of a natural solution.

Nonetheless, obstacles have been pointed out with regard to the English-only technique that affect the very basic underlying assumption, i.e. that the interlocutors and business partners are similarly willing and able to communicate in English. As exemplified in the C1 context, it has been shown that this is not always the case, e.g. when it comes to training courses with Chinese non-English-speaking participants, or to Japanese clients who demand Japanese-only service and support, or to the businesses in Latin America, where Spanish, instead of English, is the transnational trade language.

It is necessary to accentuate that choices, especially language choices, do not remain stable, but that they need to be constantly exercised in order to be sustained. With particular regard to what has been reported on the communicative activities in the IT sector and the availability of training materials, linguistic choices are not available. Professional training is simply done in English. Although materials in German would help German-speakers to acquire the knowledge faster and, perhaps, better, there does not seem to be a demand for proper translations.

It would have been interesting to find that companies are actually aware of the negative implications that can emerge from language diversity. The language barrier, which has been a central concept in previous research on language management (see, e.g., Andersen & Rasmussen, 2004), has not been addressed by the informants in any direct way. Overt strategies of the companies' management boards regarding multilingualism in their organization (what has been suggested by Feely & Harzing, 2003, see section 2.2.2), are not existent. Implicity, the companies however rely on lingua franca communication, and expect employees to have

adequate English competencies. As top-down language management was not implemented in the four cases, it would be of particular interest to investigate the hidden costs that can arise out of language diversity in a company due to, e.g., miscommunication in imbalanced interactions between native and non-native speakers of English.

What would probably be useful to consider when evaluating linguistic diversity in international business, is the aspect of social diversity. With regard to large multinational corporations, *diversity* appears to be a buzzword in the professional realm that is supposed to indicate that companies are aware of their social responsibility and that they act accordingly. Although the four studied cases relate mainly to medium sized enterprises, it would have been interesting to see a reflection of the diversity spirit in the companies' language decisions. However, linguistic diversity does not seem to be understood as an intrinsic value, at least not in the cases studied. Considering that only little attention is paid to language issues, this is not surprising. Nevertheless, given that plurilingual individuals can function as language resources in multilingual domains, but that languages need to be frequently practised in order to remain active, workplaces could be employed as strategic sites to ensure multilingual corporate communications.

Against the backdrop of these rather large-scale considerations to language, it is important to point out that specific actions should be taken in the educational sector as well. Throughout the interviews, an important theme has recurred several times, namely that of problems related to comprehending English varieties. In particular, this relates to non-native varieties of English, for example, when Chinese or Indian colleagues speak English. Apparently, peculiar phonological sets in combination with regional variants of the lexicon can make it difficult for employees to conduct oral conversations with these colleagues. Certainly, learning about different varieties of English would be a very reasonable topic for both school curricula and English training courses in language schools. Also, an orientation towards communicative teaching and the acquisition of language skills for casual encounters seem to be very relevant for facilitating successful communication in international teams.

5 Conclusions

This qualitative case study has shown how multilingualism is being managed in four German multinational corporations. From the interviews with ten employees, the policies, practices, and perceptions of languages and multilingual language use have emerged. It has been illustrated that these three aspects are closely interrelated and that multilingualism management does not only take place on a macro level. Instead, it takes place on the individual level as well. Interestingly, it has been found that top-down language management is almost absent, as no official, i.e. explicit, language policies have been found throughout the four cases. For the case of C1, it has turned out that the only explicit language policies that affect the language situation at C1 is due to their relationships to their client companies. For C2, C3, and C4, explicit language policies do not seem to be existent. In this context, the term *company language* was interpreted differently from interviewee to interviewee. When understood as official regulation, the informants stated that their companies do not have company languages. However, if the term was interpreted as related to a habit or practice, some informants stated that their company has a company language.

However, with regard to implicit policies, a considerable amount of information has been found that suggests that there are indeed several implicit policy mechanisms at work. These are of particular importance for understanding and explaining language choice in multilingual workplaces. English has been found to be seen as a way to ensure communication among speakers of different nations in the first place. However, even if a non-L1-speaker has adequate competencies in a language other than English, it was reported that still English is utilized to facilitate fast and easy communication.

Although all informants work in multinational companies and although many of them report on their companies to be multilingual, their individual workplace realities are not as multilingual as it could be expected. Multilingualism is often interpreted in view of the number of nationalities and L1s represented by the company's workforce. Whereas the C2 informant does not position her company to be very multilingual, employees of the companies C1 and C4 do. However, their usages of languages other than their L1, German, are mainly limited to English. What is remarkable is that multilingualism in general is evaluated very positively, and it has been found that multilingualism can have positive and motivating effects on the

employees' experiences in work-related interaction. Also, it has been demonstrated that language choice in multilingual settings is influenced by aspects of group dynamics. In order to facilitate positive rapport and in order to prevent negative effects, such as social exclusion through language, there are quite specific expectations toward appropriate language choice, as has been reported on by several employees.

Hence, these expectations of what is appropriate constitute reasons for employees to directly intervene and to "correct" language behaviour. These practices can therefore be interpreted as clear implicit policies to language use. At C3, the situation differs from the other cases insofar as native speaker competency is concerned. All informants at C3 have Russian as their L1. They are non-native speakers of German and exhibit very high competencies in German. Although they are all living in Germany and although they are employed at a German company, their linguistic realities at work differ due to their personal background and migration history. This leads to the peculiar situation that one informant reports that although she lives in Germany and works at a German corporation, she hardly ever has the chance to utilize German. This is perceived as a shortcoming to how she experiences her current work reality and everyday life.

Against this backdrop, it has been discussed that the situation in German multinationals can be put into context with a major change in progress regarding the German language. German seems to be losing ground as a language of professional communication, especially in the IT business, whereas German-only communication is assumed to be restricted to areas of state legislation and administration. At the same time, Germany has been reported to position itself as a multicultural country that is growing more and more multilingual.

This study has shown that multilingualism management occurs in the workplace, with language policies, practices, and perceptions being strongly interdependent factors. The findings suggest that while official language policies are not implemented on the corporate level, language practices operate as de facto policies on the level of social interaction. The status that is ascribed to particular languages, especially English and German, shape how multilingual settings are perceived and evaluated. At the same time, these perceptions generate assumptions which guide individuals' subsequent language behaviour. With respect to the title of this thesis, it can be said that multilingualism management is indeed *at work*.

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Appendices

A Transcription Conventions

The interviews were fully transcribed using the following transcription conventions. Signs are borrowed and adapted from the Jeffersonian Transcription Conventions used in Conversation Analysis (cf. Atkinson & Heritage, 1984). However, the basic verbatim transcriptions were used for content analysis only.

.	falling intonation
.	final continuing or slightly rising intonation
?	rising intonation (question)
-	abrupt ending or glottal stop
(pause)	pause (only long paused are transcribed)
haha	laughter
wORD	emphasis of syllables or words are capitalized
#word#	quoted speech
(word)	uncertain hearing
( )	unintelligible stretch of talk
(( ))	additional comments
X X	anonymised names, e.g. "XFirmennameX" for company name
...	omitted passages, including overlaps with less relevant elements

The simplified transcriptions do not usually contain backchannels, longer selfcorrection and repairs, hesitations, or laughter, unless considered important for content analysis.

Please also note the following abbreviations and signifiers:

C	Company, such as C1, C2, C3, C4
M	Member of the company, M1, M2, M3, M4, M5
Q	Question, tags questions posed by the interviewer
A	Answer, tags reponses by the interviewees

B Schedule for the Semi-Structured Interviews

Fragen für das semi-strukturierte Interview (flexibel)

Generelle Informationen:

- – Sprachen?
- – Arbeitsgebiete (Intern / Extern?)
- – Grad der Verantwortlichkeiten?

Generelle Fragen zur Sprachbiographie:

- – Was ist ihre Muttersprache (Sprechen Sie bestimmte Dialekte)?
- – Haben Sie Kenntnisse anderer Sprachen?
    - – Welche? (Englisch?)
    - – Wann und wie haben Sie sie erworben? Haben Sie formalen Unterricht erhalten?
    - – Wie würden Sie Ihre Kenntnisse in diesen Sprachen einschätzen? Sind sie verhandlungssicher und/oder fließend? (Haben Sie offizielle Zertifikate?)
- – Welche Sprachen nutzen Sie normalerweise (zuhause / in Familie / mit Freunden etc.)?

Wissen / Vorstellungen zu Sprachpraktiken und Sprachregelungen im Unternehmen:

- – Würden Sie sagen, das Unternehmen ist ein mehrsprachiges Unternehmen? (Beispiele?)
- – Würden Sie sagen, das Unternehmen hat eine "Firmensprache"?
- – Wissen Sie, welche Sprache(n) das Unternehmen nutzt für seine Kommunikation innerhalb der Niederlassung / mit anderen Niederlassungen? In welchem Maße?
- – Wissen Sie, ob das Unternehmen Maßnahmen für mehrsprachige Begegnungen trifft?
- – Was würden Sie sagen, wie viele Mitarbeiter Kenntnisse and in mehr als einer Sprache haben (in Ihrer Niederlassung / insgesamt)? (Welche?)
- – Denken Sie, dass Ihr Unternehmen Mitarbeiter einstellt, die weder Englisch noch Deutsch sprechen?

Sprachpraktiken und Wahrnehmungen zur Mehrsprachigkeit im Unternehmen:

- – Welche Sprache(n) nutzen Sie bei der Arbeit (mit Kollegen / in Meetings / mit Kunden etc.)? Falls mehr als eine:
    - – Können Sie selbst wählen, welche Sie nutzen?
    - – Nutzen Sie bestimmte Sprachen für bestimmte Tätigkeiten / bestimmte Personen (bspw. für E-Mails, beim Mittagessen, in Kaffeepausen etc.)?
    - – Wie oft nutzen Sie diese Sprache(n)?
    - – Mit welcher Sprache fühlen Sie sich am wohlsten?
- – Würden Sie gern mehr Ihrer Sprachkenntnisse bei der Arbeit einsetzen?
- – Würden Sie es begrüßen, wenn Ihr Arbeitgeber Sprachtrainings ermöglichte (e.g. Sprachmaterialien oder Sprachkurse)? (Welche Kenntnisse würden Sie gern verbessern?)
- – Können Sie sich an eine Situation erinnern, die Sie als sehr gutes Beispiel für eine erfolgreiche mehrsprachige Begegnung bei der Arbeit einstufen würden?

Abschlussfragen:
- – Gibt es etwas, das Sie als hilfreich für diese Studie empfinden, das Sie mitteilen möchten?
- – Kennen Sie jemanden, der gern an dieser Studie teilnehmen würde?

Zusätzliche Fragen für Teilnehmer mit Führungsaufgaben:

Zur Sprachpolitik:

- Trifft das Unternehmen Maßnahmen für mehrsprachige Begegnungen?
- Gibt es eine unternehmensweite Sprachpolitik?
- Welche ist/sind die Arbeitssprache(n) des Unternehmens? Gibt es eine "Firmensprache"?
- Ist Sprachverwendung bestimmten Funktionen zugeordnet (meetings / offizielle Dokumentation / Kommunikation mit anderen Abteilungen / mit Mitarbeitern / mit Kunden / für Betriebsfeiern etc.)?
- Werden bestimmten Produkten bestimmte Sprachen zugewiesen?
- Welche Sprache(n) werden normalerweise für die Kommunikation verwendet (innerhalb der Niederlassung / mit anderen Niederlassungen / in bestimmten Ländern)?
- (Inwiefern beeinflusst nationale Sprachpolitik die Sprachpolitik des Unternehmens?)
- Welche Rolle spielt Übersetzung / Dolmetschen im Tagesgeschäft?
- Inwieweit beeinflussen Sprachkenntnisse die Personalpolitik des Unternehmens?
    - Stellt die Firma Personal ein, das weder Englisch / Deutsch spricht (in dieser Niederlassung / in anderen Niederlassungen)?
- Gibt es Märkte, die die Firma aufgrund von fremdsprachlichen Problemen nicht betritt?
- Gibt es im Unternehmen Strategien für auftretende Sprachbarrieren?

Über Sprachbiographien und Sprachpraktiken von Mitarbeitern:
Was würden Sie sagen...

- ... welche Sprache(n) wird/werden am meisten von Mitarbeitern genannt, wenn Sie zu Ihrer Muttersprache(n) gefragt werden (in der Niederl. / insgesamt)?
- ... wieviele Mitarbeiter haben Kenntnisse in mehr als einer Sprache? (Welchen)?
- ... wieviele Mitarbeiter sind verhandlungssicher in mehr als einer Sprache? (Welchen)?

Über das Wissen und die Wahrnehmung von Sprachpraktiken von Mitarbeitern:
Was würden Sie sagen...

- ... welche Sprache(n) nutzen Mitarbeiter bei der Arbeit (mit Kollegen / in Meetings / mit Geschäftspartnern / mit Kunden etc.)?
- ... würden sich Mitarbeiter wohler fühlen, wenn sie verschiedene Sprachen bei der Arbeit nutzen könnten?
- ... würden es Mitarbeiter begrüßen, wenn das Unternehmen (weiterführende) Sprachtrainings anbieten würde?
- ... sind Mitarbeiter sich der Sprachpolitik des Unternehmens bewusst? (Was denken Sie, wie sie wahrgenommen wird?)
- ... schätzen die Mitarbeiter das Unternehmen ein als erfolgreich im Umgang mit Mehrsprachigkeit?

General information:

- Languages?
- Areas of Work (In-House only / external activities)?
- Degree of responsibilities?

General questions about employees' language biographies:

- What is/are your mother tongue(s)? (Do you speak certain dialects?)
- (Do you have competencies in English / in German?)
- Do have competencies in other languages?
    - When and how did you acquire it/them? Have you received formal instruction?
    - How would you rate your competencies in this/these language(s)? Are you business fluent in this/these languages? (Do you have formal certificates?)
- Which languages do you usually utilize (at home / with family / friends etc.)?

Employees' knowledge / beliefs about language practices and policies in the company:

- Would you consider the company a multilingual company? (Can you provide examples?)
- Would you consider the company to have a 'company language'?
- Do you know which language(s) the company utilizes to communicate within your subsidiary / with other subsidiaries? To what extent are they utilized?
- Do you know whether the company takes measures to handle multilingual encounters?
- How many employees do you think have competencies in more than one language (in your subsidiary / in total)? (Which languages?)
- Do you think your the company employs personnel who does not speak English / German?

Employees' language practices and perceptions of multilingualism in the company:

- Which language(s) do you utilize at work (with collegues / in meetings / with clients etc.)? If more than one:
    - Can you choose which language(s) to utilize?
    - Do you utilize certain language(s) for certain activities / certain persons (consider e-mails, lunch dates, coffee breaks etc.)?
    - How often do you utilize this/these language(s)?
    - Which language(s) do you feel most comfortable with?

- Would you like to make more use of your language skills at work?
- Would you appreciate your employer to provide further language training (e.g. language materials or courses)? (Which competencies would you like to improve?)
- Can you recall a situation which you would consider a very good example of a successful multilingual encounter at work?

Concluding Question:
- Is there anything you would consider helpful for the study that you would like to share?
- Can you think of someone who would like to participate in this study?

<u>Additional questions for participants with managerial responsibilities:</u>

On language policy:

- Does the company take measures to handle multilingual encounters?
- Is there a corporate language policy?
- What is/are they company's working language(s)? Is there an entitled "corporate language"?
- Is language use assigned to certain functions (in meetings / official documents / for presentation / communication with certain department / with employees / with clients / for office parties etc.)?
- Are certain languages assigned to certain products?
- Which language(s) are usually utilized for communication (within the subsidiary / with other subidiaries / in certain countries)?
- (How is corporate communication affected by national language policy issues?)
- What role does translation / interpreting play in everyday business?
- In how far do language competencies affect the company's hiring policy?
    - Does the company employ personnel who does not speak English / German (in this subidiary / in other subsidiaries)?
- Are there markets that the company has not yet entered due to language issues?
- Are their strategies for cases of arising language barriers?

On employees' language biographies and practices:

- Which language(s) do you think is/are most often indicated by employees when asked about their mother tongue(s) (in the subsidiary / throughout all subsidiaries)?
- How many employees do you think have competencies in more than one language? (Which)
- How many employees do you think are business fluent in more than one language? (Which)

On employees' knowledge and perceptions of language practices and policies:

- Which language(s) do you think do employees utilize at work (with collegues / in meetings / with business partners / with clients etc.)?
- Do you think employees would feel more comfortable with utilizing different languages at work?
- Do you think employees would appreciate the company to provide (further) language training?
- Do you think employees are aware of the company's language policy? (How do you think it is perceived?)
- Do you think employees consider the company successful in handling multilingualism?