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Inclusive Language Use in Multicultural Business Organizations: The effect on Creativity and Performance

Abstract

Few studies have dealt with inclusive language use in multicultural organizations. This is unfortunate because it has been hypothesized that such organizations will be more creative and will perform better than mono-cultural organizations if communication issues are dealt with correctly by managers. In this study, we test the general hypothesis that inclusive language use by managers and employees in formal and informal situations will increase the creativity and performance in multicultural organizations. By use of responses from 676 individuals employed in privately owned multicultural companies we found that management common language communication was strongly associated with performance but not with creativity. Openness to language diversity among employees, however, had strong relations with both creativity and performance. This indicates that management communication may provide information and a shared identity that can increase the performance of an organization. Yet in order to increase creativity there is a need to also facilitate inclusive group processes. The findings provide new insights into the theoretical idea that diversity leads to creativity and performance if communication is managed correctly.

Keywords

Language use, language management, multicultural organizations, diversity, performance, creativity, common corporate language, management communication, openness to diversity.

Increased internationalization of businesses has made the management of languages in multilingual organizations a growing concern (Ehrenreich, 2010; Wells, 2013). While choosing a common corporate language may solve some problems, still many remain (Born and Peltokorpi, 2010). Thus, predicaments associated with language mainly relate to variations in fluency in common languages and to the use of other languages alongside the common language (Zaidman, 2001; Barner-Rasmussen and Aarnio, 2011). Such differences in skills and practices could make it more difficult for individuals in multilingual organizations to communicate. In relation to this, language diversity, i.e. when organizational members hold a variety of different mother tongues which also affects the use of a shared second language (Henderson, 2005), has been found to negatively impact knowledge transfer (Ghoshal and Nohria, 1989; Lagerström and Andersson, 2003; Mäkelä et al., 2007), global value chain management (Govindarajan and Gupta, 2001), international conflict management (Von Glinow et al., 2004), inter-unit communication intensity (Barner-Rasmussen and Björkman, 2005) perceived trustworthiness between business units (Barner-Rasmussen and Björkman, 2007), mergers (Vaara et al., 2005), joint ventures (Brannen and Salk, 2000), headquarter-subsidiary relations (Gupta, 1987), and global integration in MNCs (Marschan et al., 1997).

There could be several reasons for why language diversity seems to affect organizational activities and processes negatively. In organizations hosting many different nationalities, unfamiliar vocabulary, unusual accent, slow speech rhythm, or frequent grammatical mistakes can make it more difficult to understand each other, and the communication process is often slowed down (Yashima et al., 2004; Wells, 2013). It is simply more difficult and more stressful to get a message across when having to speak a language that one does not master to perfection (Du-Babcock, 1999; Du-Babcock, 2006). In cognitive neuroscience it has even been shown that languages that are

acquired later than in early childhood will require the use of substantially more cognitive resources since speaking processes are not automated as they are for one's native language (Abutalebi, 2008; Volk et al., 2014). Hence, the effort and distress involved with speaking a learned language will result not only in reduced comprehension and hampered rhetorical skills but also in decreased communication frequency.

Negative effects on understanding and communication frequency, however, are not the only problems associated with organizations where individuals have different native languages. Language diversity may also have important identity implications affecting intergroup behavior (Lauring, 2008). As a particularly potent element of group differentiation and ethnic conflicts, language has been found to be one of the strongest indicators of social identity (Giles and Johnson, 1981). Accordingly, language can be a powerful force creating a sense of exclusion from key information processes, cooperation, and decision making for those with insufficient language skills in the dominating language such as the common language or the parent company language (Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999; Feely and Harzing, 2003). Exclusion of certain individuals due to language skills can lead to sub-group formation based on linguistic affiliation. This could have important implications on the functioning of organizations. A number of studies have, for example, found that the need to identify with social groups in order to feel a sense of belonging may lead to negative attitudes towards other groups and counterproductive biases in resource distribution (cf. Bartel, 2001; Rooney et al., 2010). Language diversity and the resulting organizational subdivision may thus harm the effectiveness of a business unit not only due to reduced understanding but also due to social exclusion mechanisms.

In an attempt to standardize communication and avoid language-based subgrouping, inclusive

language management strategies has been unfolded in many business organizations (cf. Fredriksson et al., 2006; Harzing and Pudelko, 2013). In a national language policy context, the concept of inclusive language was coined by Clyne (2005) to describe a contrast and alternative to the language of exclusion often applied by nation states when confronting immigration issues. Building on the work of Clyne, Lane (2009) discusses how legislation against discrimination through language use can lead to a greater inclusion of all citizens regardless of their background. This approach holds that the use of a shared language takes precedence over the co-existence of different linguistic systems within the nation. Thus, when taking this stand, parallel use of different languages is seen as exclusive and the use of a common language is seen as inclusive in that it provides a unifying code between individuals holding different language repertoires (Janssens and Steyaert, 2014). Here, Luring and Selmer (2012) have, in an organizational setting, explored how language management activities may stimulate inclusive language use and found that conscious use of the common language by the management level increased inclusive attitudes in multinational organizations.

Based on the above literature, we argue that inclusive language use may be conceptualized as a form of communication that allows others to take part in the dialogue in spite of inherent language differences. It may thus involve an attitude of being open and acceptant of variations in styles of speaking, vocabulary, and proficiency levels (Sawyer et al., 2005; Luring and Selmer, 2012). This perceptual dimension of inclusive language use is central since acceptance towards linguistic differences enhance individuals' willingness to communicate and also potentially diminish subgroup-formation based on variations in the common language (Hinds et al., 2014; Klitmøller et al., 2014). Moreover, inclusive language use in organizations should comprise the use of a shared means of communication by managers and employees in formal and informal situations so that

linguistic minorities are not excluded from the communication flow, and so that an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ mentality does not emerge based on differences in national languages (cf. Fredriksson et al., 2006; Harzing and Feely, 2008; Luring and Selmer, 2010). In other words, inclusive language comprises open attitudes and the consistent use of a generally shared language.

In this study of multicultural business organizations, we focus on how inclusive language use can affect work outcomes in the form of creativity and performance. We focus on performance because it is a central measure of evaluative achievements of the work group. Creativity has been included because it has been a central argument that multicultural groups have a potential for creativity if communication problems and mistrust do not hinder this (Maznevski, 1994; van Knippenberg et al., 2004; Pieterse et al., 2013). Creativity can be conceptualized as the production of novel and useful ideas by an individual or a group (Amabile, 1996; Zhou and George, 2003). Mumford and Gustafson (1988) suggest that creativity can be conceptualized as a phenomenon with a number of elements including cognitive processes (underlying the individual’s ability to generate creative outcomes or products), motivational variables (facilitating the application of these cognitive processes) and contextual variables (climate, evaluation and culture).

Although most organizations strive to be creative in developing new products, services, or process solutions, this does not happen automatically. Organizations have to ensure that individuals will make creative contributions and this most often requires a keen managerial effort (Nijstad, 2000). One area that is known to increase creativity in work groups is communication and dialogue (Kratzer et al., 2004). Hence, if inclusive language management can facilitate better and more distributed communication in organizations, it is likely that creativity in such groups will increase and that they will perform better in general.

We argue that exploring this could be worthwhile for several reasons. First, while the language theme has recently gained momentum in management and organization research, Piekkari and Tietze (2011) maintain that there is still little common thrust in developing research agendas on linguistic issues. Similar notions are put forward in a large number of recent articles that call for more research on the topic (e.g. Björkman and Piekkari, 2009; Luring and Selmer, 2010; Harzing et al., 2011; Zander et al., 2011). Second, while a handful of researchers have touched upon the concept (Lane, 2009), few studies deal directly with inclusive language use and its effect on work group outcomes (Luring and Selmer, 2012). Third, although some quantitative research in multilingual organizations have recently been published, they have mainly focused on inter-organizational (headquarter-subsidary) communication (Barner-Rasmussen and Björkman, 2007; Barner-Rasmussen and Aarnio, 2011; Harzing and Pudelko, 2013) or have been carried out in academic organizations (Luring and Selmer, 2012; Luring and Selmer, 2013). Therefore there is still a need for quantitative studies on how language use functions internally in multicultural business organizations. Finally, while the link between communication and creativity has been established (Kratzer et al., 2004; Heath, 2007), very little is known about how organizational language use affects this.

Hypotheses

Creativity

According to Kratzer et al. (2004) communication can be viewed as the ‘nervous system’ of innovative organizations because creative processes are facilitated in interaction between individuals with varying backgrounds of expertise. This seems to be even more important in multicultural organizations where individuals’ backgrounds and perspectives may be substantially

heterogeneous (Distefano and Maznevski, 2000). It can be argued that it is the internal communication in the organization that enables work groups to create a healthy social environment and coordinate work activities (Hobman et al., 2004). This could well stimulate creativity because individuals trust each other and are able to quickly test their ideas among colleagues (Zhou and George, 2003). It may, however, be more difficult to achieve good internal communication in organizations where individuals speak different native languages.

A managerial approach to reduce potential negative effects of language diversity has been to adopt a common language. The consistent use of a shared language by managers has also been found to increase group cohesion (Lauring and Selmer, 2010) and knowledge sharing (Lauring and Selmer, 2011) in multicultural organizations. Hence, the management's use of the corporate language in work related contexts may well assist in promoting an inclusive environment in which employees will feel part of the general communication flow and thus may air ideas that are new to the organization. Hence, we hypothesize:

Hypotheses 1a: In multicultural organizations, inclusive language in the form of consistency of using a common language by management is positively associated with creativity.

Employees' use of the common language, Zenger and Lawrence (1989) maintain that individuals unfamiliar with the shared language are likely to distort and misinterpret information received from group members and thereby to find communication more difficult. This can be due to different accents and different levels of language proficiency. However, if group members communicate through a shared language, they gradually develop feelings of trust that facilitate subsequent

communication and information sharing (cf. Li, 2005; Mäkelä et al., 2007). Hence, the use of a shared language among employees could improve possibilities for work related communication that will allow group members to be more familiar with each other's differences, thus improving incentives for further communication. Based on the above we propose the following:

Hypotheses 1b: In multicultural organizations, inclusive language in the form of frequency of using a common language by employees in work related contexts is positively associated with creativity.

It is not only the use of the common language for work communication that is important. The use of a shared language also in more informal or personal circumstances may add to creative processes (cf. Amabile, 1996). Interaction is known to create stronger personal ties and thus again increase the frequency of communication (Granovetter, 1973). Since interaction can be confined to specific language groups, the use of the common language in social interaction can help break down such barriers. Accordingly we suggest that:

Hypotheses 1c: In multicultural organizations, inclusive language in the form of frequency of using a common language by employees in private contexts is positively associated with creativity.

Finally, individuals' general openness to language diversity in the organization may also affect creativity positively. Openness to language diversity will allow individuals that speak the common language or e.g. the host country language less well to also join discussions and dialogue. This will decentralize communication processes as more peripheral organization members will be included

and not only dominating groups such as the management or host country nationals. In general, it has been argued that decentralization in decision-making increases organizational creativity (Kratzer et al., 2004). If certain language-defined groups of individuals dominate the problem-solving process, the dominant group will be prone to information overload, whereas linguistic minorities may not receive sufficient information to be part of the creative processes. Since work group creativity critically depends on getting a wide range of information, it is important that dissimilar individuals have equal access to the information flow (Fleming and Koppelman, 1996). Finally, openness to language diversity will reduce the chance of language based sub-group formation. This is important since Kratzer et al. (2004) found that subgroup-formation of communication had a negative relationship with team creativity. Therefore we suggest the following hypotheses:

Hypotheses 1d: In multicultural organizations, inclusive language in the form work group members' openness to language diversity is positively associated with creativity.

Performance

The management's use of the common language could increase the feeling of belonging to the group for all individuals in spite of diversity in linguistic affiliations and skills. Hence, the work group could more easily develop a shared identity (cf. Vaara et al., 2005). This will often lead to greater cohesiveness in the organization and more optimal work processes (Larson and Pearson, 2012; Koschmann, 2013; Wells, 2013). Thus, consistent use of the corporate language in management work communication may well increase the general performance of a business unit. Hence, we hypothesize:

Hypotheses 2a: In multicultural organizations, inclusive language in the form of consistency of using a common language by management is positively associated with performance.

Employees' use of the common language may also affect the performance of an organization favorably. Zenger and Lawrence (1989), for example, demonstrate that the presence of a shared language determines the efficiency of communication because it guides how individuals interpret, understand and respond to information. Accordingly, a shared language increases mutual understanding among organization members, and this helps them to communicate more effectively. Moreover, the opportunity to establish group involvement is increased when individuals interact on a regular basis (O'Reilly et al., 1989). Not only because increased interaction leads to more frequent communication, but also because communication is more effective due to the fact that these interactions also result in some form of a shared language thus increasing the effect of the common language even further (Pelled, 1996; Weick et al., 2005). On the other hand, if work group members do not share a common language, their work related communication will be less efficient and more time consuming (Dearborn and Simon, 1958). Therefore we hypothesize the following:

Hypotheses 2b: In multicultural organizations, inclusive language in the form of frequency of using a common language by employees in work related contexts is positively associated with performance.

In terms of personal communication, speaking a shared language in informal contexts is particularly important in the transfer of tacit knowledge that is difficult to articulate (Nonaka, 1994). And this type of knowledge is often central to organizational performance (Kogut and Zander, 1992). In line

with this, Welch and Welch (2008) maintain that language commonality has a positive effect on the sender's ability to transmit knowledge because knowledge often circulates within the social networks and informal structural clusters created by linguistic connections. Hence, informal communication could increase the information sharing that is necessary for performance in knowledge intensive organizations (Heaton and Taylor, 2002; Kuhn and Jackson, 2008). This leads us to the following hypothesis:

Hypotheses 2c: In multicultural organizations, inclusive language in the form of frequency of using a common language by employees in private contexts is positively associated with performance.

Openness to language diversity could also have important implications for performance. Dissimilarities will often lead to reduced group involvement and reduced satisfaction causing individuals to engage in different forms of decreased attachment, such as physical or psychological withdrawal (Tsui et al., 1992). However, if individuals are more open towards each other's differences, they will overcome barriers created by diversity (Hobman et al., 2004; Homan et al., 2007; Homan et al., 2008; Strauss et al., 2008; Shrivastava and Gregory, 2009). For example, Fujimoto and associates (2004) demonstrated that diverse groups had higher decision effectiveness when showing openness to diversity. Similarly, Watson et al. (1993) found that heterogeneous groups performed better when openness to diversity was high. On the other hand, if a work group is less open to language diversity, thus giving rise to sub-group formations, this will most likely affect organizational performance negatively (Triandis, 1960; Xia et al., 2009; Lammers et al., 2013). Accordingly, we suggest the following:

Hypotheses 2d: In multicultural organizations, inclusive language in the form of group members' openness to language diversity is positively associated with performance

Methods

Sample

Our study uses a self-constructed database of e-mail addresses of white-collar employees in Danish privately owned knowledge intensive organizations. We contacted managers and HR personnel in multicultural organizations, defined as having more than 10 percent non-Danish employees. The data was collected by use of an English language electronic e-mail based survey. A total of 981 employees were invited to participate in the survey, and eventually 676 responses were received amounting to a response rate of 69 per cent. The average age of respondents was 41.4 years, and the average tenure was 11.2 years. 68 percent of respondents were male, and 74 percent of the respondents came from Denmark. Non-Danish employees represented 51 different nationalities. Of the non-Danish respondents, 50 percent came from outside the EU. The average percentage of non-Danish employees in respondents' departments was 25.4. This is equivalent to responses in our collected sample. The percentage of native English speakers in our sample was 3.6. The average number of languages spoken on a daily basis in departments was 2.4. The percentage of Language use in the organizations were Danish as the local language, English as a corporate language, and in some instances other languages when e.g. groups of German, Mandarin or Spanish speaking individuals worked together.

Instrument

The constructs were all measured by tested psychometric scales. English management communication was gauged by a five-item, seven point (strongly agree – strongly disagree) scale by

Lauring and Selmer (2010). This scale measures the consistency of using the common language in writing and speaking by the management at the department level ($\alpha=.81$). A sample item is: “The Department Manager uses English in situations where more nationalities are present” Openness to language diversity was measured by a four-item, seven point scale (strongly agree – strongly disagree) by Lauring and Selmer (2012). This scale measures the degree of openness of department members to work with others in the department despite language barriers ($\alpha=.76$). A sample item is: “Department members enjoy doing jobs with people despite of languages barriers”. English work-related communication and English personal communication were measured by direct questions: “Over the last two-week period, what percentage of time did you speak English in: (1) Work-related communications? (2) Personal communications?”

We used five items adapted from Tierney et al.’s (1999) scale for employee creativity ($\alpha=.84$). A sample item is: “Department members served as good role models for creativity”. Performance was measured by Martins et al.’s (2003) five item scale for group successfulness ($\alpha=.78$). A sample item is: “Everything this department does turns out well”. The same response scales as for English management communication were applied for both creativity and performance.

Size of department and number of languages spoken on a daily basis in the organization were applied as control variables. Both variables were measured by direct questions: “How many staff members are currently employed at your department?” and “How many languages are spoken on a daily basis in the department?” Controlling for the size of the department seems reasonable since it is not unlikely that large departments in business organizations may be different in terms of language management and inclusive language use (cf. Bettenhausen, 1991; Jackson et al., 1991). The number of languages spoken in the department may also affect the language management as it

may be different to implement inclusive language in organizations with few languages than in organizations with many languages spoken. This follows the Faultline Theory that would predict that while the existence of two language groups could lead to negative group categorization, a much larger collection of native languages would force individual group members to more regularly use the common organizational language when needed (Lau and Murnighan, 1998; Luring and Selmer, 2012).

Data analysis techniques

Sample means, standard deviations and zero-order Pearson correlations were computed for all variables of the study. The hypotheses were formally tested by way of hierarchical multiple regression.

Results

Table 1 displays sample means, standard deviations and zero-order Pearson correlations of the variables. There are significant associations between number of language spoken and creativity ($r=.08$, $p<.05$) and performance ($r=.08$, $p<.05$). This confirms the need to make use of this control variable in the regression analysis.

Insert Table 1 about here

The hypotheses were formally tested by way of hierarchical multiple regression (Table 2). The control variables, organization size and number or languages spoken on a daily basis were entered in Step 1. This produced significant associations between number of languages and both criterion variables. There was a significant positive association between number of languages and creativity

($\beta=.08$; $p<.05$) and performance ($\beta=.08$; $p<.05$).

In Step 2, the four predictor variables were entered. This produced significant effects on the criterion variables, explaining 11 percent of the variation for creativity and 20 percent of the variation for performance. As displayed by Table 2, there was a strong positive relationship between management common corporate language and performance ($\beta=.15$; $p<.001$). There was also positive associations between openness to language diversity and creativity ($\beta=.31$; $p<.001$) and performance ($\beta=.38$; $p<.001$). There was no significant association between any of the measures of percentage of time speaking English for employees. All F values for the work outcome variables (creativity and performance) were statistically significant, indicating a proper fit between the regression model and the data. These findings provide support for H1d, H2a, and H2d. The other hypotheses were not supported.

Insert Table 2 about here

Discussion

Main findings

This study explored the effect of inclusive language on work outcomes in terms of creativity and performance in multicultural organizations. We found that management common corporate language and openness to language diversity were both positively associated with performance. In addition openness to language diversity was also positively associated with creativity. All relations were strongly significant. It is not too surprising that the relation between management common corporate language and creativity was not significant. This may indicate that while the management by speaking the common language can provide the necessary information and a feeling of belonging

to foreign employees thus increasing the performance level, it might not make the organization more creative. This finding may suggest that not all communication promote creativity (Kratzer et al., 2004). For example, Kratzer et al. (2004) argue that too much and too centralized communication can be damaging to creativity. Yet, this type of communication may not be a problem with regard to performance. As an indication of positive work outcomes, our findings are in line with Luring and Selmer (2010) who found English language management communication to be positively associated with group trust and group inclusiveness and negatively associated with group conflict in a university context. It is also in line with a later study by Luring and Selmer (2011) documenting a relation between academic head of departments' English language communication and group knowledge sharing outcomes.

Openness to language diversity among employees had a strong effect on both performance and creativity suggesting that if employees are open to dissimilarities in terms of language, they will interact more broadly thus utilizing the full spectrum of perspectives that exist in a multicultural organization. This finding is supporting the hypothesis that multicultural work groups will be more creative than mono-cultural work groups if communication is not causing too great hindrances for collaboration (Distefano and Maznevski, 2000). The positive effect of openness to language diversity is in line with other studies linking openness to different types of diversity to favorable group outcomes (Fujimoto et al., 2004; Hobman et al., 2004; Sawyerr et al., 2005; Strauss et al., 2008).

We did not find any effect of employees' percentage of time speaking English; neither for work or social purposes. Hence, it may be suggested that it is not so important that employees speak the common language all the time. It is more important that the management speaks the common

language. But even more so it is important that employees are open to differences in the way people speak.

Limitations

As always, this study has a number of shortcomings that could limit to what extent it may be generalized. A potential problem of this study could be common method variance (CMV), since all the data were collected by cross-sectional self-reports. However, the general and automatic condemnation of cross-sectional self-report methods have been found exaggerated to the extent that it may have achieved the status of a methodological urban legend (Spector, 2006). Nevertheless, some procedures were implemented in this study to lessen the potential bias of CMV. As usual, the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents were assured. Also, the items measuring inclusive language were spread throughout the questionnaire at different pages. Additionally, a number of the items also had reverse polarity. This design of the questionnaire may have contributed to diminish effects of CMV (Podsakoff et al., 2003). To investigate the potential for remaining biases of CMV, Harman's single factor test was applied (Aulakh and Genc Turk, 2000). The exploratory factor analysis of the items, corresponding to all the variables of the study, resulted in a six-factor, unrotated solution where none of the factors accounted for the majority of the covariance among the factors. Finally, we found that the effect of the different inclusive language use variables varied from strongly significant to non-significant. This cannot be explained by CMV.

A second limitation is that this study has been carried out only in Danish multicultural business organizations. As part of the Nordic countries, Danes are generally known to have a high English language proficiency which may differ from other countries. In order to test the generalizability of the current study, more research is needed taking departure in countries with different types of

language use patterns. This could be countries where English is spoken as a native language or countries where the native language has a broad and more dominating position worldwide such as China, Spain, France, or Germany.

Finally, the causality of the study cannot be determined with certainty although theoretically it makes good sense to perceive creativity and performance as dependent variables. It may, however, be possible that highly creative or high performing work groups find the resources to communicate more inclusively.

Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the field of communication management by being one of the first to study inclusive language in multicultural business organizations. Much literature has dealt with the link between cultural diversity and creativity/performance but few prior studies have focused on how language use and language management may impact the outcome of multicultural work groups. Thereby this study contributes to the hypothesis that cultural diversity will lead to creativity and higher performance if communication issues are dealt with correctly (see Distefano and Maznevski, 2000). The most central finding was that not all types of inclusive language use have equal impact on the work outcomes. The finding that common language management communication is positive for performance but not for creativity seems relatively straightforward as communication from managers are not enough to ensure creative collaboration. Openness to language diversity among employees, on the other hand, had a strong relation with creativity indicating that group processes related to language are more important for creativity than information from the management. Hence, we provide new knowledge about what types of managerial interventions that could be useful in order to make multicultural organizations more

creative. We did not find any effect of the percentage of employees' English language communication. While this could indicate that the proportion of employees' English is less important for creativity or performance in organizations, this needs to be explored further in future research.

In relation to practical applications, our study provides managers with some insight into the role of inclusive language use and management communication in multicultural organizations. First, in order to increase performance and to a lesser extent creativity, our findings suggest that communication from the management is kept consistently in the common language in multicultural organizations. In this regard, it is important that top managers 'walk the talk' and resist the temptation of using local language in, e.g., large official group meetings. Top managers should also make sure that the communicating middle managers are aware of the effects of speaking a common language rather than using local languages. To be successful when using English as a business language, it is necessary to be able to express business-specific knowledge and undertake the relevant genre conventions (Kankaanranta and Planken, 2010). Hence, it is important for managers, in particular those engaging with diverse employees, to gain knowledge of business specific terms and sharpen their ability to concisely convey a message (Kankaanranta and Planken, 2010). Accordingly, we suggest that language training may be useful. This is not only to improve the vocabulary and pronunciation of managers. In addition it can assist in furthering their knowledge of situation-specific expressions (Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen, 2010). The above language management interventions should be included as parts of a corporate language policy that could explicitly list preferred practices and the reasons behind them.

Results also suggest that the management of multicultural organizations should focus on creating an

environment supporting openness to language diversity. Language diversity attitudes can be improved by interventions at the individual and organizational level. At the individual level, personnel responsible for diversity-management initiatives could focus on diversity training. Here, it is important that organizational members gain an understanding of how language differences are not neutral, but build on pre-existing preferences that give rise to cultural and communicative challenges (Lauhiala-Salminen et al., 2005). Furthermore, recent research has shown that contextual factors play an important role in organizational members' willingness to communicate with individuals that speak the common language differently than them. For example power differentials have an impact on individuals' willingness to engage in common language communication – especially if they have a low proficiency level (Lauring and Klitmøller, 2015). Such individuals should be supported in their communicative efforts. This relates to the finding that training of individuals' diversity awareness has a documented positive impact on group behavior, e.g. knowledge of minority cultures (Kulik and Roberson, 2008).

At the organizational level, strategies and policies can be implemented to develop open and inclusive attitudes in interaction and collaboration with dissimilar others. This can be done in the form of missions, evaluations, and reward structures. Emphasizing openness to diversity as an important code of ethics and ensuring that people behave in ways consistent with the portrayed values may improve the functioning of diverse groups. Different organizations, however, may need different strategies and policies for promoting a positive diversity climate. Considerations concerning the aims and challenges of a specific organization should be included in the development of strategies and policies in order to make them effective in supporting openness to language diversity.

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TABLE 1: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS AND CORRELATIONS AMONG THE VARIABLES											
S.No	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Criterion Variables										
1	Creativity	3.41	0.57	1.00							
2	Performance	5.65	0.75	0.38**	1.00						
	Predictor variables										
3	Communication management	5.53	1.13	0.19**	0.28**	1.00					
4	Percentage of English in work communication	36.49	32.18	0.07	0.08*	0.35**	1.00				
5	Openness to language diversity	5.05	1.01	0.34**	0.43**	0.40**	0.23**	1.00			
6	Percentage of English in private communication	19.32	25.05	0.07*	0.06	0.28**	0.66**	0.17**	1.00		
	Control Variables										
7	Number of languages spoken	2.44	1.12	0.08*	0.08*	0.24**	0.14**	0.15**	0.22**	1.00	
8	Organization size	2.77	0.49	-0.02	0.01	-0.04	0.02	-0.05	-0.04	0.00	1.00

* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001; two-tailed

Table 2 : Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression for the effect of language diversity on performance and creativity		
	Creativity	Performance
	β	β
Step 1 (control)		
Number of languages spoken	0.08*	0.08*
Organization size	-0.02	0.01
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.00	0.00
Step 2		
Communication management	0.08	0.15***
Percentage of English in work communication	-0.05	-0.05
Percentage of English in private communication	0.03	-0.02
Openness to language diversity	0.31***	0.38***
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	0.11	0.20
<i>Δ in Adjusted R²</i>	0.11	0.20

^a All standardized regression coefficients are from the final step in the analyses.

* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001; two-tailed