Language, Identity, Attitudes and Expectations at The Royal Tropical Institute (KIT):

Recommendations for a Corporate Language Policy

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Preface

This thesis describes my final (research) project of the master Intercultural Communication at Utrecht University. I am very pleased that the research project has finished and I am grateful for the support I received from many people. I would like to thank several generous individuals in particular, who helped me to bring this thesis to a good end. My special thanks go to Kees Tukker and Femke Blickman from the Royal Tropical Institute, who gave me the opportunity to collect data within their organisation and to gain experience in a practical language situation at an international organisation. Your trust, enthusiasm and support have been very helpful. I also would like to thank all employees who filled out my questionnaire and who participated in the interviews. The research could not have taken place without their participation. My special gratitude also goes to my supervisor Dr. Roselinde Supheert for her support, inspiration and guidance. Last but not least, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation for the endless trust, support, humour and patience of Michiel, my parents and my friends.

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1. Introduction

With approximately 1500 million native and non-native speakers of English worldwide, English has become one of the most important international languages in international business settings (Crystal 69). Although the language was first mainly spoken as a first language, English is now more widely spoken as a second or foreign language by non-native speakers (Crystal 69). The language is used as a common language or a lingua franca for international communication in different fields and settings, such as in international business communication. An international organisation that deals with linguistic and cultural variety and that uses English as a lingua franca, is the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in Amsterdam. At KIT, the language situation and the use of Dutch and English for internal and external communication at organisational level were studied. The aim of this research project is to give practical advice and recommendations about the current language situation and the possible introduction of a corporate language and language policy. Existing research shows that not only multinational corporations with subsidiaries and headquarters in different countries have to deal with the effects of an international workforce and a corporate language strategy. Smaller international organisations also aim to manage languages in corporate communication affairs. Before the language situation at KIT and different perspectives on language policies can be analysed, clear definitions have to be given to clarify the meaning of the relevant concepts.

Different terms and definitions are used for the regulation and management of languages in countries and communities, such as international organisations. The term *language policy* often refers to national policies set up by governments to study languages or language varieties and to regulate language use in countries (Dhir and Goke-Pariola 242). Ager gives the following definition: ''Language policy is official planning, carried out by those in political authority, and has clear similarities with any other form of public policy'' (6). Ager stresses that ''the word policy should be kept strictly to apply to the political actions of governments or states'' and that the term does not directly refer to language issues in other settings, such as (international) organisations (6). However, Spolksy and Kaplan and Baldauf argue that language policy can also relate to other settings than political actions (1, xi). In this thesis, the following definition of *language policy* will be used: ''language policy is a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in the society, group or system'' (Kaplan and Baldauf xi). Spolsky adds that ''a language policy may refer to all the language practices, beliefs and management decisions of a community or polity'' (9). After a language policy is created, strategic plans and goals of a language policy are changed into practical steps and activities that need to be carried out to accomplish the goals of the language policy. This process is called *language planning*, according to Kaplan and Baldauf (xi). Language planning activities will take place after the creation of a corporate language

policy and describe concrete steps that will be carried out. The research at KIT focuses on recommendations for language policy including ''management decisions'' on this topic (Spolsky 9).

Although national governments and international organisations seem to have similar aims and objectives to create a language policy, some differences between a national language policy and a corporate language policy can be explained. Language policies set up by national governments seem to focus mainly on managing national language(s) of a country, and deal with issues such as minority languages, language deterioration, language behaviour, etc. (Ager 1). Language issues in international organisations, however, seem to focus on the standardisation of languages, and aim to create a corporate language. Welch et al. explain that ''firms have reached a substantial level of international operation in multiple language contexts and face major challenges in terms of communication and information flow among their diverse operations, locations and languages'' (197). Furthermore, corporate languages are implemented to improve and to simplify communication between headquarters and offices in different countries, or departments of an organisation (Welch et al. 195). The goal of a corporate language is to ''increase efficiency by overcoming misunderstandings, reducing costs, avoiding time-consuming translations and creating a sense of belonging and cohesion within the firm'' (Frederiksson 409).

KIT aims to manage the linguistic diversity in the organisation and to improve the current language situation for Dutch and English speaking employees. The communications department wants to be consistent in its use of Dutch and English and asks for recommendations regarding the implementation of a corporate language. The organisation also aims to reduce costs for translations, wants to create more internal cohesion among employees, and would like to overcome misunderstandings. This research will examine the current language situation and will analyse in which way the communications department could deal with linguistic and cultural diversity.

The first part of this thesis focuses on theory about language policies and language situations in international organisations. Linguistic and non-linguistic motives that are related to language policy in international organisations such as identity, attitudes, exclusion, inequality, group membership and expectations, will be explained. In addition, several methods and recommendations for the successful implementation of a corporate language will be discussed. In chapter three, the organisation structure, the current language situation at KIT and the background of the research project will be explained. The research methods that were used for this project are participant observation, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, and will be justified in chapter four. Chapter five presents the findings of the research, and these will be analysed in chapter six. In chapter seven, practical recommendations will be given to improve the organisation's current language situation and to create a corporate language policy.

2. Theoretical Framework

Globalisation, expansion of international organisations and the international mobility of people lead to linguistic and cultural diversity within organisations. International organisations have to deal with different languages and top management often aims to manage the use of these languages. In professional business settings, English is often used as a lingua franca. Polz defines lingua franca as ''a language that is used predominantly for communication purposes. Speakers use it as a medium of communication only, and do not identify symbolically with it [. . .] and use the lingua franca simply to be intelligible to others'' (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin 148). Nickerson explains that ''the dominance of English used as a lingua franca in international business contexts is now seemingly beyond dispute'' (Nickerson 367). Because employees are expected to be able to communicate in English in international business activities and settings, English is often introduced as the official corporate and working language in international organisations. The introduction and implementation of an official corporate language might seem to be a logical step in the international business world of today. However, there are different aspects involved in the introduction and implementation processes of a corporate language.

Language situations in international organisations and companies have been widely examined by different researchers. Although many international organisations implement a corporate language to manage linguistic diversity, it will not automatically overcome language problems, since it ''may hinder or alter information flows, knowledge transfer, and communication'' (Welch et al. 195). Welch et al. examined how the introduction of a corporate language becomes successful and ''whether such an adoption of a corporate language facilitates internal communication, or whether it simply creates more problems, merely shifting the focus of cross-language issues from headquarters to subsidiary level, pushing the language 'problem' further down – out sight of top management'' (195). Their research shows that the implementation of a corporate language will not always solve the language problems (Welch et al. 201). If employees are forced to communicate in their second language, new communication problems may arise (Welch et al. 201). A case study of a language policy within a multinational company showed that despite the implementation of a corporate language, several problems still occurred, such as translation errors, and ''difficulties in exchanges between native and non-native speakers'' (Welch et al. 201). Communication between native and non-natives became difficult because non-native employees preferred to communicate with other non-native employees, and not with native employees (201). Welch et al. argue that there is a danger in the process of implementing a corporate language, because a ''common corporate language is generally imposed from the top, [and] there may be a tendency for top management to regard the language issue as

having been addressed and handled'' (202). Managers expect that all corporate communication will take place in the corporate language, while the situation is more complex and the implementation phase is often underestimated (Welch et al. 202). Moreover, Welch et al. explain that organisations should continue to use other languages besides the corporate language to reach local markets and target groups (206). In other words, a corporate language might lead to standardisation of languages, but will not automatically lead to less use of local languages.

There is a clear connection between the experiences of employees regarding language strategies and corporate languages and the function and position these employees have within the organisation (Tange 131). Tange focused on two main aspects in his analysis to see how employees experience the implementation of a language policy: (1) professional constellations and (2) perceived organisational distances (135). Tange argues that professional functions of employees affect the way in which they are aware of the implementation of a language policy and that people working at different organisational levels have different views and perspective on a language policy (Tange 139). The management of an organisation should therefore not only focus on strategic planning when introducing a corporate language, but they should involve employees who are working at different organisational levels, in the creation of a language policy, ''to help identify potential areas of conflict and negotiate a compromise between global strategies and local viewpoints'' (Tange 140).

2.1   The Intercultural Aspect of Language Policies in International Organisations

Language standardisation in language policies is often related to the field of intercultural communication, since language and culture are inevitably connected. Standardisation of a language does not automatically lead to (intercultural) understanding. Varner and Beamer explain that ''even if two people from different cultures can speak a common language, they may misinterpret the cultural signals'' (51). Although English is used as a lingua franca by KIT employees, intercultural understanding is not automatically guaranteed. Because employees have different native languages and cultural backgrounds, employees need to be aware of cultural differences to create mutual understanding. Intercultural and non-linguistic aspects are also important for language policies and language management, according to Ager (9). Ager defines seven motives for language policies that seem relevant for the language situation at KIT. This chapter will elaborate on these terms and the motives will be discussed in more detail. These motives are:

(a) identity
(b) ideology
(c) image creation

(d) insecurity

(e) inequality

(f) integration with a group

(g) instrumental motives for advancement

Although Ager defines seven motives for national and governmental language policies, five terms (a, b, c, e and f) seem applicable to this research project regarding a corporate language policy. These definitions were used as a basis for the analysis of the language situation at KIT and will be discussed below. These motives will also be discussed in chapter 6.

2.1.1. Identity

Identity is an important aspect in language planning and language policy (Ager 9). This corresponds to Ricento's view, who explains that language is closely connected to identity of individuals or social groups (232). To define the term *identity*, Jan Blommaert explains the differences between *achieved* identity and *ascribed* identity: ''Achieved identity is the identity people themselves articulate or claim and ascribed is the identity given to someone by someone else'' (Blommaert in Ricento 238). With a corporate language policy, the achieved and ascribed identity of people may differ. For example, employees feel that they have a particular identity, but with the introduction of a corporate language, people in authorised positions decide which language(s) should be used in the working environment. In this way, employees might experience a clash between their achieved and attributed identity, because they have to use the language and identity that is given to them by the organisation's management that is different from their ''own'' achieved identity.

Identity is also related to attitudes of people (Ager 125). Ager explains that attitudes are based on people's historical and social experiences, education, and position in society and are often culturally determined (136). Ager adds that ''attitudes of individuals derive from their beliefs and, at a deeper level, from the sets of values that they hold'' (125). People working in international organisations with international colleagues will often have different cultural values and beliefs, and different attitudes towards the language situation and the corporate language. Attitudes consist of cognitive, affective and conative elements (126). The cognitive component relates to the ''individual's thoughts and knowledge about language behaviour and language use'' and the affective aspect is formed by the personal attitude towards language use in the international organisation (Ager 126). The conative (or behavioural) component consists of the way in which people are willing to change their behaviour (Ager 126). These three attitudinal elements are interesting to study in terms of language situations within international organisations. To examine the cognitive and affective aspects of KIT-employees, their feelings, experiences, thoughts and attitudes about the current

language situation will be analysed. In addition, the conative component focuses on the extent in which employees are willing to change their language behaviour to improve the language situation in the organisation. Ager explains that attitudes of people can change over the years. However, it is more difficult to change ''deeper values and particularly identity'' than attitudes towards specific objects or topics (Ager 126).

2.1.2. Ideology and Image Creation

There are two perspectives on the motive of ideology in language planning and language policy. First of all, the ideology of individuals or employees will affect the way in which they look at the language issue within the organisation and the opinion they have about the topic. Their ideology is often based on the cultural values and beliefs they have. The ideology of employees will also influence the implementation of a language policy and the way in which they are willing to implement the language policy and corporate language. When the management of an organisation aims to introduce a language policy, they should be aware of the feelings and experiences of employees about the current language situation and implementation of a corporate language policy.

The ideology of a language policy is also connected to the general ideology of the organisation that introduces and implements the language plans and strategy. The ideology of an organisation is, in turn, related to the organisation's strategy. For example, if an organisation aims to expand internationally or wants to attract new markets abroad, it is likely that these strategic plans affect the language use and the corporate language. The ideology of an organisation, including the corporate language will be expressed in the image the organisations aim to create.

2.1.3. Inequality

Language can create power distances and inequality among employees. Lauring argues that language is an influential tool ''in processes of both exclusion and inclusion of individuals'' (263). Inequality on the other hand, could be related to in- and out-group membership (Lauring 262). Fiske et al. define in-group membership as ''bounded communities of mutual trust and obligation that delimit mutual interdependence and cooperation'' (1088). Lauring explains that language is not only used as a way to communicate, but is also related to power and influence (263). This is also argued by Marschan-Piekkari et al., who argue that language is also often used ''as an informal source of expert power in multinationals'' (421). When organisations introduce and implement a corporate language, specific (groups of) employees will be excluded from fields of information, due to their lack of corporate language skills. Trainings, documents and information in English, for example, might be impossible to understand for colleagues who do not have sufficient English language skills (Andersen and

Rasmussen 233). Janssens et al. explain that ''the language strategy in an international [organisation] is a way to decide which languages can be spoken and therefore, which groups and/or individuals will be involved in the international communication process and impact its outcomes'' (424). This will affect the ''power structure'' of an international organisation (Janssens et al. 424). The change in power structure might also be relevant for the language situation at KIT. Currently, the dominant language in the organisation is Dutch and most linguistic power seems to be centred among the Dutch speaking employees. This situation and the power structure will change if the management decides to implement English as the corporate language. A clear example of a changed power structure in multinational Kone is given by Marschan-Piekkari et al (431). Although the organisation introduced English as the corporate language, differences in language proficiency among employees caused inequality and power distances. Marschan-Piekkari et al state that ''the possession of relevant language skills often led to individuals having more power than their formal position would normally indicate'' (431). Employees with proficient corporate language skills functioned as translator for managers and gained ''a powerful gatekeeper role'' (Marschan-Piekkari et al. 431). Besides, native speakers of the corporate language often function as *language nodes*. Andersen and Rasmussen point out that ''the person who is the language node has often not an official position in the communication network, but [has developed a good knowledge of the official language and] is taken away from his or her official work to translate'' (232). Research at multinational and international organisations showed that language nodes are frequently used within organisations to improve the communication between speakers of different languages (Andersen and Rasmussen, Welch et al. 198, Marschan-Piekkari et al. 437). These language nodes have a powerful position in the organisation because they have a good command of both languages. However, ''native speaking ability does not automatically make a person a skilled and effective interpreter'' (Varner and Beamer 66). Native speakers of the language need training in communication and language skills to become a good interpreter or translator (Varner and Beamer 66).

Inequality caused by a corporate language will also affect career opportunities for employees. Marschan-Piekkari et al. argue that the introduction of a corporate language will force employees to use this language in their professional activities. Research in a multinational company that introduced English as the official language showed ''that there was an implicit message: If you are interested in career progression in this company, it is essential that you learn the common language'' (Marschan-Piekkari et al. 381). Employees are often aware of the importance of improving their corporate language skills because it will lead to more personal and professional advantages, and career opportunities (Marschan-Piekkari et al. 433). Employees who speak the corporate language have an advantage over colleagues who do not have the same language skills or proficiency. However, inequality and power distances increase when employees who want to learn the (new) corporate language do not have the ability to do so (Marschan-Piekkari et al. 383). Organisations should offer

language training to skilled technical staff who have developed less language knowledge and proficiency, to make sure that they will be able to communicate in the corporate language (Marschan-Piekkari et al. 383).

Differences in language skills between native and non-native speakers of a corporate language could also lead to inequality and power distances. Beyene et al. explain that in their research, different language skills of natives and non-natives led to negative emotions and feelings and to a lack of exchanging information between the groups of speakers (4). Non-native speakers needed more time to do their work and experienced more difficulties in collecting information that is important for their professional activities (Beyene et al. 4). The research also showed that non-native speakers did not always want to use the corporate language because they felt embarrassed to speak due to their lack of language proficiency (Beyene et al. 13). These negative emotions led to ''withdrawal from discourse'' by non-native speakers, but also to exclusion of native speakers when non-native speakers met (Beyene et al. 15). The research also showed that the corporate language English was not always used by the non-native speakers, and natives are not able to understand the language that is used by their non-native colleagues (Beyene et al 20). In this way, not only non-native speakers can feel excluded because they do not have sufficient corporate language skills, but the introduction of a corporate language can also lead to exclusion of native speakers. Beyene et al. explain, however, that more cultural understanding among both native and non-native employees will also lead to more positive feelings about communication between natives and non-natives (24). Native speakers of the corporate language will then understand why non-natives sometimes have to switch to their native language and why it takes them more time to do their work. Non-natives on the other hand, will understand that speaking in their own native language could create feelings of exclusion among native speakers (Beyene et al 25).

2.1.4. Integration

Integration among groups of speakers or employees is important to make a language policy effective and successful. Marschan-Piekkari et al. explain that the introduction of a corporate language will have consequences for the behaviour of employees (381). Integration processes are also related to group-membership, according to Ager (138). He explains that ''the motive of a wish to get closer to a community perceived as desirable lies behind many attempts by individuals to learn a new additional language, and sometimes, of whole communities or groups to be absorbed into another group'' (Ager 138). However, integration of groups could also have a negative consequence and might lead to ''language shift or language loss'' (Ager 139). With a corporate language, people must change their language behaviour and might feel that they lose part of their identity. This could lead to power distances or feelings of inequality, since some speakers have to use another language than their native

langue, while native speakers can use their native language as the corporate language.

2.2   Expectations

A non-linguistic aspect that plays a role in the introduction and implementation of a language policy, are employees' expectations. When a corporate language is introduced, employees may have varying perceptions and expectations regarding this management decision. To make sure that all employees have the same expectations about a corporate language and policy, managers should explain the consequences of a corporate language very clearly. Holbeche explains that in general international management, there is a clear difference between organisational expectations and individual expectations (250). A research project regarding international assignments in international organisations showed that ''there was a clear mismatch between what employers were expecting of employees and what employees considered to be their needs and aspirations'' (Holbeche 250). In other words, when management of an organisation decides to implement a corporate language, they should not assume that their expectations about this decision are similar to employees' expectations. Expectations of employees can also be examined in the research regarding the current language situation at KIT. For example, Dutch speaking employees at KIT could have different expectations about the current language situation or a corporate language than international employees. Expectations among employees could also be different because of different language use within departments and in their professional activities.

2.3   Implementation of a Language Policy

Organisations should be aware of several risks when implementing an official corporate language, such as English. It is essential to examine and to verify whether English is actually used by the majority of the employees, since ''English is perhaps not as widely shared throughout the organization as assumed by top management in the first place'' (Frederiksson et al. 407). Varner and Beamer explain that the introduction of a corporate language will not automatically lead to implementation in the whole organisation (59). The introduction and implementation of a corporate language needs time to become adopted and ''shared throughout the organisation'' (Frederiksson 407). Marschan-Piekkari et al. argue that the linguistic and policy activities of an organisation should be closely connected to Human Rescource Management, because a language policy will influence ''staff selection, training and development, and international assignments'' (377).

When a corporate language is introduced by the management, employees should be encouraged to learn the language or to improve their corporate language skills. Marschan-Piekkari et al. explain that ''corporate training, management development programmes and potential international

assignments'' are important strategic tools to ensure that employees will be motivated to learn the corporate language (383). The model below shows that employees who aim to improve their corporate language skills, will have more (career) opportunities than employees who are not willing to develop their language skills. Employees without competence in the company language will not be offered career progression and they will stay local. New and existing employees who want to improve their company language competence, however, will be offered ''enhanced training options, international assignments and career progression'' by the organisation's management (Marschan-Piekkari et al 383)
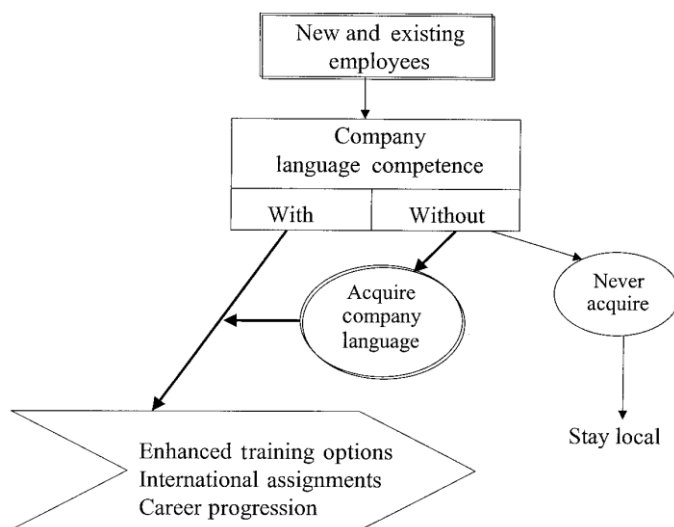

Fig. 1. Model for language learning of employees in international organisations (Marschan-Piekkari et al. 383)

Managers should implement corporate language policies strategically, because a corporate language and policy will not become successful without clear implementation planning. Marschan-Piekkari et al. therefore suggest employing a language officer, who could be involved in multiple activities (389). A language officer works together with the Human Resources department and could support and address language practices in recruitment processes, selection and trainings for international employees (Marschan-Piekkari et al. 389). The language officer could also support more research into the language issue within the organisation, could solve linguistic and communication problems and could make the language issue more visible within the organisation.

Furthermore, the management of an organisation should be aware of several aspects that are involved in the implementation of a corporate language. Frederiksson explains that the implementation of a corporate language will probably not lead to more effective work activities, since employees need to change their daily professional language, need time to get used to it, need more time to make translations and to communicate in the corporate language if it is not their native

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language (410). Employees who have to communicate in a second language will be less efficient in their work than when communicating in their native language. Managers should also be aware of ''coping strategies'' of these employees and should create ''high levels of psychological safety, and promote high employee morale and group cohesion'' to decrease the negative consequences of these strategies (Beyene et al. 31). Non-native speakers of the corporate language should feel safe and comfortable when speaking the corporate language. Managers should therefore not underestimate the time that is needed to make sure that a change in (collective) thoughts, feelings of identity and language use in the organisation is created (Frederiksson 410).

To make sure that all employees develop sufficient corporate language skills, organisations should offer their employees support in intercultural misunderstandings by offering intercultural training (Varner and Beamer 88). *Local* employees should be offered language and intercultural training as well, because they need to adapt to ''the immigrant's culture''(Varner & Beamer 88). Organisations should not expect that international employees adapt completely in terms of language and culture and international organisations should express their international and intercultural character by paying attention to cultural differences and training (Varner and Beamer 88).

Andersen and Rasmussen explain that there are often no standard or ready-made solutions for language situations or language policies in international organisations (241). Each corporate language situation seems unique. The organisational culture plays an important role in the introduction and implementation of a corporate language. Spencer-Oatey and Franklin explain that ''organizations can be said to have their own culture in that they can have espoused or assumed values, established practices and procedures, behavioural conventions and so on'' (42). Besides, linguistic, non-linguistic and intercultural aspects also seem to play an important role in corporate language challenges. One of the most important steps in facing the language issue is to become aware of the problems that can be caused by languages (Andersen and Rasmussen 241). Organisations and managers do not always see how ''under investment in language skills and communication can lead to a lack of market shares,'' according to Andersen and Rasmussen (241). However, managers and organisations should invest time and resources in language management to prevent highly skilled employees from leaving the organisation (Andersen and Rasmussen 241).

At KIT, the communications department has become aware of the complexity of the language situation at their organisation, and people are willing to invest time and resources in language management to deal with the language challenges. The organisation is situated in Amsterdam and is internationally active in research and sustainable development projects in many countries over the world. As Varner and Beamer put it, ''international expansion goes hand in hand with the need to deal with different cultures in all aspects of the business. The question that managers must ask is when and to what extent the international orientation becomes critical and what the communication needs are at each stage'' (Varner & Beamer 410).

Within the organisation, two dominant languages are used, Dutch and English, and the number of Dutch speaking employees is much higher than the number of international and English speaking employees. Although the language situation of KIT seems to be less complex than in multinational companies with subsidiaries and offices in many countries, an analysis of the current language situation is needed and recommendations for a corporate language policy are desired.

The research question of this thesis is: *What is the current language situation regarding Dutch and English at KIT for internal and external communication and what recommendations can be made regarding a corporate language policy?*

Aspects that will be examined are:

- Existing (language) policies in the organisation
- The goal of a language policy for KIT and of other communication strategies
- The departments that are involved in the language situation
- The most important fields and problem areas that need to be analysed (internal and external communication)
- The attention to language in recruitment procedures
- Opinions and experiences of employees about the current language situation
- The way in which the languages in the organisation affect intercultural understanding and communication between international and Dutch speaking employees

3. *Case: Language Situation at The Royal Tropical Institute*

3.1. Organisation Structure

The Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam (KIT) is an international non-profit organisation that contributes to the fields of sustainable development, cultural preservation, knowledge, health, education and reduction of poverty worldwide (Royal Tropical Institute). KIT is internationally active in scientific research, training, consultancy and information services (Royal Tropical Institute). The organisation is also known for the Tropenmuseum and Tropentheater and collaborates with private, public, national and international partners.

KIT is a Dutch association and consists of several governing bodies, such as the Council of Members, the Supervisory Board and the one-headed Executive Board. The Executive Board is formed by the President of KIT. International experts in different fields of operation form the Supervisory Board of KIT.

In December 2011, 337 people worked at the organisation. The majority of these employees were working in Amsterdam; some employees were temporarily working abroad on international projects. At KIT, two types of departments can be distinguished: line departments and staff departments. The line departments focus on the most important products and services and the core activities of the organisation. These departments are Biomedical Research (BR), Development Policy & Practice (DEV), Information & Library Services (ILS), Tropenmuseum (TM) and Tropentheater (TT). Staff departments support the line departments in their activities and are formed by Finance & Control (F&C), Personnel, Organization & Information (PO&I), and Communication, Hospitality & Facilities (CH&F). All departments within KIT offer a wide range of different products and services, and have different target groups and (public) roles. The relatively high level of departmental authority and autonomy makes KIT an interesting organisation to analyse in terms of organisation type and structure, but also in terms of international employees, the language situation and recommendations for a corporate language policy. Besides the staff and line departments, KIT owns a holding that consists of multiple BVs (private companies). Former KIT- departments KIT Publishers BV (PB) and Intercultural Professionals BV (IP) developed into private companies some years ago, but are still closely connected to the organisation. Other BVs are KIT Hotel, Mali Biocarburant, Annona and Yiriwa. An overview of all governing bodies, departments and the KIT holding BV can be found in the organisation chart below. The organisation chart shows the KIT-departments and two private companies where the data collection for the research project took place:
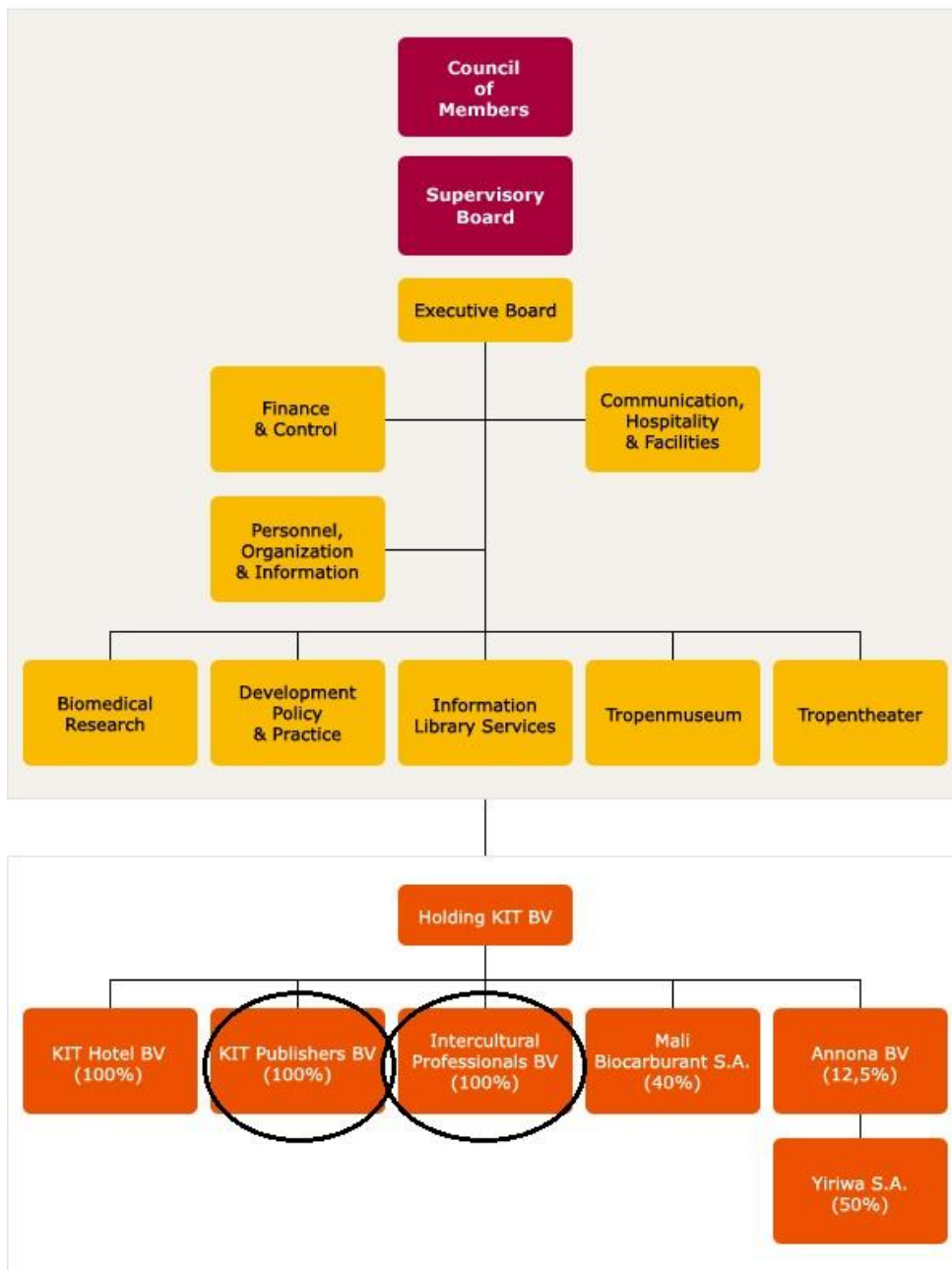
Fig. 2. Organisation chart KIT (Royal Tropical Institute)

When looking at Mintzberg's organisational decentralisation types, it seems that the most important decentralisation type of KIT is limited vertical decentralisation (133). Mintzberg explains that in limited vertical decentralisation, power is shared between the strategic top and managers (113). Departmental managers are able to make most decisions regarding their department (Mintzberg 113). Although the Executive Board makes final decisions on fundamental changes in departmental policies and has final authority regarding organisational decisions, departmental managers have quite some autonomy and authority regarding their own departments. Mintzberg argues that a variety of markets, products, services and target groups among departments leads to different units with authority (116).

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The differences between departments and the departmental authority and autonomy will probably affect the implementation of a corporate language policy. The different products, services, situations and target groups of the departments require specific recommendations and strategies to deal with the language situation at each department.

In the current language situation, the majority of the 337 employees is or speaks Dutch as a native or second language. The organisation also recruits and employs international experts from all over the world. These international employees function as advisors and researchers and speak English as their native or second language. Of the 337 employees, 15 employees[1] have very limited or no Dutch language skills and are not able to use and to understand Dutch in their professional activities.

Departments with international employees	Number of non-Dutch speaking employees per department
BR	4
DEV	9
ILS	1
TM	1

Fig. 3. Overview of the number of non-Dutch speaking employees per KIT-department

Most of these international employees mainly communicate in English in their daily activities and are working in international teams. Besides these 15 international employees, there are international staff members who communicate in English, but learnt to speak Dutch as well. Some of these employees prefer to use English, but can speak Dutch. Most international employees who are working at specific departments in the organisation do not have to learn Dutch for their professional activities, because most communication takes place in English. Despite the fact that there is an unequal proportion of non-Dutch speaking employees and international employees in the organisation, both English and Dutch are used for internal and external communication.

To deal with the linguistic and cultural diversity within the organisation, the document *Taalkwestie 2009* was drawn up.[2] *Taalkwestie* focuses on the language situation at KIT in 2009, on experiences of international employees and the way in which communication between Dutch speaking and international employees could be improved. *Taalkwestie* consists of some practical recommendations regarding translations, support of the human resources department and staff members to help international employees, and a Dutch language course. However, the recommendations are limited and these were not evaluated at the time.

Despite this attempt to improve the language situation and to deal with the language issue at KIT , the communications department still faces challenges with translations and inconsistency in

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[1] This number of employees is based on statistics of the human resources department.

[2] The document can be found in the appendix to this thesis.

language use for internal and external communication. Due to the unequal proportion of Dutch and non-Dutch speaking employees and the lack of a corporate language strategy, it is not always clear which language(s) should be used for different communication mediums. The communications department of the organisation aims to deal with the current language situation and to create a consistent language policy for internal and external communication. To examine the current language situation in the organisation and to give recommendations regarding a corporate language policy, linguistic and non-linguistic aspects will be analysed.

4. Method

The aim of the research is to analyse the current language situation and language use at KIT, and to examine experiences, attitudes and opinions of KIT-employees with regard to a corporate language and a language policy. The communications department aims to develop practical solutions to deal with the two prominent languages, Dutch and English, within the organisation and to meet the needs of Dutch and international employees. This research aims to give recommendations for the development of a corporate language policy and the use of Dutch and English for internal and external communication.

In this project, two different groups were studied: Dutch speaking employees and international employees. Dutch speaking employees at KIT are defined as employees who speak and understand Dutch at such a level that they can use Dutch in their professional activities and do not need another language to communicate. English speaking employees, on the other hand, are defined as employees who do not speak Dutch as their native language and who do not have sufficient Dutch language skills to understand all corporate information in Dutch. They need another language to communicate at KIT. The research project also focuses on the intercultural interaction of two different groups (Dutch speaking and international employees). The study of these groups can be seen as culture-comparative approach, in which ''data [are] obtained independently from two or more different cultural groups and is compared for its similarities and differences'' according to Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (266). However, the group of English speaking employees consists of people from different countries, who have different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and generalisations about this group should be avoided. Culture-interactional research, on the other hand, focuses on the results and consequences of interaction between ''two different cultural groups'' (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin 266). Elements of culture-interactional research can also be found in this research project, since the current language situation and recommendations for a possible language strategy are a result of the interaction between Dutch speaking employees and international employees (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin 266).

4.1.   Data Collection

The data collection took place in all departments of the organisation, including two BVs that are part of the holding of the organisation. [3] Boeije argues that triangulation of methods and of researchers, member validation and method justification increase the reliability of research (275). Several methods

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[3] An overview of all departments and BVs can be found in the organisation chart on page 20.

have been used to ensure the reliability and the validity of the research project. Triangulation of research methods was created by a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The validity of qualitative research is mainly based on the interpretations of the researcher and the way in which these interpretations are explained and justified, according to Boeije (276). Member validation was created with a transcription of the interviews. In this chapter, a clear description of the research methods is given to increase the validity of the research.

4.1.1. Participant Observation (Qualitative Data)

In the first phase of the research, observations of the organisation, its culture and employees were made during the first weeks of a three month internship at KIT from February until May 2012. Spradley explains that ''participant observation is a method in which a researcher takes place in the daily activities, rituals, interactions and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture'' (1). In this research project, qualitative research was used to define and to understand the perspective of the participants and the KIT-employees. The most important techniques that were used to collect data, were conversations and small talk with different colleagues from the corporate communications department and other departments. Furthermore, weekly meetings with the corporate communication section and internal meetings for all employees organised by the Executive Board were attended and notes were taken. Participant observation was used to be able to describe, interpret and to explain behaviour and experiences of KIT-employees at different departments. During the participant observation, an inventory of communication mediums of KIT was made. Some of the communication mediums were suggested by the communications department as problem areas regarding the use of Dutch and English, and other aspects were defined as a result of the observations. These aspects formed the basis for the questionnaires and interviews.

4.1.2. Questionnaires (Quantitative Data)

The quantitative element of the research consisted of a questionnaire in Dutch and in English to examine the use of English and Dutch by all employees and to collect their opinion and experiences regarding the language situation.

Dutch and English questionnaire

Target groups	All Dutch speaking KIT employees
	All English speaking KIT employees
Departments	All KIT departments (DEV, BR, ILS, TM, TT, F&C, PO&I, CH&F)
	KIT Publishers BV
	KIT Intercultural Professionals BV

Type of questions	Open
	Semi-open
	Closed

Fig.4. Overview of Dutch and English questionnaire

The target population of the research were all 337 employees of the organisation, including employees of the BVs KIT Intercultural Professionals and KIT Publishers. The employees of these BVs were also invited to fill out the survey because they are closely connected to the organisation and the language situation. Because of the different linguistic backgrounds of the employees, the questionnaire was set up in Dutch and in English, consisting of almost the same questions. English speaking employees were invited to fill out the English version and Dutch speaking employees were invited to complete the Dutch questionnaire. However, since there were also some employees who mainly spoke English but also had some knowledge of Dutch, some English speaking employees may have filled out the Dutch version or that Dutch speaking employees have completed the English version.

The aspects found in the first phase of the research by participant observation formed the basis for the surveys and the questions. The questions were divided into three main categories: (1) general background information, (2) internal communication and (3) external communication. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of questions about general characteristics and background information of the respondents, such as age, gender, working years and position in the organisation (Boeije 232). For example, questions in the questionnaires focused on the corporate language of KIT, how often Dutch and English are used by employees and to what extent they would be willing to change their language use and behaviour. Other questions focused on language use at internal meetings, (cultural) misunderstandings with colleagues, the corporate image and documents that employees would like to see translated into English. The complete questionnaires with all questions can be found in the appendix to this thesis.

Both questionnaires consisted of open, semi-open and closed questions. For the closed questions, answer categories were given and participants were asked to choose the answer that represented their point of view or opinion best. Several statements were given and participants were asked to choose on a scale from one to five, from ''totally disagree'' to ''totally agree''. The questions were discussed and checked by the internal communications advisor, and multiple versions were created. Furthermore, the questionnaire was tested by a communications colleague and final adjustments were made. The questionnaire was created with an online tool and was available through a hyperlink. Web surveys work fast, help to avoid mistakes and make it possible to examine and check the collected data, according to Boeije (221).

Boeije argues that a communication strategy is required when a questionnaire is used as data collection method (239). In the communication strategy, it should be defined how people will be approached and invited to fill out the questionnaire, and what steps need to be taken in case of non-response (Boeije 239). A week before publication of the questionnaires, employees were informed about the research activities and the questionnaires. Messages on the intranet were published to explain the purpose of the research and to ask for participation. When the questionnaires became available online, news messages in Dutch and English were published on the intranet with a direct hyperlink to the questionnaire. One week later, the *recall strategy* was used to invite more respondents (Boeije 239). In the recall strategy, the target population is informed about the purpose of the research and invited again to fill out the survey (Boeije 240). The questionnaires were available online for three weeks.

4.1.3. Semi-structured Interviews (Qualitative Data)

Semi-structured interviews were part of the qualitative research as well. In this part, data collection was alternated with analysis of the data, in a so-called cyclic process (Boeije 259). Although researchers usually decide who will be interviewed after the analysis of the first interviews, due to a strict planning and time limit of the data collection phase, all interview participants were invited before the analysis started. In other words, due to the limit, the interview questions were designed before the results of the questionnaires could be analysed. However, the topics and questions of the interviews regarding the use of English and Dutch, internal and external communication, level of English, miscommunications, language use in meetings and the use of other languages, corresponded to the topics of the questionnaires. To find and to select participants for the interviews, employees were selected with purposive sampling (Boeije 261). It was decided to interview two employees per department. Since the communications department was closely involved in the research, no employees were interviewed from this department. Because employees from the two BVs were also invited to fill out the questionnaire, these departments were also included in the purpose sampling of the interviews. However, because KIT Publishers only consists of three employees, one participant was selected at this department. An overview of the positions, sex and working and interview language of the interviewees can be found in figure 5 below.

	Department	Position	Working and interview Language	Sex
1	DEV	Middle Manager	Dutch	Male
2	DEV	Senior Advisor	English	Female
3	BR	Middle Manager	Dutch	Female
4	BR	Advisor	English	Male

5	ILS	Middle Manager	Dutch	Female
6	ILS	Advisor	English	Male
7	TM	Middle Manager	Dutch	Male
8	TM	PR & Communications Employee	Dutch	Female
9	TT	Middle Manager	Dutch	Male
10	TT	PR & Communications Employee	Dutch	Female
11	F&C	Middle Manager	Dutch	Female
12	F&C	Financial Controller	Dutch	Male
13	PO&I	Middle Manager	Dutch	Female
14	PO&I	ICT Controller	Dutch	Male
15	IP	Intercultural Trainer	Dutch	Male
16	IP	Back Office Employee	Dutch	Female
17	PUB	Back Office Employee	Dutch	Male

Fig.5. Overview of interviewees per department

The interviewees were selected with purposive sampling. Boeije explains that different strategies can be used for purposive sampling (261). A typical unit is used to examine the average of a group of people (Boeije 261). For the qualitative interviews at KIT, employees with average job positions were selected to compare the results of the average employees with the results of the questionnaires. Because of the limited number of international employees at KIT, the job positions of non-Dutch speaking formed the basis for the purposive sampling. Positions of the international employees included middle management and advisory job descriptions and would represent an average of the functions in the organisation. The selection criteria for the participants included: one male and one female per department, one participant from middle management and one participant with another function, two participants from different sub departments or (research) teams, and if possible, one English speaking employee and one Dutch speaking employee per department. On the basis of these selection criteria participants have been chosen and invited personally to participate in the interviews. An open performance was used to ask people to participate and to inform them about the purpose of the research (Boeije 266). Both Dutch- and English speaking employees were interviewed (Boeije 261). Because of the unequal proportion of Dutch and international employees, four of the 17 interviews took place in English and 13 interviews were conducted in Dutch. All Dutch speaking employees preferred to speak in Dutch and all international employees preferred to use English. In other words, all interviews were conducted in the language that was easiest for the interviewee. The type of interview that was used in the research is a semi-structured or qualitative interview, in which the contents of the interview and sequence of the questions are somewhat clear in advance, but can be adjusted per interview (Boeije 267). Because of the variety in activities and positions of employees, a semi-structued interview was helpful and made it possible to focus on specific questions. The relevance of the interview questions depended on the departments of the interviewees, the number of years they worked at the organisation and the way in which they dealt with the language situation. All interviews were recorded and transcribed, and transcriptions were sent to the interviewees to make

sure that all information was approved by the interview participants. Boeije defines this process as a member check (275).

Besides the 17 interviews with Dutch and international staff members, two other interviews were conducted for other purposes. First of all, an interview with an advisor of the human resources department was held to gain more insight into the recruitment processes and background of international employees. Secondly, the communications manager was interviewed regarding the organisation type and structure.

5. Results

In this chapter, the findings of the three data collection methods will be presented. Chapter 5 uses the same structure as the method chapter. The results of all three research methods will be presented in sections regarding internal communication and external communication. These two sections formed the basis of the questions of the questionnaires and interviews in the data collection phase and are divided into specific subtopics.

5.1. Participant Observation

The participant observation led to several findings. In the observation phase of the research, several communication tools and problem areas regarding the use of Dutch and English at KIT were analysed. The participant observation method was used to make an inventory of the use of Dutch and English in different communication tools, and to see whether both languages were used consistently. Problem areas were defined and were used for the questionnaire and interview questions. Furthermore, an inventory was made of three documents and KIT policies that were relevant for the language situation and the research.

5.1.1. Internal Communication

The following observations that were made regarding internal communication will be discussed below:

1. *Taalkwestie 2009*
2. *Schrijfwijzer* (Writer's Guide).
3. *The International Staff Document*
4. Social report
5. Dutch and English version of the intranet
6. KIT meetings or information sessions for all employees.

Several observations regarding internal communication were made. First of all, *Taalkwestie 2009* was a small internal research into the language situation at KIT in 2009. *Taalkwestie 2009* consists of some recommendations to improve the communication between Dutch speaking and international employees. The document can be found in the appendix to this thesis.

The Schrijfwijzer (Writer's Guide) of KIT is used for all corporate communication in English. The document consists of guidelines for the use of British English as the corporate English language

variety and guidelines for British English spelling, grammar, syntax and lexicon. The document also consists of KIT communication media and general information about writing texts according to the organisation's corporate style. The most recent version of the *Writer's Guide* dates from 2007.

Furthermore, the *International Staff Document* was created by the human resources department for the recruitment of new international employees. The document describes procedures and rights of international employees at KIT, such as the possibility to take a Dutch language course.

The social report is written in Dutch because it consists of annual internal corporate information for KIT employees. Because the majority of the workforce speaks Dutch, the document is only available in Dutch.

The KIT intranet is available in Dutch and English. Most information is in Dutch, but translations and summaries are available in English as well. However, not all intranet pages are translated into English, since they are not relevant for the English speaking employees.

During the observations, an internal meeting for all employees was attended to see how Dutch and English speaking employees are informed and which language(s) were used. The meeting took place in Dutch because the majority of the audience could speak Dutch. However, at the beginning of the meeting the President of the Executive Board asked whether international employees were present and whether these people would be able to understand Dutch. Because some international employees, who did not understand Dutch, also attended the meeting, the presenter gave a summary in English after the Dutch PowerPoint slides. However, some summaries or translations were forgotten by the presenter or interrupted by the Dutch audience, because people started talking during these summaries.

5.1.2. External Communication

The following observations regarding external communication were made and will be discussed below:

6. Digital newsletters:
   - KIT Update (Dutch version)
   - KIT Insight (English version)
7. Annual report
8. Social media
9. Dutch and English version of the corporate website kit.nl
10. News items (internally and externally)

For external communication, some observations have been made as well. At KIT, two different types of corporate digital newsletters are used: (1) KIT Update (Dutch version) and (2) KIT Insight (English version). During the observations, it became clear that the Dutch version of the digital newsletter was regularly sent to all KIT stakeholders, while the English version had not been sent for several years. However, the English version was sent again during the observations phase.

The observations further showed that the annual report of KIT always appeared in English, because it focuses on an international audience and KIT's international target groups. The annual report is also sent to international partners and clients.

KIT has different accounts for social media. There are some corporate accounts for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, but also accounts for departments and project of KIT. The language situation also led to challenges for the corporate social media accounts, because only a few characters are allowed for news messages in social media. In other words, messages need to be published in one language due to the limited characters. The question is which language(s) should be used for these social media accounts.

On the corporate website, most information is available in Dutch and English. However, because some KIT departments mainly work with international partners and stakeholders, some of this departmental information is only available in English, and is not available in Dutch. On the other hand, some corporate information is mainly available in Dutch, and summarised in English.

Other observations were made regarding the news items for internal and external communication. Most news items on the intranet and the corporate website are published in Dutch and English. However, not all news messages appeared in two languages. An analysis of the published news items in Dutch and English on the intranet and the corporate website showed that some translated news messages were published several hours or days later than the original news message in Dutch. Furthermore, news items that were published on the intranet did not always have a link or switch between the original and translated news message. In the content management system[4] of the website, there is a button to link the original message with the translated text. The translations into English were made, but these were not always visible for all employees.

5.2. Questionnaires

Statistics of the human resources department show that of the 337 employees, only 15 (international) employees have no or very limited Dutch language skills. Although the target group of the Dutch questionnaire was Dutch speaking employees, the results showed that the Dutch version was also

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[4] A content management system is a operating system of a website in which texts can be added or changes can be made.

filled out by some English speaking employees who were able to understand the questionnaire in Dutch. Of the 322 employees who have native or sufficient Dutch language skills, 87 employees filled out the Dutch questionnaire. Item non-response was found in the Dutch questionnaire, since two Dutch respondents only filled out the first questions and did not answer the rest of the questions. These two participants were therefore left out the data. In total, 27% of the organisation's Dutch speaking workforce participated in the questionnaire and their answers were used for the analysis.

Of the 15 international employees who have no or very limited Dutch language skills, six employees (40%) filled out the English version of the questionnaire. Because the number of international employees who do not have Dutch language skills is relatively small compared to the total number of Dutch employees, it is difficult to generalise and to draw conclusions about a limited number of respondents. However, the outcomes of the English questionnaire give some insight into the language situation and experiences of international staff.

In this section, the most important findings of the Dutch and English questionnaire will be given. The results are divided into two main sections: (1) internal communication and (2) external communication. These sections include several subsections. The complete results of the questionnaires can be found in the appendix to this thesis.

5.2.1. Internal Communication

Corporate Language(s)

Respondents of the Dutch and English questionnaires were asked about their language use to examine which language(s) are most frequently used by the employees in their professional activities. Figure 6 gives an overview of the languages that are most frequently used by employees who filled out the Dutch questionnaire:
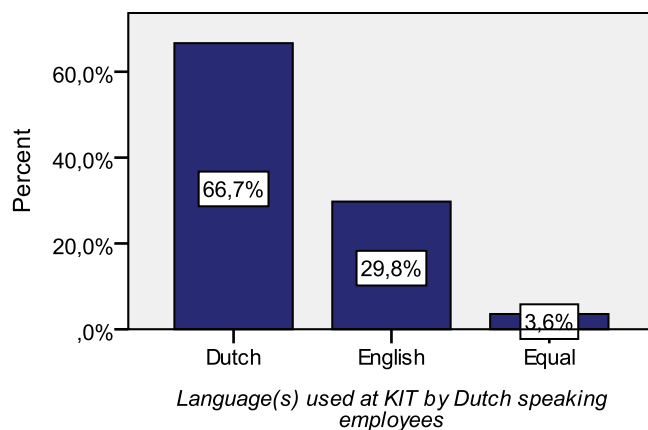

Language(s) used at KIT by Dutch speaking employees

Fig.6. Language(s) most frequently used by Dutch speaking KIT employees

Of the Dutch respondents, 66.7% mainly used Dutch and 29.8% used English most frequently in their daily activities. Only 3.6% of the Dutch employees answered that they used both English and Dutch on an equal basis. Although the majority of the Dutch speaking respondents mainly used Dutch in their professional activities, still a remarkable percentage of the respondents stated that they used English more than Dutch. In the English questionnaire, all respondents used English mostly in their working activities.

To examine the level and proficiency in English of Dutch speaking employees, Dutch respondents were asked to define their level of English. This level of English is based on employees' own assessment. Figure 7 gives an overview of the level of English by Dutch speaking employees:

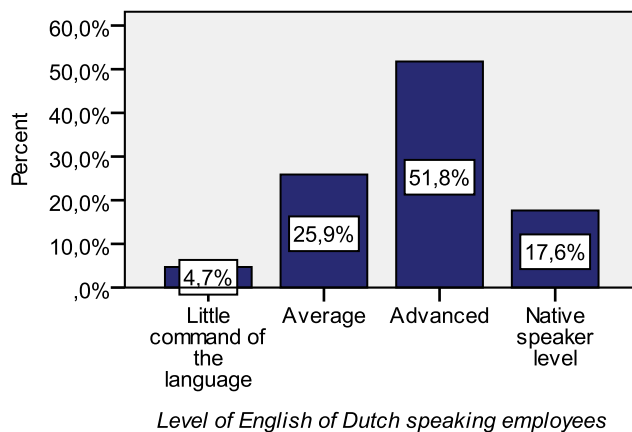*Level of English of Dutch speaking employees*

Fig.7. Level of English of Dutch speaking KIT employees

Dutch speaking employees felt they have a good command of English. 51.8% answered that their English is advanced and that they feel comfortable when speaking English. 17.6% of the Dutch speaking employees claimed to have developed native skills and proficiency in English and 25.9% of the employees claimed to have average knowledge of the language. Only 4.7% thought they have limited command of the language.

The majority of the Dutch respondents indicated that they use English on a daily basis (54.1%) or several times per week (18.8%). 10.6% stated that they use English once a week or occasionally, and 3.5% used English once per month. 2.4% of the Dutch respondents stated they never use English in their professional activities. The results showed that there are more Dutch speaking employees who used English often in their daily activities (72.9%) than employees who used the language occasionally or never (16.5%). Figure 8 shows the level of English of English speaking KIT employees (based on their own assessment):
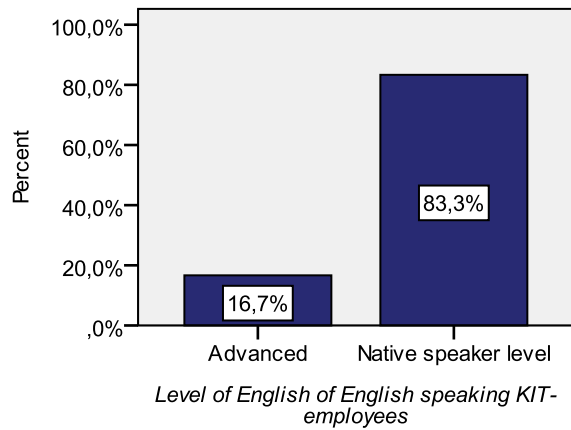
31

Fig. 8. Level of English of English speaking KIT employees

Of the international employees, 83.3% answered that they are able to communicate in English as a native speaker, and 16.7% claimed to have advanced command of the language.

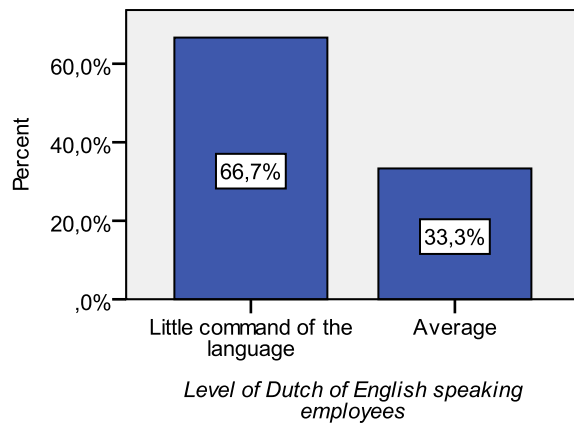Figure 9 shows the level of Dutch of English speaking respondents:

Fig. 9. Level of Dutch of English speaking KIT employees

The majority of the international respondents (66.7%) had little command of Dutch and 33.3% had average knowledge of Dutch. 66.6% communicated occasionally or never in Dutch. In another question, 16.7% of the English respondents answered that they use Dutch every day and 16.7% use Dutch several times per week.

Figure 10 gives an overview of the preferred corporate language(s) for internal communication of Dutch speaking employees:
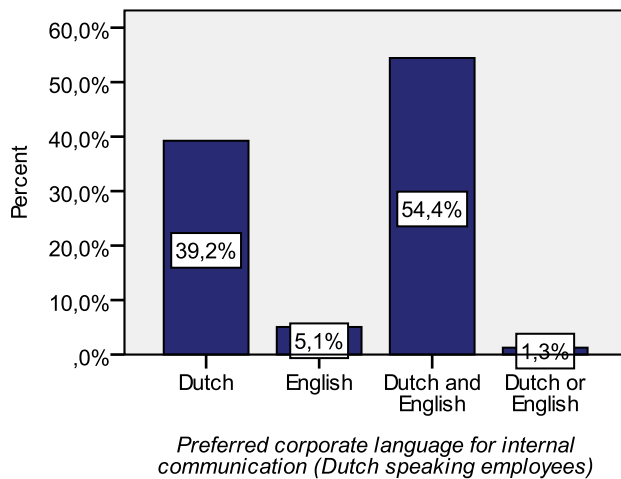
Fig. 10. The preferred corporate language for internal communication according to Dutch speaking employees

The majority of the Dutch respondents (54.4%) felt that both Dutch and English should be used as corporate language for internal communication. A remarkably high number of employees (39.2%) answered that Dutch should be the single corporate language for internal communication, and only 5.1% felt that the organisation should use English as the single corporate language for internal communication.

In figure 11, the preferred corporate language(s) for internal communication of English speaking employees is presented:
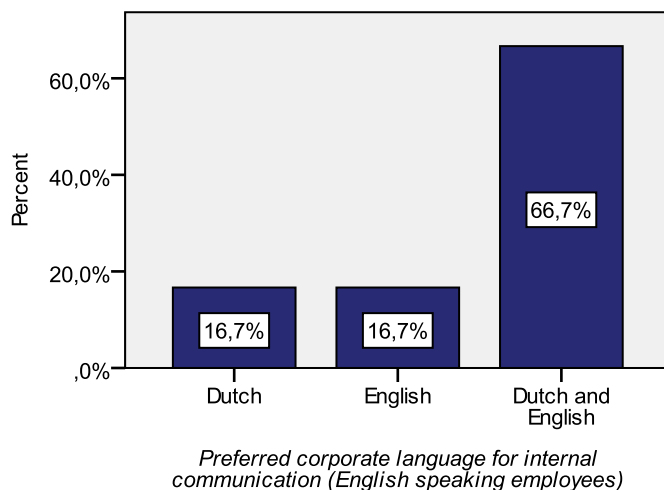

Fig. 11. The preferred corporate language for internal communication according to English speaking employees

It is interesting to see that of the English respondents, only 16.7% felt that English should be the single corporate language for internal communication, while 66.7% wanted to use both English and

Dutch for internal communication. A clear majority of both Dutch and international employees felt that English and Dutch should be used for internal communication.

Internal KIT meetings for all Employees

To see in which way information sessions or general meetings for all Dutch and internal employees could be structured in terms of language, respondents of the questionnaires were asked about their experiences of these meetings. In the questionnaires, seven options were given to deal with Dutch and English these meetings. All options and scores are presented in figure 12 below.
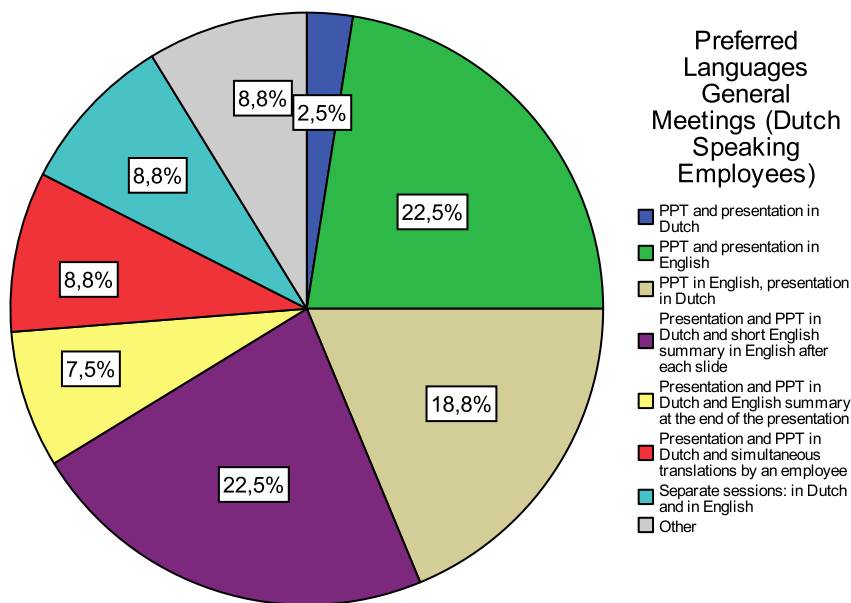

Fig. 12. The way in which Dutch and English should be used at general internal KIT meetings according to Dutch speaking employees

The most popular options with equal scores (both 22.5%) are to use English PowerPoint slides and to give the oral presentation in English, or to give the oral presentation in Dutch with Dutch slides and a short summary in English after each slide. 18.8% of the Dutch survey respondents felt that meetings should be held in Dutch with English PowerPoint slides. The many different preferences and variety in answers show that Dutch speaking employees have different opinions about this issue. It is interesting to see that 22.5% of the Dutch speaking employees felt that these sessions must be held in English and that only 2.5% of the Dutch speaking respondents preferred that the session will be held completely in Dutch.

The results of the English questionnaire regarding the use of Dutch and English for internal KIT meetings can be found in figure 13:
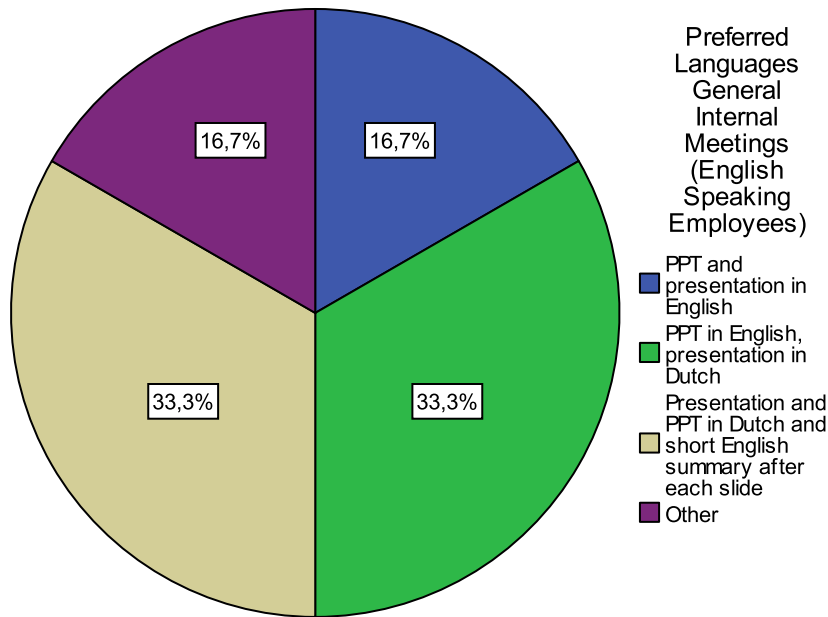
Fig. 13. The way in which Dutch and English should be used at general internal KIT meetings according to Dutch speaking employees

The results of the English questionnaire are quite similar; the most popular options of the English questionnaire are an oral presentation in Dutch with Dutch PowerPoint slides and a short summary in English after each slide (33.3%), or English PowerPoint slides with the oral presentation in Dutch (33.3%). The most popular option for both Dutch and international employees is to have the oral presentation in Dutch and to use Dutch PowerPoint slides, with a short summary in English after these slides.

Only 16.7% of the English respondents felt the that English PowerPoint slides should be used and that the oral presentation should also be given in English, while the majority of the Dutch respondents (22.5%) felt that the presentation and PowerPoint slides should be in English. None of the English speaking respondents wanted to organise two separate sessions, while 8.8% of the Dutch respondents felt that separate sessions ensure that English speaking staff is informed. However, the English speaking staff felt that a summary in English or English PowerPoint slides are sufficient.

Miscommunications

To see to what extent and in which way the different linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the employees affect the communication between Dutch and English speaking staff, respondents of the questionnaires were asked about any possible miscommunications they experienced. Figure 14 shows the percentage of employees who experienced a form of miscommunication with a KIT-colleague caused by linguistic or cultural differences:
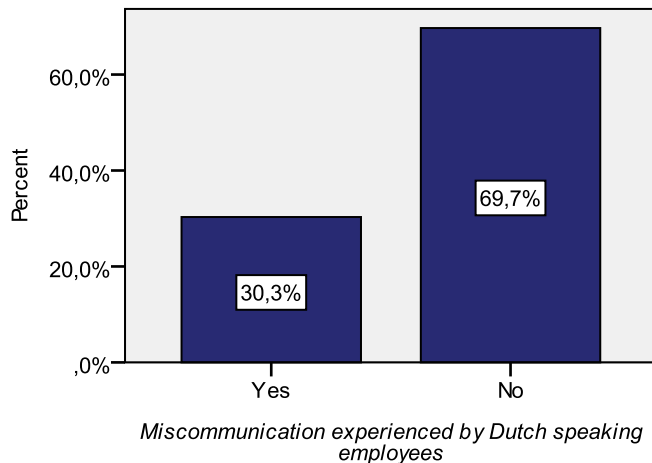
Fig. 14. Percentage of Dutch speaking KIT-employees who experienced miscommunication at KIT

30.3% of the respondents answered that they did experience miscommunication in their activities at the organisation and 54.1% of the respondents did not experience any miscommunication. However, also some question non-response was found at this question, because 22.4% of the respondents did not answer the question. Because these respondents did not answer the question and did not give an example of a miscommunication, it could be argued that they did not experience a miscommunication at KIT.

Examples of miscommunications that were given by Dutch respondents related to the exclusion of English speaking employees when communication takes place in Dutch and when non-Dutch speaking colleagues do not understand the main communication message. Respondents also mentioned that people might feel excluded at internal meetings or information sessions. Dutch speaking respondents explained that communication of the human resources department and specific documents are not translated into English, and led to miscommunication. Respondents gave examples of miscommunication caused by a lack of English language proficiency of some Dutch employees. They also mentioned that some employees know different jargon of specific scientific or business fields, and because not all employees know the same jargon, miscommunications may take place.

Figure 15 shows the percentage of international respondents who experienced a form of miscommunication based on cultural and linguistic differences at KIT:
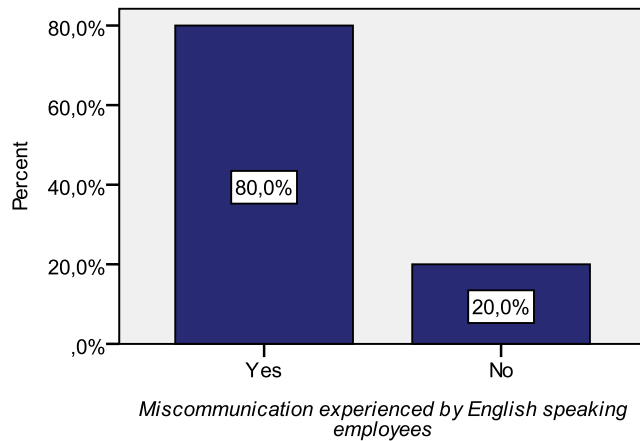
Fig. 15. Percentage of English speaking KIT-employees who experienced miscommunication at KIT

80% of the English speaking survey respondents gave examples of miscommunications they experienced in their professional activities, such as the time it took to translate things such as a Word template or documents from Dutch into English. English speaking respondents also explained that full participation in corporate communication and activities is less effective due to the language barrier. Some examples that were given by English speaking respondents did not directly refer to miscommunications. However, an international respondent explained that her level of Dutch is often overestimated by Dutch colleagues. Dutch colleagues might think that communication in Dutch is understood by the English speaking staff while this is not the case. The pace, details and metaphors of the Dutch language are difficult to understand and do sometimes lead to miscommunications.

In the Dutch questionnaire, many different suggestions were given to improve the use of English and Dutch for internal communication. The wide variety of answers shows that employees have different opinions about this issue. Multiple Dutch speaking respondents mentioned the need for an internal translator or communications employee who is a native speaker of English or who is trained in English. This communications employee will guarantee the quality of the translations and could be consulted for translations. Some Dutch respondents felt that there already is a clear language strategy within the organisation and that it is not necessary to make more arrangements on this topic.

English speaking respondents also gave different suggestions to improve the language situation at KIT. It seems that English speaking employees understand that Dutch is more frequently used for internal communication than English, since the majority of the staff are and speak Dutch. English speaking employees explained that they do not always require complete translations, but that they would appreciate summaries or conclusions in English. They mentioned, however, that if the organisation claims to be an international organisation and employs international staff, that the organisation's management should be aware of the consequences of hiring internationally. The

management should be aware of the time needed to make translations and to include international employees in the organisation.

All Dutch and English speaking employees were asked about organisational information and documents that they would like to see translated into English. The most important documents for internal communication according to the Dutch speaking respondents, are news-items on the intranet (24.8%), computer and ID instructions for new employees (24.2%), the minutes of the worker's council, (19.0%), the pay check (17.0%) and the menu of the day (9.8%). Other suggestions included personal development documents, function names in e-signatures and information concerning activities of the human resources department. Some Dutch speaking respondents argued that English translations should be limited, while others argued that it is important to translate all corporate internal information into English.

Results of the English questionnaire show that for internal communication, 50% of the English speaking respondents would like to see the minutes of the worker's council and the pay check available in English. Furthermore, news-items and the computer ID instructions (25%) should also be translated into English. It was also suggested to translate employment terms and Human Resources information.

The questionnaires show that 75.9% of the Dutch respondents and 66.7% of the English respondents are not aware of the *Writer's Guide*.

5.2.2. External Communication

When looking at the preferences of employees with respect to the official corporate language(s) for external communication, a difference between the Dutch and English speaking participants can be observed. Figure 15 shows the preferred corporate language(s) for external communication of Dutch speaking respondents:
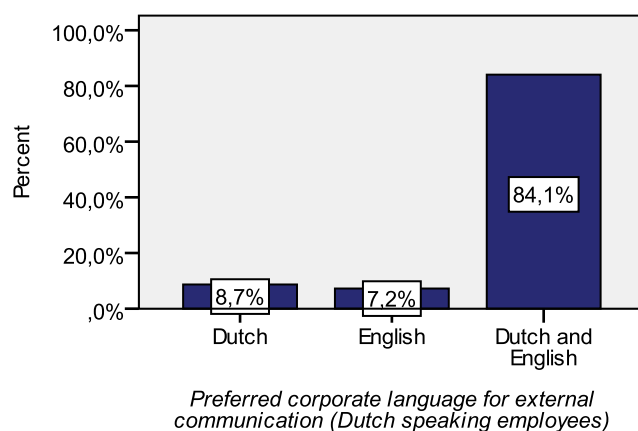

Fig. 15. The preferred corporate language(s) for external communication of Dutch speaking employees

Most Dutch speaking respondents (84.1%) preferred to use Dutch and English for external communication. 8.7% of the respondents felt that Dutch should be used for external communication and 7.2% preferred to use English as the single external corporate language.

Figure 16 shows the opinion of English speaking employees regarding the corporate language(s) for external communication:
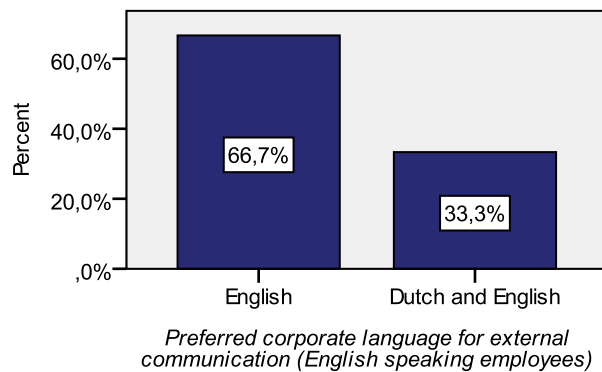

Fig. 16. The preferred corporate language(s) for external communication of English speaking employees

The majority of the English speaking staff (66.7%) felt that English should be the only official corporate language for external communication and 33.3% thought that both Dutch and English should be used as external corporate languages.

For external communication, flyers (24%), press releases (21.8%), online news items (20.7%), social media messages (16.2%) and the corporate newsletter (14.5%) should be translated into English according to the Dutch speaking respondents. It was also suggested to translate the word and e-mail format and to translate all information for non-Dutch target groups.

There are some differences between the scores of the Dutch and English questionnaires on this topic. The Dutch respondents felt that news-items on the intranet and computer ID instructions are the most important documents to translate into English, while the English respondents answered that the minutes of the worker's council meetings and the pay check are most important. It is also interesting to see that none of the English respondents thought that the menu of the day should be translated into English, while 9.8% of the Dutch speaking employees thought that a translated menu would be useful for their international colleagues. The Dutch speaking respondents felt that flyers are important communication tools that need to be translated, while the English respondents paid less attention to flyers. Both respondent groups preferred press releases and news items on the corporate website to be translated into English.

Suggestions given by English speaking respondents to improve the language situation at KIT, relate to the quality of English translations for external communication. [5] These respondents stressed the importance of an ''in-house'' corporate communications employee who is a native speaker of English or who is trained in the language, and who can edit and translate texts from all departments to ensure that all translations are of good quality and have been checked from a linguistic and communicative perspective. English respondents explained that a communications officer could take over work from employees who speak English as a native language and who function as language nodes. In this way, high quality translations will optimise the corporate image.

Focus International Press and Audience

Both Dutch and English speaking respondents felt that the organisation should focus more on an international audience and press. Figure 17 shows the percentages of Dutch speaking respondents:
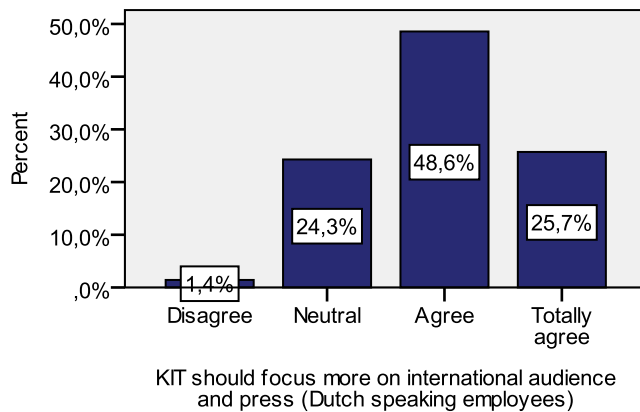
Fig. 17. The opinion of Dutch speaking employees about the focus on an internal audience and press.

74.3% of the Dutch speaking respondents felt that the organisation should focus more on an international audience and press. Only 1.4% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and 24.3% did not have an opinion about this topic. The percentages of the English speaking respondents can be found in figure 18 below:

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[5]Due to a strict planning and time limit, the quality of the English translations at KIT was not studied in this project

Fig. 18. The opinion of English speaking employees about the focus of KIT on an international audience and press.

The majority of the English speaking respondents (66.7%) felt that more attention should be paid to the international press and audience of the organisation. 16.7% did not have an opinion about this topic and 16.7% disagreed with the statement. It is interesting to see that of both respondent groups, only a small number of respondents thought that the organisation should not focus m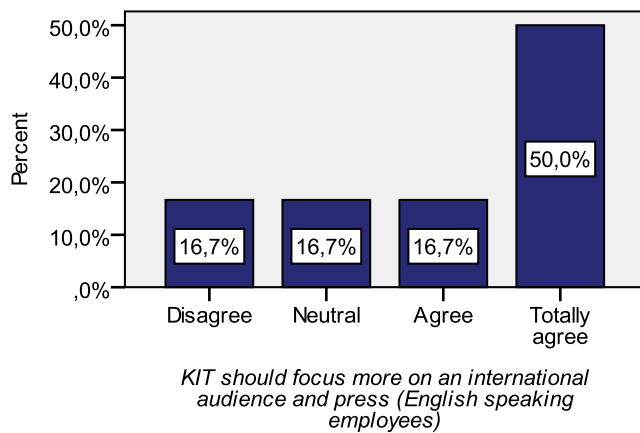ore on an international audience and press. Both respondent groups agreed on the topic and the majority felt that more attention should be paid to an international audience and press.

5.3. Interviews

5.3.1. Internal Communication

Corporate Language(s)

The majority of the Dutch interview participants explained that they have developed good skills in English and that they spend 15% of their working in English. Dutch speaking interviewees who work at departments in which English is more commonly used, automatically used English more frequently. Employees explained that their passive knowledge (listening and reading) is often more developed than their active language knowledge (speaking and writing). It is interesting to see that 11 of the 13 Dutch speaking interviewees answered that they would be able to understand all corporate information in English without Dutch translations. Seven of the 13 Dutch interviewees would not be interested in improving their English language skills by taking a course, because they felt they have sufficient knowledge of the language. Three of them already took a course in English and three employees would be interested in an English language course. These results correspond to the outcomes of the Dutch questionnaire, in which Dutch speaking employees answered that they have developed good English skills, and that they speak English at advanced or native speaker level.

The four English interview participants were asked about their Dutch language skills. Two of them answered that they think they understand corporate information in Dutch because they took a

course in Dutch and have developed some passive language skills. However, they clearly preferred English for important corporate information, because it is easier to understand English. Identity issues also play an important role. Two English speaking interviewees argued that they are not able to understand Dutch, but that they would be interested in taking a course to learn the basics of the language. Both employees started working at KIT less than two years ago and should have been offered a Dutch language course according to the policy for international employees, the *International Staff Document*. However, both interviewees stated that they were not aware of the possibility to take a course in Dutch. One English speaking interviewee said about a Dutch language course ''I think it would have been nice if there was a kind of guidance to that through KIT, if they recruit people from outside, I think that should be part of the introduction.''

Dutch interview participants gave other suggestions regarding the internal corporate language(s) than the respondents of the questionnaires. While the Dutch speaking respondents preferred Dutch and English to be the internal corporate languages, the majority of the Dutch interviewees felt that Dutch should be used for internal communication. Some Dutch speaking interviewees mentioned that mainly Dutch should be used and that English translations should only be made if necessary. Other Dutch interviewees suggested to use both Dutch and English for internal communication, and some interviewees did not have a clear preference. Some mentioned a strong preference for Dutch. Most interviewees mentioned that they want to use the language that is the easiest to use.

The majority of the English interviewees preferred English for internal communication. One international interviewee mentioned that for internal communication, both Dutch and English should be used. This interviewee said ''I think they have to be bilingual. For internal communication, it is not fully bilingual. But I can still understand that, because quite a number of people working in services that are not connected to scientific work are not all fluent in English. And that is a challenge.'' Another international employee felt that Dutch should be used as the internal language because the majority of the workforce speaks Dutch. However, English speaking employees mentioned the complexity of the issue. Some international employees are working at KIT for a short period of time and do not have the time to learn Dutch in their professional or free time. The majority of the international staff does not have to use Dutch frequently in their professional activities, since they are working in international teams and projects. Although international employees seem to be aware of the complexity of the language issue and the proportion of Dutch and English speaking employees, three out of four English speaking interviewees felt that the organisation should be aware of the consequences of hiring and recruiting people internationally. If the organisation aims to recruit international experts, it is important that these international employees are able to communicate in English and feel welcome and valued in the organisation. However, one interview participant

mentioned that the language and communication problems encountered at work were relatively small compared to challenges faced in day-to-day life (such as setting up a bank account in Dutch).

Skills New Employees

To examine whether new Dutch and international KIT-employees are tested on English skills and proficiency during recruitment processes, all 17 interviewees were asked about their experiences. The interviews showed that none of the interview participants was tested on their English skills or knowledge during their recruitment processes. Although some of the interviewees answered that they might have been tested because the interviews were in English, they did not have to pass a language test. It is interesting to see that neither Dutch nor non-Dutch speaking employees were tested on their level of English or Dutch. It can be assumed that people who apply for jobs in international functions or positions speak English at such level that they would be able to work in international teams and departments.

Internal KIT- meetings for all Employees

Dutch speaking interviewees have varying opinions about the use of Dutch and English in general internal KIT-meetings for all employees. This corresponds with the outcomes of the questionnaires. Some Dutch speaking interviewees are satisfied with the use of Dutch and English in these meetings, but others see room for improvement. The most popular option according to the Dutch speaking interviewees is to give the oral presentation in Dutch and to use Dutch PowerPoint slides, with a summary in English after each slide, similarly to the outcomes of the Dutch questionnaire. One Dutch interviewee explained that if the session will be held in English, Dutch people would feel excluded. Another possibility mentioned by four Dutch speaking interviewees is to translate simultaneously with headphones, but they explained that simultaneous translations would be difficult due to financial and practical restrictions. Other Dutch interviewees suggested using English slides and speaking in Dutch, or organising two separate sessions. It was also suggested that all attendees should use their own language and could ask questions in their own language, or that the English speaking attendees would receive a hard copy (a hand-out) before the meeting. Overall, the majority of the Dutch interviewees felt that these sessions must be held mainly in Dutch because of the many Dutch speaking employees who attend the meetings, and the fact that not all employees have sufficient skills and proficiency in English to understand all complex financial and judicial information in English. However, Dutch employees felt that it is important to pay attention to English translations as well to make sure that their English speaking colleagues feel informed and welcome at these meetings. One Dutch interviewee mentioned ''I always feel a little sorry for the English speaking employees who attend these meetings, because there is only a short summary given in English. Maybe a separate

session for English speaking colleagues should be organised.'' [6] Overall, Dutch employees seemed to be aware of the exclusion of international employees. The results of the Dutch questionnaire also showed that Dutch respondents were aware of the exclusion of their international colleagues and that attention must be paid to English translations.

Exclusion is also mentioned by all four English speaking employees. Two international interviewees explained that they do not attend these general meetings (any more) because the meetings often take place in Dutch and translations are not made, or promises about translations are not always kept. This was also observed during the participant observation of the research. A internal employee explained ''I took part in a number of presentations. They were all in Dutch. Some short summaries were given in English the two first times, the third time [the presenter] didn't even make a summary so then I stopped going.'' Although two interviewees explained that they understand Dutch and do not need English translations in these sessions, they feel that most English speaking employees are in a disadvantaged position because they do not understand the information in Dutch. One English speaking interviewee said ''As an English speaker and an English employee, it means though that you're always disadvantaged. It means that you're always going to feel a little less than informed. And that probably in terms of work, is not a good feeling as an English speaker. Because going to a meeting where you understand only a quarter of what is going on, cannot make you feel good as an employee.'' Although the majority of the international employees understands that the meetings mainly take place in Dutch, they would also like to be informed. One English interviewee asked for a translation in an internal general meeting: ''And, in a way I was, because [the presenter] asked if anyone did not understood, so I had to raise my hand and I was only one in the entire room of 50+ people so I was on the spot. Yeah that was kind of an issue.'' However, this interviewee and the other English interviewees stressed that they appreciate the summary in English that is given in some of the meetings, but explained that it should be communicated very clearly from the beginning in which language the meeting will be held. It should be communicated beforehand whether a report of the meeting will be available in English. Although the English speaking employees are not all able to understand the meetings in Dutch and do not attend the meetings, they are very interested in the corporate information being discussed in these sessions.

Miscommunication

Seven out of 13 Dutch interviewees and all four English interview participants explained that they experienced miscommunication based on linguistic or cultural differences in their professional activities at KIT. Dutch interviewees mentioned that not only linguistic differences but also different

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[6] Original quote of Dutch speaking employee: '' Ik heb altijd een beetje medelijden met die Engelstalige mensen die er dan bij zitten, een heel lang verhaal in het Nederlands en een heel korte samenvatting in het Engels. Misschien kan dat beter toch apart voor die Engelstaligen.''

cultural backgrounds can influence communication and may lead to miscommunication or difficulties in understanding one another. Similarly to Dutch and international respondents, some Dutch speaking interviewees explained that it is difficult to give clear examples of miscommunications, but they remembered that they experienced a miscommunication at KIT. Not all Dutch interviewees experienced miscommunications, which could be explained by the fact that some Dutch employees only communicate with Dutch colleagues in their daily activities, and do not have to work closely with international staff. All four English speaking interviewees explained that they had experienced one or multiple miscommunications. Examples include misunderstandings with colleagues or misunderstandings about the Dutch culture. One interviewee mentioned that he made a wrong decision, explained with the following example: ''I made a decision based on one word which had two meanings [in Dutch] and I only knew one meaning.'' English participants said that it is inevitable that miscommunications take place in international settings, but that these are minimal. They argue that to make communication successful, all employees should be aware of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their colleagues and that miscommunications may take place.

The majority of the Dutch interviewees did not have suggestions about documents that they would like to see translated into Dutch or English, which is different from the questionnaire results. In the Dutch questionnaire, multiple suggestions were given. Some Dutch speaking interviewees argued that there is sufficient information available in English. In one of the English interviews it was mentioned that it would be important to translate the summaries or information of internal meetings for all employees. Although these summaries are already translated into English by the communications department, not all (international) employees seem to be aware of this.

5.3.2. External Communication

Corporate Language(s)

For external communication, most Dutch interviewees explained that it is important to use the language that addresses the target group, which could be either English or Dutch. Some interviewees explained they do not have a preference for a corporate language for external communication. Other languages that were suggested for external communication are Dutch, English, or Dutch and English. One of the interviewees expressed concern about the level of English of Dutch speaking employees and talked about feelings of identity and exclusion if English was implemented as official corporate language. In the Dutch questionnaire on the other hand, the majority preferred both Dutch and English for internal and external communication.

One English speaking employee mentioned that if the organisation only uses Dutch for internal and external communication, external parties, stakeholders and international employees will not be reached and the organisation would not be able to use the talents of possible international employees.

6. Discussion

At KIT, English is spoken as a lingua franca. This research shows that the main focus of communication between Dutch and international employees is on understanding each other and to get the message across, and less on grammatical or linguistic correctness. Although not all employees use English in their daily activities, many staff members who are involved in communication with English speaking colleagues have developed a method to communicate with one another. The questionnaires showed that employees are not dissatisfied with the way in which the organisation deals with the language situation. However, suggestions and reactions indicate that there is need for improvement on specific aspects. Based on the results of the participant observation, questionnaires and interviews, the language situation at KIT can be analysed and discussed with Ager's motives for a language policy. Below, Ager's most relevant motives will be related to the language situation at KIT.

6.1. Identity

Feelings of identity play an important role in the organisation's language situation. Because the majority of the Dutch speaking respondents and interviewees stated that they have advanced English language skills or that they speak English as a native speaker, it could be assumed that these employees would be able and willing to use English as the corporate language. However, the majority of the Dutch respondents would like to use Dutch and English for internal communication, and the majority of the Dutch interviewees preferred Dutch for internal communication. The conative element of employees' attitudes is expressed in the way in which employees would be willing to change their language behaviour (Ager 126). AT KIT, it would be interesting to analyse why Dutch speaking employees do not want to change their language behaviour and do not want to use English as the single corporate language, since they claimed to have good skills in English. Varner and Beamer explain that the labels to express one's language level ''are not very precise, and many speakers have a tendency to overestimate their language proficiency'' (56). Although the majority of the Dutch staff answered they have developed sufficient language skills, they also thought that not all Dutch speaking colleagues would be able to communicate in English. Frederiksson explains that organisations should be careful with the introduction of English as the corporate language, because people could have a good command of technical terms, but less of general English and English used in other professional working fields (418). Besides, the preference of Dutch employees to be and to stay a Dutch organisation does not only seem to be based on their language level and skills, but is also related to identity issues. Dutch employees mentioned that the Dutch character of the organisation should not be forgotten and that English should not be implemented as the corporate language because the majority

of the staff speaks Dutch. It seems that employees expect the Dutch character of the organisation to disappear if English is implemented as the corporate language. The Dutch speaking staff feels that with the introduction of English as the corporate language, the identity of the organisation and its employees will automatically change as well.

6.2. Ideology and Image Creation

The way in which organisations deal with language situations is connected to the organisation's general strategy and ideology. Marschan-Piekkari et al. argue that language challenges in international organisations should be recognised as strategic issues (389). The strategy should include an overview of the organisation's departments that will be involved in the implementation of the language policy. Furthermore, if the organisation aims to become more international, wants to enter new markets, address new target groups and to recruit more international employees, the language strategy of the organisation will inevitably also change and should adapt to the organisation's general goals and strategy.

Expectations of Dutch and international employees seem to play an important role in the language situation and are related to the ideology and image of the organisation. Interviewees explained that their expectations were already formed during their recruitment processes. The English website, communication and interviews that took place in English expressed an international character. However, the majority of the international employees were surprised about the communication in Dutch at organisational level. Because the organisation has not yet created a clear language policy or strategy, employees formed different opinions and expectations on this topic. As Holbeche points out, there is a clear difference between organisation and individual expectations (250). Managing the expectations of employees requires a language strategy or policy that is communicated to all employees and through all layers of the organisation.

In this case study, the majority of the employees answered questions about the current language situation and their experiences from a departmental perspective and less from an organisational perspective. This could be explained by the organisation's structure and departments that deal with a different products, services, employees and target groups. Due to this variety of products, services and target groups, the departmental managers have quite some autonomy and authority. This variety and authority makes the language situation at KIT more complex, since some departments have an international workforce and target groups and have to deal with both languages while others mainly communicate in Dutch. This should also be taken into account in terms of the organisation's ideology, strategy and image they want to create. The variety of products, services and target groups of KIT-departments makes it also more difficult to express the same ideology and image in terms of language use to all external stakeholders and target groups. However, the rules and

guidelines of the *Writer's Guide* aim to create a consistent use of English and will directly contribute to the image of KIT, as a recognised centre of research and knowledge with high quality English.

6.3. Inequality

Exclusion and inequality were mentioned in the interviews and questionnaires by Dutch and international employees and refer to two aspects. First, international employees mentioned feelings of exclusion because general internal meetings often take place in Dutch and much corporate information on strategic and management level is in Dutch. However, international employees are interested in corporate information and are willing to attend internal meetings. Because these meetings often take place in Dutch, international employees do not have access to this information and power distances arise. Some staff members even mentioned that they do not feel appreciated as employees, because they feel excluded from the (Dutch) group. Andersen and Rasmussen explain that language can function as tool for power in international settings, and that specific groups can be excluded from information, due to their lack of language skills (234). Research by Marschan-Piekkari et al. showed that in international organisations, some employees are not invited to specific meetings or trainings, because these staff members do not have sufficient corporate language skills (428). At KIT, international employees are invited to internal meetings, but do not always attend them because of the language that is used. International employees also feel excluded because the Dutch news items on the intranet or the corporate website are not always available in English. Some Dutch news messages were not translated into English and some international employees missed the information. Some international employees felt less informed about internal issues and expressed their desire for more translated news items. It is interesting to see that in some cases, international employees thought that a news item was not translated into English, whereas in fact the news message was translated and available in English. Attempts were made to address all employees by translating documents and information into English, but not all international employees seemed to be aware of the information that is available.

Secondly, Dutch speaking employees also seem to be aware of exclusion of international and Dutch speaking staff. Dutch speaking employees expressed concern regarding exclusion of international colleagues because the majority of the KIT employees communicate in Dutch. Dutch speaking employees also mentioned that the implementation of English as the corporate language might lead to feelings of exclusion among Dutch employees. Dutch respondents thought that their Dutch colleagues who do not have sufficient knowledge or skills of English, would have a disadvantaged position. The research showed that only a few Dutch employees stated that they would feel excluded themselves, and that they do not have sufficient corporate language skills to conduct their professional activities in English. The majority of the employees who mentioned concern for

exclusion and power distances argued that they are afraid that their Dutch colleagues in lower hierarchical positions would not be able to use English, but think they themselves have developed sufficient knowledge and skills to deal with English as the corporate language. The implementation of a corporate language could create tension and increasing power distances for employees who want to learn the corporate language skills, but do not have the ability to do so, according to Marschan-Piekkari et al. (383).

6.4. Integration

Although the organisation has not yet implemented a language strategy, it seems that integration processes between Dutch and international employees are already taking place. Ager explains that language policies and management are connected with the integration of groups of speakers (9). At KIT, it seems that both Dutch and international employees developed a sense of *perspective-taking*, which is ''the cognitive process of taking the point of view of others'' (Beyene et al. 24). Perspective-taking is important for integration processes because it ''is an important part of developing shared meaning'' (Beyene et al. 24). The questionnaires and interviews showed that Dutch and English speaking employees seem to be aware of the complexity of the language issue within the organisation and seem to understand the point of view of their colleagues. At KIT, the majority of the workforce is willing to adapt to the language of the colleagues and is willing to change their language behaviour to some extent. This corresponds to Marschan-Piekkari et al.'s view, who explain that with the introduction of a corporate language, the (linguistic) behaviour of employees will change (381). However, because the large majority of the workforce speaks Dutch, and only a small number of international employees speaks English, there is no ready-made solution to the language situation and communication challenges at KIT.

An example of integration and linguistic behaviour was given by a Dutch speaking interviewee, who suggested to use *receptive multilingualism* for communication with international colleagues. Beerkens and ten Thije explain that with receptive multilingualism, it is possible for both interlocutors to use their native language in communication without ''any effort to learn the other language'' (102). The option to use receptive multilingualism could be relevant for communication between Dutch and English speaking staff in the organisation. Some interview participants explained that they preferred to use their native language for technical and complex communication issues, because these are difficult to explain in English. However, Beerkens en ten Thije stress that to make receptive multilingualism successful, a ''near-native passive level of the other language'' is required, to make sure that all nuances are being understood and interpreted correctly (102). This communication method would therefore probably only be useful for English speaking employees who have developed good passive skills in Dutch and for Dutch speaking employees who have advanced

English skills, because a ''near-native passive level'' is necessary (Beerkens en ten Thije 102).

6.5. Language Nodes

In the questionnaires and interviews, Dutch and English speaking employees mentioned that some native speakers of English function as *language nodes*, and are ''taken away from his or her official work to translate'' (Andersen & Rasmussen 232). One interviewee explained that it was assumed by employees that native speakers function as translators, and that some non-native employees were not aware of the fact that these native speakers have other positions and that they are not working as translators. Respondents and interviewees argue that these translating and writing activities cost time. However, in the organisation there is no in-house translator or communications employee who can be consulted for translations or documents in English. All departments are responsible for their own translations, and as a result, native speakers function as *language nodes*. Because language nodes' official tasks do not include translating or writing, the time they need to function as language nodes cannot be spent on official work. It might be assumed that language nodes could save translation costs, but it seems to be less effective because time that is now spent on translations, could otherwise be used for their official activities. Varner and Beamer also explain that not all native speakers are skilled to interpret or translate, and that these people often need training in communication skills (66).

7. Recommendations

Recommendations for the language situation and a corporate language policy at KIT are based upon results of the research and documents describing the organisation's communication goals and strategy. The mission and vision of the organisation focus on the international and intercultural character of KIT, and the communications department created a strategy to increase the visibility of the organisation externally (The Royal Tropical Institute). For external communication, the organisation aims to develop the corporate image as a recognised centre of knowledge. The organisation wants to create awareness about its projects and activities in the Netherlands and abroad, and wants to show its successes. The most important aims and goals of the strategy for internal communication, on the other hand, are to improve internal communication and to create cooperation, alignment and well developed personal contacts among employees. The internal communication strategy further aims to create positive feelings and involvement about the organisation among employees to create a strong image of the organisation that will be expressed towards external stakeholders. It is important that all employees feel appreciated as employee and that feelings of exclusion of Dutch and English speaking staff are absent. In the questionnaire and interviews, feelings of exclusion were expressed by Dutch and English speaking staff. People who do not understand the language that is used for important corporate information are not able to contribute to the goals of the internal communication strategy, since they feel less connected with their colleagues and the organisation due to language use. Feelings of exclusion may lead to less positive feelings about the organisation, atmosphere or colleagues, as mentioned in the interviews. To make sure that both English and Dutch speaking staff feel included in the organisation and that both groups can contribute to the achievement of the strategy goals, it is important to pay attention to the desires of the Dutch speaking employees and the international staff.

Another aspect that plays a role in determining a corporate language policy are the target groups of the organisation. The most important target groups are international and national private and governmental clients, visitors, partners, a Dutch and an international audience and national and international press and organisations in the same fields of expertise and activities (Royal Tropical Institute). The organisation aims to reach both a national and international audience.

Based upon the data of the research and the discussion combined with the theoretical motives for language policy, recommendations can be given to improve the current language situation at KIT. The theoretical aspects of language policies were combined with the results of the participant observation, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews and formed the basis for the structure and recommendations of this chapter.

7.1. Corporate Language(s)

For internal corporate communication at KIT, Dutch and English should both be used as the corporate languages. Although 39.2% of the Dutch respondents felt that Dutch should be used as the corporate language for internal communication, the majority of both Dutch (54.4%) and international questionnaire respondents (66.7%) were in favour of two corporate languages for internal communication: Dutch and English. The use of two corporate languages would probably be the most suitable solution at this moment, since most employees speak Dutch and the number of English speaking staff is relatively small. Over the years, the language issue has become more important, more translations have become available and more people have become aware of the language situation and consequences of recruiting international employees. However, the implementation of English as corporate language would probably be too early at this moment, considering the language skills of employees, activities, departments, workforce, members and stakeholders. Furthermore, it would probably not eliminate the organisation's language challenges at this moment. Consequences of the introduction of English as the corporate language for internal and external communication will affect the quality and efficiency of the work, will probably lead to more feelings of exclusion of employees and identity issues for the employees and the organisation. These consequences should not be underestimated. However, the organisation is in a transformation process in which the English language has become more important. Besides, both Dutch and international employees have developed a sense of perspective-taking and are aware of the translations that they need to make for their colleagues (Beyene et al. 24).

For external communication, both Dutch and English should be used as well. The questionnaires and interviews showed that the majority of both Dutch and English speaking employees are in favour of bilingual communication for external communication, depending on the target groups. With bilingual external communication, KIT would be able to reach their international target groups. Since more people in communications functions have become used to translating, both Dutch and English can be used for internal and external communication. However, if it is decided not to translate documents or to translate only a summarised version, employees should be informed about this decision. It should be explained why this decision has been made and in which way language the documents are available. In this way, people know the reasons for the decision and will be able to understand why some documents are not translated or only will be summarised. This will also influence the expectations about translations employees may have.

Although the organisation does not seem ready to implement English as the corporate language at this time, it might be possible to implement English as the corporate language in the future, depending on the organisation's ideology and strategy. The implementation of English as a corporate language does not mean that Dutch cannot and will not be used any more in daily small talk or informal communication among Dutch employees. However, the transformation processes to

change the language situation and language use within an organisation will take time. More preparation is necessary and more attention should be paid to the English skills of employees before English could be implemented as the corporate language for internal and external communication in the future. The current and future organisational strategy will also affect the corporate language(s) and corporate language strategy depending on the departments, products, services and most important working fields of the organisation.

To make sure that all employees who have to write and translate in English frequently are aware of the organisation's rules and guidelines, they should be reminded about the *KIT Writer's Guide*. The document describes the corporate guidelines for writing in English accurately. Since the questionnaires showed that the majority of the Dutch and English employees were not aware of the British English language variety and the *Writer's Guide*, people working in communication functions should be reminded about the corporate rules and guidelines for writing English.

7.2. Skills New Employees

Although current employees in communicative functions should be trained to translate and to write in English, the organisation should also pay attention to the English language skills of new employees. Marschan-Piekkari et al. explain that language policy activities are often closely connected to the human resources department, because this department recruits and employs new employees, and provides guidance and support for current employees (377). Because none of the 17 Dutch and English speaking employees were tested on their language skills during their recruitment process and only a few of the Dutch speaking employees took a course in English, it is recommended to pay more attention to the English skills and knowledge of new employees. The knowledge and proficiency in English of (new) employees would become even more important if English were to be implemented as the corporate language in the future. It should be remembered, however, that different positions at KIT require different language skills and different levels of proficiency in English. People in communication functions who have to translate and write documents could be offered an English writing course to improve their skills and to guarantee the quality of the translations. These language courses could only be offered to employees in communication functions who have to deal with English translations frequently. Managers should make sure that the English language courses are useful for the organisation. In other words, it is important that employees who take an English language course need the course for their professional activities and communicate in English frequently. A Dutch interviewee explained that she took a course in English, but could not implement the learned skills because she did not communicate in English in her daily activities.

The organisation should be aware of the expectations of Dutch and international employees about the organisation and its language(s) that are already formed during the recruitment process of

new employees. International employees explained that they saw KIT as an international institution because of its international website and the fact that all communication took place in English. Although the organisation aims to inform new Dutch and international employees about the language situation at the organisation and within the different departments, it seems that the expectations of some new international employees do not correspond with the real language situation in the organisation. It is therefore important to inform Dutch and English speaking employees clearly during their recruitment processes about the languages used within the organisation. Dutch employees seem to have different expectations of the organisation compared to English speaking employees, because some of the Dutch speaking employees see KIT as an organisation with a Dutch character. These employees also expect that all communication will take place in Dutch and that their international colleagues will learn Dutch.

Furthermore, all new international employees should be offered a Dutch language course and cultural training. According to the *International Staff Document*, all new international employees will be offered a Dutch language course. However, two of the four English speaking interviewees explained that they were interested in a language course, but that they were not aware of the possibility of doing so. All English speaking employees who were recruited before the *International Staff Document* was implemented, should be informed about the possibility to take a course in Dutch. Although the organisation offers all new international employees a Dutch language course, it could be useful to offer them a cultural training or workshop about the Dutch (working/business) culture as well. Several international employees and respondents of the questionnaire explained that they experienced miscommunications at KIT based on cultural and linguistic differences. Varner and Beamer argue that cultural training is an important element in dealing with language challenges within organisations or during the implementation of a corporate language (57). KIT Intercultural Professionals BV offers courses, consultancy services and trainings in the field of intercultural communication and also offers courses and trainings about specific (business) cultures. This in-house expertise and knowledge could be used to develop a training about the Dutch (business) culture for new international employees.

The research shows that English speaking employees do not need a digital platform or e-group to exchange experiences, cultural knowledge and information with international colleagues. Although the organisation wanted to create a digital platform or e-group for international employees, the interviewees showed no interest in exchanging and sharing information by means of an online e-group. International employees prefer personal contact with their international colleagues. Some interviewees mentioned that they would like to create personal relationships with Dutch speaking colleagues and that they want to integrate into the Dutch culture.

7.3. Internal KIT- meetings for all Employees

Some recommendations can be given regarding expectations and the structure of general internal KIT-meetings for all employees. For internal meetings, (e.g. those organised by the Executive Board), it is essential to inform all employees beforehand about the language(s) that will be used in the meeting. If an e-mail invitation and news message on the intranet are in Dutch and English, people might expect the session to be in two languages. However, if it is communicated and explained from the beginning what language will be used in the session, both Dutch and English speaking staff know what to expect and can decide whether or not to attend the meeting.

For these internal meetings, the majority of the Dutch and international staff thought that it would be most effective to use Dutch PowerPoint slides with a short oral English summary after each slide. However, some risks should be considered. It was mentioned in the questionnaires and interviews that some English speaking employees feel embarrassed to ask for translations, because the large majority of the audience understands the presentation in Dutch. Furthermore, observations showed that during the summary in English after each PowerPoint slide, the audience started talking and the summary and translations in English were be interrupted by noise. This affected the length of the summary in English. Feelings of exclusion of international employees may increase because the Dutch audience might give the impression that the translations are less important. Besides, if it is decided by the presenter to use this method, presenters should be very careful with the promises they make; it is important that the translations or summaries are given after each slide and are not forgotten or stopped during the presentation. It is advisable to inform everyone clearly about the structure of the organisation in terms of language use. Before the presentation starts, presenters should inform their audience about the summaries that will be given and they could ask their audience to remain silent during these summaries.

Another possibility to deal with English and Dutch in these meetings, is to use English PowerPoint slides and to speak in Dutch. However, this option requires some specific skills from the presenter. It could be difficult to read in one language and to present in another language. Two separate sessions could also be organised (one in Dutch and one in English), to make sure that all English speaking employees are informed. It should be said that none of the English respondents chose this option, but that it was suggested by Dutch respondents and interviewees. International employees, on the other hand, seem to understand and to accept that these sessions take place in Dutch with a summary in English. However, presenters are advised to pay attention to English translations or summaries in these presentations to decrease feelings of exclusion and to inform all employees.

7.4. In-house English Communications Specialist

The time, effort and activities carried out by language nodes should not be underestimated by the organisation's management. Although it is not always clear who functions as a language node and how often employees are asked to translate or to write documents in English, at KIT, some native speakers function as language nodes. It is therefore recommended to analyse the way in which these non-official activities affect the official work of the language nodes. An in-house communications employee could be hired who could be consulted for translations or linguistic and communicative questions. In this way, native speakers of English will no longer be asked to translate or to carry out other communicative activities. A (part-time) in-house communication employee who is trained to translate and to edit texts in English, could help all employees with English issues or translations. This communications employee could not only replace the different translators or translation offices who are hired by the organisation, but could also be an internal expert and a ''helpdesk'' on English and Dutch. An in-house communications employee could improve the quality of internal and external translations and will save time for other native and non-native employees who have to make translations themselves (at different departments), but do not always have the time and skills to do so. A communications employee would not only have to translate, but could also carry out other communication activities at the communications department.

7.5. KIT-Intranet and Corporate Website

Because it is recommended to use both Dutch and English for internal and external communication, it is important to be consistent in publishing news items on the intranet and the corporate website in Dutch and English. Although some news items might be less relevant for an external English speaking audience and it takes time to translate all news items, all news items can be seen as free publicity, making the organisation visible for international stakeholders, partners and other target groups. For the intranet, it is also important to translate all news items since this is the medium for all employees and to keep informed.

Furthermore, it is important that international employees become aware of all corporate information that is available in English to reduce feelings of exclusion. All Dutch and English news messages should be published at the same time. Analysis of the translated news messages on intranet showed that news messages in English are sometimes published several hours or days later than the original message in Dutch. If the English translation is late, people might think that the English translation will not be published at all. In one of the interviews, it was mentioned that people do not go back several days later to read the news message in English.

Another recommendation related to news messages affects the way in which news messages are published via the Content Management System of the websites and the absence of the language switch between the original and translated news message. It is important that all departmental web editors who publish news messages become aware of the language switch of the translated news item and that both news items will be published at the same time.

The corporate website should also be consistent in terms of languages and should offer a summary in Dutch of all technical products, trainings or services that are only available in English. Because all information on the corporate website is available in Dutch, visitors might be surprised that some information is only given in English. An explanation why this information is only available in English can also be given in a summary on these pages.

8. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

Although recommendations can be given regarding language use and a possible language strategy, some limitations of the research should be considered. These recommendations and conclusions are mainly based on internal staff research, and employees' experiences and opinions. Most questionnaire respondents or interviewees focused on internal communication challenges, rather than on external communication and the corporate image. In a larger study, it might be useful to look at the corporate languages that are used by KIT's clients and competitors, or to examine more corporate strategy documents, such as KIT's acquisition strategy. A more extensive analysis might lead to more valid recommendations to determine the corporate language of an organisation. The implementation of a language strategy or policy would have to be connected to the strategic plans of an organisation. Some recommendations could possibly be implemented right away, while others require more research and time.

Because the research project was carried out by one person, triangulation of researchers was not realised (Boeije 277). Although both quantitative and qualitative methods have been used and increased the reliability of the research, experience with these practical research methods was little. Quite some time was spent on the preparation of these research methods and analysis programmes, such as SPSS.

Although the number of non-Dutch speaking employees is relatively little, it is difficult to draw conclusions or to generalise about the questionnaire results based on six English speaking respondents. In the analysis of the qualitative interviews, interpretations of the researcher are important for conclusions of the research and recommendations. Although the transcribed interviews were sent to the participants of the interviews as a member check, still interpretations made by the researcher are personal and not completely objective. These can be seen as the ''well-known limitations of a qualitative case study approach'' (Ehrenreich 429).

To give more specific recommendations on the language situation within the different departments of the organisation, further research at these departments would be necessary. Because of the variety in products, services, employees and target groups in the different departments, some departments deal more frequently with language issues and intercultural communication challenges with Dutch and international employees than other departments. More research in these departments might lead to more specific recommendations. The recommendations given in this thesis are given from an organisational perspective, and not from a departmental perspective. Besides, in a lager study focusing on the different departments at KIT, links and comparisons could be drawn between the results of the questionnaires in this research, and the information about the respondent's age, language proficiency and departments. In this research, these comparisons are limited.

More research on language situations in smaller international organisations would give insight into language situations and language challenges they face in other international and intercultural working environments. Research that has been conducted in the field of language policies in international organisations, focused on multinational companies with multiple subsidiaries in different countries. This case study showed, however, that language challenges are also faced and that and language policies are also relevant for smaller international organisations with an unequal different proportion of international and Dutch speaking employees. Although former research was mainly directed towards language challenges in multinational corporations with subsidiaries in different countries, more research into language situations in smaller, but, international organisations, is needed. In this way, the language situation in the organisation of this case study could be compared to other (smaller) international organisations.

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Appendices

Questionnaires
- Dutch
- English

Interviews
- Dutch
- English

Results Dutch and English Questionnaires
- General background information respondents

KIT document Taalkwestie 2009

KIT Writer's Guide: Chapter 3 on KIT Spelling

Questionnaire Dutch

1. Wat is je geslacht?

Man
Vrouw

2. Wat is je leeftijd?

Jonger dan 25
25-34
35-44
45-54
55 of ouder

3. Hoe lang ben je werkzaam bij het KIT?

Minder dan 3 jaar
4-9 jaar
10-19 jaar
20-29 jaar
30 jaar of langer

4. Op welke afdeling ben je werkzaam?

Finance & Control
Personnel, Organization & Information
Communication, Hospitality & Facilities
Biomedical Research
Development Policy & Practice
Information & Library Services
Tropenmuseum
Tropentheater
Raad van Bestuur
KIT Publishers
KIT Intercultural Professionals

5. Wat is je positie/functie binnen het KIT?

Hoofd (afdeling)
Middelmanagement
Adviseur
Medewerker

6. Wat is je niveau van Nederlands op een schaal van 1 tot 5?

1 = geen kennis   5 = moedertaal spreker

7. Hoe comfortabel voel je je bij het spreken van Engels (spreken, lezen, luusteren, schrijven) op een schaal van 1 tot 5?

1 = heel oncomfortabel   10 = zeer comfortabel

8. In welke taal vindt het grootste gedeelte van je dagelijkse werkzaamheden plaats?

Nederlands
Engels
Anders, namelijk:

9. Hoe vaak communiceer je gemiddeld in het Engels tijdens je dagelijkse werkzaamheden? (zowel mondeling als schriftelijk)

Iedere dag
Een aantal keer per week
Eens per week
Eens per maand
Zelden
Nooit → ga naar vraag 11

10. Hoe gebruik je Engels het meest bij het KIT?

Door te spreken
Door te lezen
Door te schrijven
Door te luisteren

11. Ben je bekend met de KIT-regels voor spelling, grammatica, en woordkeuze voor Engels (de Schrijfwijzer Engels)?

Ja
Nee

12. Het is voor mij duidelijk in welke situatie ik welke taal moet gebruiken bij interne en externe communicatie van het KIT (bij het schrijven van nieuwsberichten, teksten voor flyers, notulen, social media, etc.)

1 = Helemaal mee oneens
2= Oneens
3= Niet oneens, niet eens
4= Eens
5= Helemaal mee eens

Interne communicatie, of: "Alle manieren om informatie kenbaar te maken en uit te wisselen onder KIT-medewerkers door te spreken, schrijven of andere manieren om informatie te zenden en te ontvangen" (OED, 2012)

13. De informatie die beschikbaar is in het Engels voor interne communicatie moet uitgebreid worden.
1 = Helemaal mee oneens
2 = Oneens
3 = Niet oneens, niet eens
4 = Eens
5= Helemaal mee eens

14. Welke documenten of onderdelen bij het KIT moeten volgens jou (nog) vertaald worden en beschikbaar zijn in het Engels voor interne communicatie? Meerdere antwoorden mogelijk.

Notulen OR
Salarisstrook
Dagmenu Ekeko
Alle nieuwsberichten op intranet
Anders: ……………………
N.v.t.

15. Welke officiële voerta(a)l(en) vind je dat het KIT moet hanteren voor interne communicatie?
Nederlands
Engels
Nederlands en Engels
Anders, namelijk:

16. Ik ben bereid meer Engels te gebruiken tijdens mijn dagelijkse werkzaamheden
1 = Helemaal mee oneens
2= Oneens
3 = Niet oneens, niet eens
4 = Eens
5= Helemaal mee eens

17. Ik ben bereid een cursus Engels te volgen vanuit het KIT wanneer Engels meer gebruikt gaat worden bij het KIT.

1 = Helemaal mee oneens
2= Oneens
3 = Niet oneens, niet eens
4 = Eens
5= Helemaal mee eens

→ ik heb al een cursus Engels gevolgd vanuit het KIT

18. Hoe kunnen de presentaties voor alle KIT-medewerkers volgens jou het beste worden vormgegeven wanneer er zowel Nederlandse als niet-Nederlandssprekende werknemers aanwezig zijn?

Powerpoint en presentatie in het Engels
Powerpoint in Engels, presentatie in het Nederlands
Powerpoint en presentatie in het Nederlands
Presentatie en Powerpoint in het Nederlands en een korte samenvatting in het Engels na iedere slide
Presentatie en Powerpoint in het Nederlands en een samenvatting in het Engels na afloop van de presentatie
Presentatie and Powerpoint in het Nederlands en vertalingen tijdens de presentatie door een medewerker van het KIT
Twee verschillende presentaties; een in het Nederlands en een in het Engels.
Anders:……………….

19. Kun je een voorbeeld geven van een mogelijk misverstand dat je binnen je afdeling of het KIT hebt meegemaakt door een taalbarrière?

20. Wat zijn jouw suggesties voor het gebruik van Engels en Nederlands voor interne communicatie van het KIT?

Externe communicatie, of: ''Alle manieren om informatie kenbaar te maken en uit te wisselen onder doelgroepen, stakeholders en externe partijen van het KIT door te spreken, schrijven of andere manieren om informatie te zenden en te ontvangen'' (OED, 2012)

21. Voor externe communicatie is er voldoende informatie over het KIT in het Engels beschikbaar (website, folders, etc.)

1= Helemaal mee oneens
2= Oneens
3 = Niet oneens, niet eens
4 = Eens
5= Helemaal mee eens

22. Welke informatie en onderdelen van het KIT moeten volgens jou (nog meer) in het Engels worden aangeboden bij externe communicatie? Meerdere antwoorden mogelijk

Social media berichten
Brochures/folders
Persberichten
Alle nieuwsberichten op kit.nl
KIT nieuwsbrief (KIT Insight)
Anders:………….

23. Welke officiële voerta(a)l(en) vind je dat het KIT moet hanteren voor externe communicatie?
Nederlands
Engels
Nederlands en Engels
Anders, namelijk:

24. Het KIT moet zich (meer) richten op internationale pers, een internationaal publiek en stakeholders)

1= Helemaal mee oneens
2= Oneens
3 = Niet oneens, niet eens
4 = Eens
5= Helemaal mee eens

25. Denk je dat Engels als officiële externe voertaal bijdraagt aan de zelfstandigheid van het KIT?

Ja
Nee
Weet niet
Eventuele opmerkingen:

26. Wat zijn jouw suggesties voor het gebruik van Engels en Nederlands voor externe communicatie van het KIT?

Questionnaire English

1. Are you
Male
Female

2. How old are you?
Under 25
25-34
35-44
45-54
55 or over

3. How long have you been working at KIT?
Less than 3 years
4-9 years
10-19 years
20-29 years
30 years or more

4. Where do you work within KIT?
Finance & Control
Personnel, Organization & Information
Communication, Hospitality & Facilities
Biomedical Research
Development Policy & Practice
Information & Library Services
Tropenmuseum
Tropentheater
Executive Board
KIT Publishers
KIT Intercultural Professionals

5. What is your function/position within KIT?
Head (of department)
Middelmanagement
Advisor
Other

6. How would you rate your level of English on a scale from 1 to 5?

1 = no command   10 = native speaker

7. How would you rate your level of Dutch on a scale from 1 to 5?

1 = no command   10 = native speaker

8. Which language do you use most frequently during your daily activities at KIT?
Dutch
English
Other:

9. How often do you communicate in Dutch during your daily activities at KIT (both oral and written communication)?
Every day
Several times per week
Once per week
Once per month
Occasionally
Never (go to question 11)

10. How do you use English (Dutch) most often at KIT? (multiple answers possible)
While speaking
While reading
While writing
While listening

11. Are you aware of KIT-guidelines for English spelling, grammar, syntax and lexicon ('Schrijfwijzer Engels')?

Yes
No

12. It is clear to me which languages should be used in different situations of internal and external communication at KIT, for example when writing news articles, texts for flyers, minutes etc.

1 = Totally disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither disagree nor agree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

Internal communication or ''*All ways to exchange and to make information known to KIT-employees by speaking, writing or other means for sending and receiving information'' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2012)*

13. More information should be made available in English for internal communication

1 = Totally disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither disagree nor agree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

14. What documents of KIT would you like to see translated into and available in English for internal communication?
Minutes OR
Pay check
Document with computer and ID instructions
Menu of the day Ekeko
Other: ……………………

15. Which should be the official corporate language(s) of KIT for internal communication?

Dutch
English
Dutch and English
Other:

16. I am willing to use Dutch more frequently in my daily activities at KIT.
1 = Totally disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither disagree nor agree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

17. I am willing to take a course in Dutch paid by KIT to improve my Dutch and to use Dutch more frequently at KIT.

1 = Totally disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither disagree nor agree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

18. I feel that during KIT meetings for all employees (such as information sessions, New Year's reception, etc.), enough attention is being paid to English translations.

1 = Totally disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither disagree nor agree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

19. How would you like to see English and Dutch used in such meetings?

Powerpoint and presentation in English
Powerpoint and presentation in Dutch
Powerpoint in English, oral presentation in Dutch
Presentation and Powerpoint in Dutch and short summary in English after each slide

Presentation and Powerpoint in Dutch and English summary at the end of the presentation
Presentation and Powerpoint in Dutch and translations during presentation by employee of PO&I
Depending on the number of English people, two separate presentations: one in Dutch and one in English
Other:……………….

20. What are the most important reasons for you to attend or not to attend these meetings?

21. Could you give an example of any possible misunderstanding you experienced within your department or within KIT as a result of language barrier(s)?

22. What would be your suggestions on how to improve and use both English and Dutch for internal communication at KIT?

External communication or: ''*All ways to exchange and to make information known to target groups, stakeholders and parties from outside KIT by speaking, writing, or other means for sending and receiving information'' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2012)*

23. For external communication, enough information and translated documents are available in English (e.g. website, brochures, etc.)

1 = Totally disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither disagree nor agree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

24. What documents of KIT need to be translated into English for external communication? Multiple answers possible

Messages in social media
Brochures
Press releases
News items at kit.nl
KIT newsletter (KIT Insight)
Other:………….

25. Which should be the official corporate language(s) of KIT for external communication?

Dutch
English
Dutch and English
Other:

26. KIT should focus (more) on international press coverage, an international audience and international stakeholders.

1 = Totally disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither disagree nor agree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

27. Do you think that English as an official external language will benefit the independence of KIT from Dutch government funding?

Yes
No
I don't know

Comments:

28. What would be your suggestions on how to improve and use both English and Dutch for external communication at KIT?

Interview Dutch

1. Sinds wanneer ben je werkzaam bij het KIT?
2. Wat is je moedertaal?

Bewustzijn
3. Was je je toen je bij het KIT kwam werken bewust van de verhouding tussen Engels en Nederlands binnen het KIT en bij de verschillende afdelingen?
- Wat was het beeld dat je van het instituut had m.b.t. het gebruik van verschillende talen?

4. Kun je veranderingen beschrijven in de *gedachtegang over Engels in het KIT* of *het gebruik van Engels* in de loop van de periode dat je werkzaam bent bij het KIT?

5. Wat is volgens jou de voertaal of voertalen van het KIT voor interne en externe communicatie?
- Wat wil je dat de interne voertaal/voertalen is/zijn?
- Wat wil je dat de externe voertaal/voertalen is/zijn?

Niveau Engels
6. Ben je toen je bij het KIT kwam werken getest op Engels?

7. Hoe zou je je niveau van Engels omschrijven?
- Hoe vaak gebruik je Engels in je dagelijkse werkzaamheden in percentages?

8. Denk je dat je met je niveau Engels alle *geschreven* informatie en communicatie van het KIT in het Engels zou kunnen begrijpen? (dat je zonder Nederlandse vertalingen alles zou kunnen begrijpen)
- En bij *gesproken/mondelinge* communicatie?

9. Heb je sinds je werkzaam bent bij het KIT een taalcursus Engels gevolgd?
- Zou je daar interesse in hebben?
- Wat zouden je reden(en) zijn om een taalcursus Engels te volgen en je Engels te verbeteren?

10. Denk je dat het niveau van Engels van Nederlandssprekende KIT medewerkers voldoende is om met niet-Nederlandssprekende collega's te communiceren in dagelijkse werkzaamheden?
- Zou het niveau Engels van Nederlandssprekende medewerkers verbeterd moeten worden zodat meer communicatie mogelijk is?

Mentorschap
11. Heb je wel eens een nieuwe niet-Nederlandssprekende collega begeleid tijdens zijn/haar eerste weken bij het KIT?
- Wat was je motivatie om een mentor te zijn?
- Zou je hier interesse in hebben? Waarom wel of waarom niet?

Interne communicatie
12. Heb je wel eens een miscommunicatie of situatie meegemaakt in je communicatie met een collega met een andere talige en culturele achtergrond bij het KIT?
- Zou je hier een voorbeeld van kunnen geven?
13. Denk je dat KIT-medewerkers zich bewust zijn van mogelijke taalproblemen bij communicatie met collega's onderling?
- Hoe zou je dit graag opgelost zien?

14. Kun je voorbeelden noemen van interne situaties bij het KIT waarin je liever een andere voertaal had gebruikt dan die werd gebruikt? (Bijvoorbeeld vergaderingen)

15. Hoe ervaar je de verhouding tussen Nederlands en Engels zoals dat gebruikt wordt bij de KIT-brede presentaties of bijeenkomsten?
- Vind je dat deze bijeenkomsten in een taal plaats moeten vinden of in twee talen?
- Zou het gebruik van een specifieke taal je keuze beïnvloeden om de bijeenkomsten bij te wonen?
- Heb je suggesties hoe zowel Nederlands en Engels effectief gebruikt kunnen worden bij presentaties voor alle KIT-medewerkers waarbij zowel Nederlandssprekenden of niet- of nauwelijks Nederlandssprekenden aanwezig zijn?

16. Welke informatie van KIT moet volgens jou nog meer beschikbaar komen en vertaald worden in het Engels voor interne communicatie?

Externe communicatie
17. Hoe wil je het KIT uitdragen naar externe partijen? Wat voor imago wil je dat het KIT heeft m.b.t. tot bijvoorbeeld een internationaal karakter.

18. Welke informatie van het KIT moet volgens jou naast het Nederlands nog meer beschikbaar komen in het Engels voor externe communicatie?

19. Ik heb nu veel informatie van je verkregen over Engels en Nederlands bij het KIT. Heb je nog toevoegingen over hoe je in het algemeen aankijkt tegen het gebruik van Engels en Nederlands bij het KIT?

Andere talen
20. Denk je dat er naast vertalingen naar het Engels, ook behoefte is aan specifieke vertalingen naar talen van de landen waarin het KIT-actief is? (zoals een flyer in het Spaans voor Zuid-Amerika of Frans voor Zuid-Afrika).
- Welke talen zijn het belangrijkst?

Interview English

1. Since when have you been working for KIT?
2. Where are you from and what is your native language?

Awareness
3. During you recruitment process, were you informed about the languages used for internal and external communication within KIT?
- What was the image you had of KIT regarding the use of different languages and Dutch and English in particular?

4. Did you experience any changes <u>in the attitude at KIT</u> towards English or <u>in the use of English </u>over the years? If so, could you describe this process?

5. What is or are the corporate language or languages of KIT for internal and external communication according to you?
- What should be the official language for internal communication?
- What should be the official language for external communication?

Level of English
6. Were you tested on your level of English or Dutch during your recruitment process?

7. How would you describe your level of Dutch?

8. Did you take a course in Dutch?
- When did you start with this course? At the beginning of your activities for KIT, or later on?
- What are your most important reasons for taking this course?
- What was the level of this course? (elementary, intermediate, advanced)
- Are you able to read and understand Dutch documents, such as news items on Intranet etc.?
- Do you feel you understand all corporate information in Dutch now?

9. If you haven't yet taken a course in Dutch, would you be interested in doing so?
- What are your main reasons influencing this decision?

10. Do you think the level of English of Dutch employees is sufficient for communication with non-Dutch speaking colleagues in English?
- If not, what would you suggest?

Tutor
11. When you started working here, did you feel there was enough information available in English to help you to set up your workplace and for practical matters such as social security, the setup of your workplace (e-mail address, id- log on etc)

Internal communication
12. Have you ever you experienced any miscommunication with a colleague in KIT as a result of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds?
- If so, could you give an example?
- Do you think these miscommunications are mainly caused by language differences or cultural differences?

13. Could you give examples of situations in which you wanted to use a language other than the language that was used (e.g. in meetings)?
- How often does this happen?
- When do you most feel the need to discuss things in English?

14. How do you experience the proportion of English and Dutch used in presentation of meetings that are organised for all KIT employees? (such as New Year's meeting, information sessions, etc.)
- Do you feel informed?
- What is your position towards such meetings? Do you attend them frequently? What are your reasons to attend these meetings?
- Do you have any suggestions how English and Dutch can be used in these meetings when both Dutch speaking and non-Dutch speaking employees are present?

15. Do you read the news items and information on Intranet?
- How do you feel about the number of translations on Intranet?

16. Do you feel you have sufficient knowledge of important corporate information? Is there any information that you would like to see translated into English (and haven't been translated so far) for internal communication?

17. Are you familiar with an online E-group (an online group for non-Dutch speaking employees in which you can exchange information)?
   - How do you feel about an E-group?

External communication
18. Is there any information that you would like to see translated into English (and haven't been translated so far) for external communication?

19. What do you think of the level and quality of English of the translations (internet and intranet)?

20. To sum up, is there anything you would like to add to this interview about the use and proportion of English and Dutch at KIT in general?
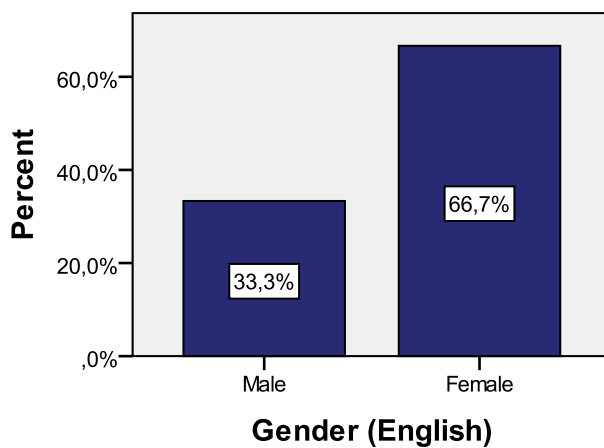
Other languages
21. Do you need other translations besides English for countries KIT has dealings with? What would be the most important languages according to you?
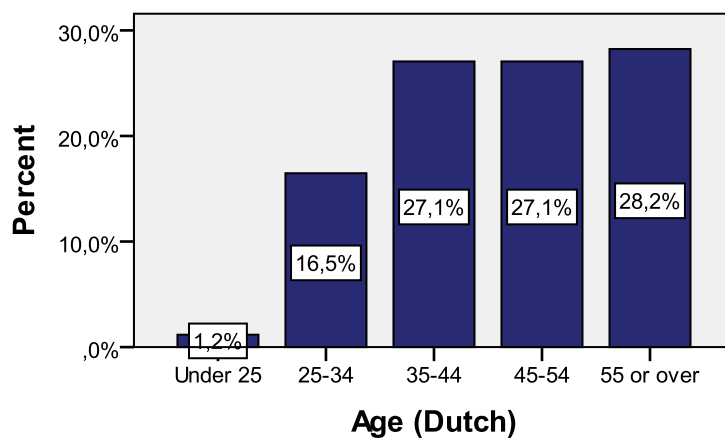
**Results Dutch and English questionnaires- General background information**
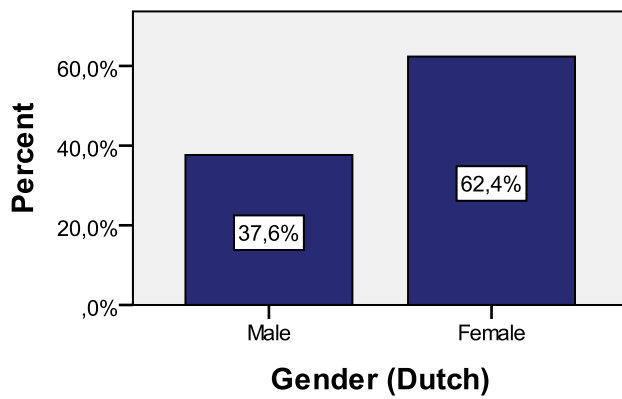
Of the 85 Dutch speaking questionnaire respondents, 32 men (37.6%) and 53 women (62.4%) participated in the questionnaire.

Of the six English respondents, two men (33.3%) and four women (66.6%) participated in the questionnaire.

Although the majority of the Dutch respondents seem to be 55 years or over, the graph shows that in total, 71.9% of the Dutch respondents is under 55 years of age.
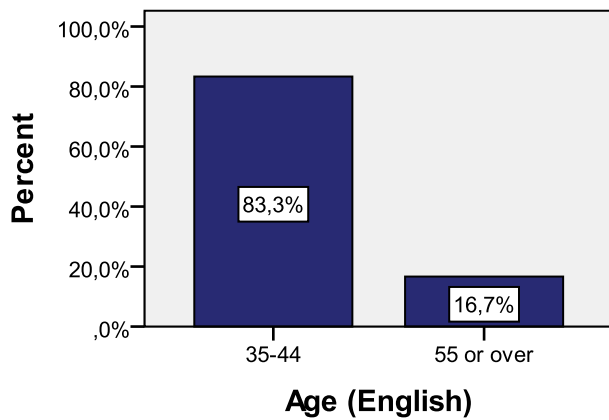
The majority of the English respondents (83.3%) can be included in the 35-44 age category.
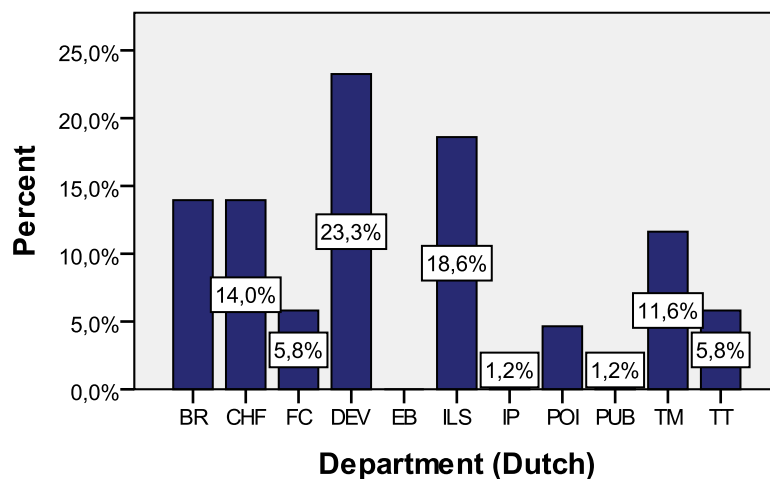
Most respondents of the Dutch questionnaire (23.3%) are working at the department Development Policy and Practice, followed by 18.6% employees of Information and Library Services. The respondents seem to be proportionally divided based on the number of employees per department.

Of the English questionnaire, five out of six respondents (83.3%) are working at Development Policy and Practice and 16.7% of the English respondents is working at Communication, Hospitality and Facilities

Working years at KIT (Dutch)

Working years at KIT (English)
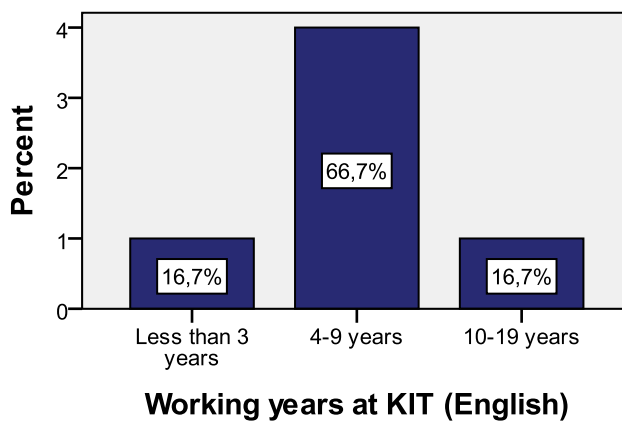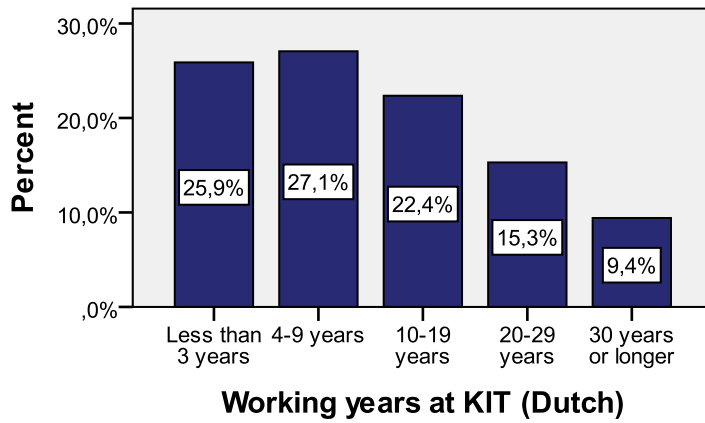
A similarity in the outcomes of the Dutch and English questionnaire is that the majority of the Dutch (27.1%) and English respondents (66.7%) work at the organisation for a period of 4-9 years. Other important categories for both respondent groups are less than 3 working years and 10-19 working years.

Aan RvB

Van CC

Referentie 0909

September 2009

Onderwerp

de Taalkwestie

DE TAALKWESTIE

Het KIT heeft een aantal buitenlandse medewerkers die de Nederlandse taal onvoldoende beheersen om daarin adequaat te kunnen communiceren en in veel gevallen is ook de passieve beheersing van het Nederlands niet voldoende om communicatie door het KIT in het Nederlands goed en volledig te begrijpen. Wat er door het Instituut naar deze medewerkers in het Engels wordt gecommuniceerd, wordt ervaren als niet toereikend.

De vraag wat hieraan moet worden gedaan en door wie speelt al jaren. Niet zozeer omdat het vraagstuk zo uitzonderlijk complex is, maar vooral omdat niet iedereen de bereidheid heeft een oplossing te accepteren als die niet voor de volle 100% spoort met de eigen opvatting.

Deze notitie doet een voorstel waarin van alle betrokken partijen een passende inspanning wordt gevraagd, zowel van de buitenlandse medewerkers als van het afdelingsmanagement en van het Instituut op corporate niveau. Deze gezamenlijke inspanning, plus de erkenning dat een voor iedereen volledig bevredigende oplossing niet voorhanden is, kunnen hopelijk bewerkstelligen dat deze smeulende kwestie voor langere tijd van de KIT-agenda verdwijnt.

Omvang en aard
Op dit moment zijn er ruim 20 medewerkers die het Nederlands niet of in zeer beperkte mate beheersen: vijf bij BR, vijf bij ILS en ruim 10 bij DEV. Dit laatste aantal zal in de nabije toekomst waarschijnlijk oplopen tot 15 door een aantal vacatures dat bij DEV nog moet worden opgevuld. Afgerond spreken we over ongeveer 7% van het personeelsbestand. Anderzijds vermindert het aantal ook weer, want een medewerker blijft niet voor eeuwig niet-nederlandstalig. Het vraagstuk van geen Nederlands sprekende medewerkers speelt niet bij TM, TT, de stafafdelingen en ook niet bij IMC en Publishers. Deze aantallen laten in één oogopslag zien dat overstappen naar Engels als voertaal geen optie is, de negatieve gevolgen hiervan overschaduwen de voordelen in ruime mate, zowel kwalitatief als kwantitatief.

De aard van het probleem heeft vooral een intern karakter. De afdelingshoofden van de betrokken lijnafdelingen geven alle drie aan geen negatieve zakelijke effecten waar te nemen: er gaat geen omzet verloren, klanten worden niet minder goed bediend. De negatieve effecten zijn grotendeels van gevoelsmatige aard: men voelt zich minder deel uitmaken van de KIT-community en, minstens zo belangrijk, men voelt zich daartoe ook niet van harte uitgenodigd. Het is niet mogelijk dit negatieve effect te kwantificeren, maar dat het er is, staat buiten discussie.

Oplossingsrichting
Vergaande "oplossingen" als de transformatie naar een Engelstalig instituut of een volledig tweetalig instituut staan buiten de realiteit. Maar ook het negeren van het gegeven dat het KIT een percentage niet-nederlands sprekende medewerkers heeft, is in strijd met de ambitie die het Instituut heeft als een internationaal en in diverse culturen opererende, aantrekkelijke werkgever.

Het is bij deze taalkwestie niet zozeer de waarheid die in het midden ligt, als wel dat ongeveer op die plek gezocht moet worden naar een modus operandi die enerzijds begrip toont voor de niet-nederlandstaligen, maar die anderzijds het vraagstuk in de juiste proportie ziet en geen onevenredige inspanning in tijd en geld vraagt. Tevens kan het niet zo zijn dat de inspanning eenzijdig bij één bepaalde partij wordt gelegd. Waar

sprake is van meerdere partijen die een belang hebben bij de oplossing van het vraagstuk, daar mag van alle betrokken een bijdrage worden gevraagd.

Navolgend 10-punten plan dekt de belangrijkste aspecten die aan deze kwestie hangen en schetst op hoofdlijnen de bijdrage die van alle betrokkenen mag worden verwacht. Detaillering en uitwerking kan geschieden na akkoord van de RvB.:

1. In de werving en selectie moet een realistisch beeld worden geschetst van de situatie en de mogelijkheden bij het KIT. Nu sporen de gewekte verwachtingen niet altijd met de realiteit.

2. Iedere niet-nederlandstalige nieuwe medewerker, aangesteld in Nederland voor minimaal een jaar, krijgt een basiscursus Nederlands aangeboden. Van medewerkers met een vast contract wordt verwacht deze basiscursus te volgen.

3. Iedere niet-nederlandstalige nieuwe medewerker krijgt een begeleider toegewezen die hem/haar ondersteunt in het regelen van allerlei praktische zaken en op wie hij/zij altijd een beroep kan doen indien een Nederlandstalige tekst niet voldoende wordt begrepen. Met dit systeem wordt sinds kort op proefondervindelijke basis gewerkt. Voorgesteld wordt het te institutionaliseren en de verantwoordelijkheid voor het vinden van begeleiders te leggen bij het afdelingsmanagement.

4. Alle informatie met een arbeidsrechtelijk karakter komt ook in het Engels beschikbaar, inclusief informatie over procedures die essentieel zijn voor het functioneren van een medewerker (bijv. veiligheidsregels in het laboratorium).

5. Iedere niet-nederlandstalige nieuwe medewerker krijgt in zijn eerste maand een uitnodiging voor een gesprek met een personeelsconsulent waarin de vragen die de medewerker heeft op het terrein van PO&I aan de orde kunnen worden gesteld.

6. De startpagina van het Intranet wordt tweetalig. Voor de vervolgpagina's kan de informatie-eigenaar zelf een keuze maken of de informatie ook in het Engels wordt aangeboden. Maar wel met inachtneming van de spelregels die in deze notitie worden voorgesteld of die later nog ontwikkeld worden.
Voor alle duidelijkheid: de startpagina van Intranet is niet het exclusieve domein van CC. In principe plaatst elke afdeling de eigen berichten. Dit voorstel raakt dus alle afdelingen en heeft een wederkerig karakter: DEV heeft Engels als voertaal, maar zal bij gebruikmaking van de startpagina van het Intranet ook verantwoordelijk zijn voor een Nederlandse vertaling.

7. Besluiten van de RvB worden in beginsel via de lijn naar de medewerkers gecommuniceerd. De lijn is derhalve ook verantwoordelijk voor een adequate informatievoorziening naar niet-nederlandstalige medewerkers. In die gevallen waar de RvB ervoor kiest rechtstreeks naar alle medewerkers te communiceren zal dit, indien relevant, in het Nederlands en Engels geschieden.

8. Bij bijeenkomsten bedoeld voor alle KIT-medewerkers (lunchbijeenkomsten, personeelsfeest, kerstborrel etc.) geeft het Instituut er blijk van zich te realiseren dat er ook niet-nederlandstalige medewerkers zijn. Over de concretisering hiervan zijn moeilijk algemene afspraken te maken. Dit moet per bijeenkomst worden afgestemd. CC is er echter verantwoordelijk voor dat dit punt voldoende aandacht krijgt.

9. Het KIT stimuleert en faciliteert het functioneren van een "E-group" voor niet-nederlandstalige medewerkers waarin zij ervaringen kunnen uitwisselen, samen naar oplossingen zoeken, suggesties voor het KIT doen, e.d.

10. Na positieve besluitvorming over bovenstaande punten, al dan niet geamendeerd, aangepast of aangevuld, draagt iedere manager uit het een redelijke oplossing te vinden voor de taalproblematiek binnen het KIT. Afstand hiervan nemen, in welke richting ook, betekent een afzwakking van de positieve effecten die de spelregels in potentie hebben.

THE WRITER'S GUIDE

3 KIT spelling

Basic premises

Use British (UK) spelling, not American (US). (If you have a Webster's English dictionary, be aware that it will contain US spellings. Oxford, Longman or Collins are British.) For an overview of the differences between UK and US spelling, or to check specific words, see *The American-British British-American Dictionary at* http://www.peak.org/~jeremy/dictionary/. Please see the box below for information about the spelling checker in Microsoft Word.

Use –ize spellings, not –ise, eg minimize, organization, immunization.
(Not analyze, however, but analyse.)

(See also 'computer terminology' below for the difference between 'programme' and 'program'.)

Using Microsoft Word

A recommended dictionary is the Collins English Dictionary. This also contains UK English spellings of place names and well-known proper names.

Microsoft Word

MS Word spelling checker gives the impression that US English uses –ize and UK English uses only –ise. This is not true. Although –ise spellings are common in UK English, most British dictionaries give –ize as the first entry, and this spelling style is widely used in UK English, especially for publication. It is also more international. The popularity of MS Word has upset the balance somewhat, however.

Two word lists for MS Word have been compiled to accommodate this usage. To use them:
- Place both files in Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\Proof;
- In 'Extra, Opties, Spelling en grammatica' select 'US aangepast.dic' in 'aangepaste woordenlijsten';
- Set the language of your text to US English.

'Mssp2_en' is a list of US spelling exclusions. 'US aangepast' is a list of British spelling additions. Combined they ensure that the US dictionary will consider UK spellings to be correct and US ones to be incorrect, except for –ize spellings. The list also contains preferred spellings that differ from the Microsoft standard, plus technical words, and some Dutch place names. If you have your own modified word list for English, you can copy its contents into this one or vice versa.

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List of rules and common mistakes

Among, while
Use among, not amongst (among three or more things, between two).
Use while, not whilst.

Countries, place names, languages
Reflecting KIT's international orientation, place names may be used in the original language except where the name is very well established in the English language, eg The Hague. Be careful not to use Dutch spellings of place names in countries other than the Netherlands. For English spellings, consult the Collins English Dictionary.

Use Suriname (not Surinam), adjective Surinamese
Curaçao should have a cedilla

It is the Philippines, but a Filipino, Filipinos (not Philippino, Philippinos)

Use the Netherlands, not Holland. The adjective is Dutch. However, it is the Netherlands Antilles. Also many organization prefer not to use the adjective Dutch in their titles, to avoid confusion. It is therefore the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Royal Netherlands Army etc.

Hindi is the language; Hindu is the ethnic group

Computer terminology
program (not programme)
disk (not disc)
CD-ROM
e-mail
the internet (no capital letter)
world wide web; the web, website; web page

Remember that in all other contexts programme is spelt in the British way, eg theatre programme, development programme. The same holds for disc.

Organizations
Spell names according to the usage of the organization itself, even if this differs from KIT style, eg:
> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
> (not 'Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development')

> World Health Organization
> (not 'World Health Organisation')

Practice/practise
-ice is the noun; -ise is the verb; the practice, to practise; a licence, to license

Quotation marks
We use quotation marks:
• at the beginning and end of a quote
• if something is meant ironically or 'in a manner of speaking' (use sparingly!)

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18

• for a title of a journal article (see *Sources and publications* below)

• for the names of projects, festivals, conferences, etc.

• as an alternative to italics in web texts, because italics are difficult to read on the computer screen.

- Full stops and commas go inside quotation marks:
  The MSF doctor said, 'Conditions here in the camp are absolutely appalling.'
  This is not so if the quotation is integrated into your sentence:
  The MSF doctor described conditions in the camp as 'absolutely appalling'.
- Titles of books, journals, plays and films should not be placed in quotation marks, but written in italics.
- If you are using curly quotation marks make sure they open like a six and close like a nine, as 'these' do. In Dutch they are often both like a nine, as 'these ' are; this is not possible in English.
- Always use single apostrophes, except for cases when you make a quote within a quote: use double apostrophes for the innermost quote.

Examples:

- The Chairman of the Board of Directors ended his speech with the words: 'Enjoy your meal!'
- We felt like 'real' men when we ploughed through the rainforest in our Land Rover.
- 'I asked people in the street for directions,' said the traveller, 'but "*I don't speak English*" was the only answer I got.'

Apostrophes

Unlike Dutch, English uses an apostrophe for possessives:

> The Kenyan representative's argument was very strong. (One representative)
> The Kenyan representatives' argument was very strong. (Two representatives)

> Prince Charles' speech, James' proposal, Jesus' disciple, St Thomas' Hospital

But not for plurals, eg:
> stereos, skis, photos

This is also true for plural abbreviations, eg:
> NGOs
> MPs

And decades, eg:
> the 1980s

However, an apostrophe should be used for unusual plurals of letters, eg:
> a's and b's, x's and y's

Please note it is
> a master's degree

and
> KIT's library is well equipped.

Here 'KIT's' is possessive (bezittelijk), but in most cases you will use KIT as an adjective (bijvoeglijk naamwoord).

> KIT employees are highly skilled.

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Commas

This is a complex area, and cannot be dealt with in detail here. Importantly, there are differences between what is usual in English and Dutch. For example, the word order of Dutch requires that a comma is used to separate verbs when they are next to each other. This does not occur in English. The most important topics are dealt with below.

Commas *may* be used before the 'and' and 'or' in lists where it makes the meaning clearer. For example:

> 'Meetings are held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.'

Here no comma is needed. However:

> 'There are good facilities for pensioners, people with disabilities and children.'

This is ambiguous and would be better with a comma before 'and children':

> 'There are good facilities for pensioners, people with disabilities, and children.'

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Commas

She asked me if/whether He said that Mary promised (that) It is obvious (that) It is unwise to They are so heavy (that)		None of these phrases should have a comma in or after them. eg She asked me if I would help. ~~She asked me, if I would help.~~ They are so heavy that I cannot lift them. ~~They are so heavy, that I cannot lift them.~~ (Note that 'that' is a conjunction and may be removed, particularly in spoken English.)
The woman over there is my teacher. The way you do it is not very important.		Neither of these should have a comma. It would separate the subject from the verb. Imagine how wrong these would look: 'The woman, is my teacher.' 'It, is not important.'
We will leave when the formalities have been completed. When the formalities have been completed, we will leave. The project will continue if the funds are made available. If the funds are made available, the project will continue. Since I first met the director on Tuesday, we have had several telephone conversations.		The underlined words form the main sentence. The rest of the sentence is a dependent clause, which cannot stand as a sentence on its own. As a rule, if the main sentence comes first, no comma is needed. If the dependent clause comes first, it should be followed by a comma.
On Tuesday we will leave for Paris.		However, if it is very short, usually no comma is needed...
In 2000, KIT IBD was active in seven regions.		...unless the particular combination of words might otherwise be confusing to the eye.

There were 25 cows in the herd. The cows, which were suffering from BSE, had to be destroyed. There were 25 girls working in the factory. The girls, who worked hard, received a bonus.	**None-defining relative clause (with commas)** The underlined words form the main sentence. The words between the commas are extra information. In this sentence, all 25 cows had to be destroyed, and all 25 girls received a bonus.
The cows which were suffering from BSE had to be destroyed. The girls who worked hard received a bonus.	**Defining relative clause (without commas)** In this sentence, 'which were suffering from BSE' defines which cows had to be destroyed. the words in bold can be seen as a single item, like the subject of the sentence.

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	Here, only the cows with the disease had to be destroyed – perhaps only two or three – and similarly only some of the girls received a bonus.
The cows **that** were suffering from BSE had to be destroyed	In this type of sentence, the defining relative clause, 'which' can be replaced by 'that'. Indeed, to increase the distinction in meaning, it is recommended that you do so. A comma before that in a relative clause is never possible MS Word grammar checker can help with consistency in this. Make sure the 'relative clauses' option is selected (Extra, Opties, Spelling en grammatica, Instellingen).

When the following words and phrases occur at the beginning of a sentence, they are followed by a comma.

Again,
Furthermore,
However, (when it occurs in the middle of the sentence it has a comma both before and after it)
In addition,
Interestingly,
Moreover,
Nevertheless,
None the less,
Of course,
Therefore, (when it occurs in the middle of a sentence it usually needs no comma)
Unfortunately,

'Hence' and 'thus' usually do not need a comma at the beginning of a sentence.

Colons

If a sentence makes sense without the colon, it is unnecessary.
This sentence does not need a colon:

The symptoms are high temperature, loss of weight, and vomiting.

This sentence does need a colon

The symptoms are as follows: high temperature, loss of weight, and vomiting.

Questions after a colon do not start with a capital letter except in titles.

eg   As part of a text:

One important question remains to be answered: is there enough money?

As a title:

Cancer: Is this the answer?

Full stops

For abbreviations of titles, do not use a full stop when the abbreviation ends with the last letter of the word itself, for example Mr (Mister), but Prof. (Professor)
In practice this means most titles do not have a full stop.

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Mr, Ms, Mrs, Miss, Dr

(This is the British style. You are more likely to see 'Mr.' followed by a full stop in US writing, although many British people also do it.)

Full stops are also not needed after abbreviations like eg, ie and etc.

However, do use full stops after initials. (In print in English it is common to leave these out, but this differs too radically from Dutch usage to be practical.)
Use therefore:

Mr L.B.E. Smith

(see also, *Names and titles*)

Brackets
Brackets are rarely used with the sense of 'and/or' in English – a construction that is very common in Dutch. The following sentences are translated from letters to the *Volkskrant*. The first one would be unusual in English, the second completely impossible.

- The decision depends on (inter)national economic developments.
- Smokers leave (ashtrays full of) cigarette ends behind them.

The first should be:
　　The decision depends on national and international economic developments.

The second must be either:
　　Smokers leave ashtrays full of cigarette ends behind them.
or:
　　Smokers leave cigarette ends behind them.

This use of brackets is possible for optional plurals, eg:
　　Name(s) of delegate(s): ....
Avoid it outside the context of forms or notes, however

Use 'he or she' rather than '(s)he' or 's/he'.

Also, avoid 'and/or' if at all possible.

Spaces
Note that there should be no space before or after a stroke (/), eg:
　　and/or

There should be a space both before and after a dash:

　　The introduction of the new test – a first in the region – will be a great help to doctors working in the field.

Make sure you use a dash (–) instead of a hyphen (-). MS Word may do this automatically, but you have to check it.

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Italics

Use italics for titles of exhibitions, books, journals, television programmes, and films.
eg

> The programme *The future of malaria* was reviewed in the medical journal *Tropical diseases*.

Place words or phrases in a language other than English in italics, not quotation marks.

> When you arrive in the Netherlands, it will not be long before you hear the word *gezellig*. *Gezellig* means sociable or convivial, and the term is applied to numerous situations in Dutch culture.

Addresses

We always write addresses, telephone numbers, PO boxes and websites in exactly the same format:

Postal Address:
KIT
PO BOX 95001
NL-1090 HA Amsterdam
Netherlands

Visiting address
Mauritskade 63
1092 AD Amsterdam
Netherlands
tel +31 20 568 8711
fax +31 20 668 4579
e-mail Communication@kit.nl
website www.kit.nl

Names of KIT departments and their abbreviated forms

• In all external communications we use the full name of the institute and its departments. The acronym KIT may also be used in such communications; this applies to all languages.
• Names of departments may only be abbreviated in internal correspondence.
• We never mention the names of different branches within the departments (such as Financial Affairs, Sustainable Economic Development) in external communications (not even in letters or emails), nor do we use their abbreviated names either.

In full	acronym
Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen	KIT
Royal Tropical Institute	KIT
Institut Royal des Tropiques	KIT
Instituto Real de los Trópicos	KIT

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Always use the full name of the department in external communications

abbreviation **for internal use only**

Finance, Control & Facilities
FC&F

Personnel, Organisation & Information
PO&I

Corporate Communication
CC

Tropenmuseum
TM

Tropentheater
TT

KIT Development Policy & Practice
DEV

KIT Biomedical Research
BR

KIT Information & Library Services
ILS

KIT Intercultural Management & Communication
IMC

KIT Publishers
PB

Abbreviations

• Do not abbreviate words in the running text: for example, do not use e.g. ('for example'), i.e. ('that is') or etc. Moreover, 'etcetera' is not an alternative as it is never written in full in English. Please note there is no English equivalent for o.a. (onder anderen). It will usually translate either as 'including', or as 'like', 'such as' or 'for example'.
• Also write tuberculosis and not TB
• Abbreviations that have become commonplace and part of everyday language are allowed: HIV/AIDS, CD-ROM, DVD, USA, UK. *However, one of the first rules of abbreviations is to use them only if you are sure that your target audience will understand them.*
• You may use the official acronym of an organization as long as you write its name in full when it appears for the first time in the text: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Agricultural Coordination Group (ACG), Southern Africa HIV and AIDS Information Dissemination Service (SAfAIDS). *The official English name of many Dutch organizations can be found in the English section of their website.* Please note: never use BuZa in an official text: despite being used by many people as the acronym for the Royal Netherlands Ministry for Foreign Affairs, it is not the ministry's official acronym.
• Spell out numbers under 10, except with measurements with a unit (8 mm, 4 cm, 9 per cent), or when in a list with other numbers (14 dogs, 12 cats, 9 gerbils). Also use figures for ages (see below).

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- Remember that the use of commas and points in numbers is the other way round to Dutch, eg:
  19.5 per cent; 195,000 cases.
- Only use a comma with numbers from 10,000 upwards: 9000; 90,000; 90,000,000
- A billion is one thousand million (not the older British usage of one million million).

Currencies

€25.00
US$ 25.00
GB£ 25.00

US$ 25,000
US$ 25m   (= 25,000,000)
US$ 25bn   (= 25,000,000,000)

Units of measurement
Note the spacing:

20°C	20 mm
20 kg	20 cm
20 g	20 m
20 ml	20 km

Ages

Use figures for ages:

a girl aged 12	3 day old child
a 64-year-old man	men in their 60s
62 years old	3 months old
children aged 8-12	
(or in formal text) children aged 8 to 12	

Generally use 'young people' rather than 'youth' or 'youths'.

Dates
- Use this style: 24 June 2001 (day, month, year; no 'th', 'rd' or 'nd')
- Please note that the place is not included with the date in English.
- Use 'from 1984 to 1986' (not, for example, 1984-86)
- Use 2000 on its own, not 'the year 2000'.

Job titles and abbreviations
• Be consistent with your job title: always write it as it appears on your business card.
• We never use abbreviated forms of job titles. The only exception to this rule is in internal notes: the positions of the department heads and directors may be shortened to HPO&I and DTM.

Names and titles
When writing formally to a woman, address her as Ms unless she has for example in a letter that she is Miss (unmarried) or Mrs (married). Ms is a modern title which does not specify whether a woman is married or unmarried.

In general, when referring to people like KIT staff members or, for example, politicians, give both their first names and surnames, rather than initials. It is also less common in English than it is in Dutch to include a person's title (eg Mr, Ms, Mrs, Miss, Dr) for

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example in articles or reports. (However, of course be sensitive if you are dealing with a culture in which the omission of a title would be seen as disrespectful.)

Because of this problem, some Dutch companies and institutions use 'Dhr. R.L.D.S. van der Brink' on their Dutch business cards, but 'Ronald van der Brink' on their English version. Be aware that the Dutch version can look old-fashioned to an English reader.

When referring to government ministers etc use:
   The Minister of Agriculture Mary Smith

In job titles, use capital letters and do not forget the word 'of', eg:
   Head of Marketing
   Director of Finance
   (but Head Curator, Head Gardener)

Note: there is a difference between: Head Curator [there are many curators and this person is the top curator], Head, Marketing and Communications [here the comma replaces the word 'of'. One could also write: Head of Marketing and Communications]. Forgetting the comma is a common mistake at KIT

The gender of a word
Avoid using 'he' as a general pronoun. Make it plural and use 'they'; if that is not possible, use 'he or she'. Rather than 'manpower', use staffing, workforce, or human resources.

Incorrect	*Correct*
KIT has **her** roots in the colonial era.	**KIT** has **its** roots in the colonial era.

Capital or lower case letters

Use capital letters for the first word of a title only. Capitals should be used for the name of an organization, but not for parts of the name if it is not used in full, eg:

> A KIT representative attended a meeting of the National Public Health Steering Committee (NPHSC). The committee meets biannually to discuss progress and policy. (Not: The Committee meets biannually to discuss progress and policy.)

Do not forget to use capital letters for days of the week, months, countries and their adjectives, and titles:

> Sunday
> January
> Mr, Ms, Mrs, Mrs, Dr etc
> Dutch, English etc.

Please note it is 'the Netherlands' but 'The Hague'.
In addresses, use only 'Netherlands'.
Do not use capital letters for:

> internet
> world wide web

North, south, east, west

north	south	west	east
northeast, northwest	southeast, southwest		
northerly, northward	southerly, southward	westerly, westward	eastward, easterly
northern hemisphere	southern hemisphere	western hemisphere	eastern hemisphere
North Pole	South Pole		
the North	the South	the West	the East
		the Western world	
Northerners	Southerners	Westerners	Easterners
Northern Countries	Southern countries	Western countries	Eastern countries
		Western clothing	
	Southeast Asia		Middle East, Far East
North America	South America		
North Africa	South Africa (country)	Western Europe	Eastern Europe
	Southern Africa (region)	West Africa	East Africa

Footnotes

We do not use footnotes in the communication media mentioned in this Writer's Guide. They distract the reader from the main text and often spoil the structure. Ask yourself how important the information you wish to place in a footnote is. Can it be missed? Then leave it out. Is it vital?

Then include it in the running text, in quotation marks if necessary. This rule does not apply to scientific articles or publications. Here, you should consult the rules that apply to that particular area of expertise.

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Hyphens

The rules on hyphenation are not fixed. The spelling checker of MS Word lists co-operate as a UK spelling and cooperate as US, but this is misleading. The style without a hyphen is more common in modern UK English. If in doubt, consult the dictionary and choose the first option.

As a rule, join the following prefixes directly to the word, not connected with a hyphen:

Ante	Anti	Bi	by	circum
Co	Counter	De	dis	down
electro	Extra	Fore	hydro	hyper
Hypo	In	Infra	inter	intra
macro	Mal	micro	mid	multi
Non	On	out	over	pan
Post	Pre	pseudo	re	semi
Sub	Super	supra	trans	socio
Ultra	Un	under	uni	tri

We therefore use:
> cooperate
> coordinate
> coproduction
> socioeconomic
> worldwide

However, do use a hyphen to separate two letters that are the same (cooperate and coordinate are exceptions). Often these are e's, eg: pre-eminent, pre-emptive, re-elect. Use one also if the prefix connects to a word beginning with a capital letter, eg anti-Nazi.

Use a hyphen with compounds formed with the following:

All	ex (when it means former)
Mid	like
Self	vice
wide (at the beginning of the word)	half

Generally, adjectives made up of two words are written as two separate words when they come after a verb, and joined with a hyphen when they come before a noun, e.g.
> a life-saving operation; the operation was life saving
> a long-term plan; we planned for the long term

This is particularly important where the combination of words could be theoretically ambiguous, eg:
> fast moving traffic
> a half dead animal
> a poorly prepared student

These should be fast-moving traffic, a half-dead animal and a poorly-prepared student. However:
> The traffic was fast moving.
> The animal was half dead.
> The student was poorly prepared.

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Sources and publications

Every branch of science describes its sources in a different way. The pointers we give here for title descriptions **do not** apply to scientific publications and other books, but to the communication media mentioned in this Writer's Guide (namely, the Annual Report and electronic media).
• Begin with the title and sub-title.
• Then write the author's name as it appears on the original publication.
• In the case of printed publications: place, publisher, publication year; in the case of journals, issue number or month and year.
• For electronic publications: URL address, year of publication.
• In the interests of clarity, place any additional information right at the end, for example: Thesis.
• Be careful when using italics, points and commas: see the examples.

• *book*
Pracht en kraal. Van Madonna tot de Masaï. Loan Oei. Amsterdam, KIT Publishers, 2005.

• *article in book*
Bird symbols on Indonesian textiles. Itie van Hout. In: *Divine Messengers. Bird symbolism and aestetics in Southeast Asia.* Pierre le Roux, Bernard Sellato (ed.). Paris, Connaissances & Savoirs, 2006.

• *article in newspaper or journal*
Digitalisering: KIT zet kaartencollectie op internet. Jeanine Tielemans. *Archievenblad*, Februari 2006.

• *other sources*
The world of Artemisia in 44 questions. Willem Heemskerk, Henk Schallig, Bart de Steenhuijsen Piters. www.kit.nl, 2006. E-publication.

Van subsidie naar output-financiering. Hans van Hartevelt. Amsterdam, Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, 2006. Paper for Online Conferentie Nederland 2006.

Emphasizing words

You can emphasize words in a number of different ways: by making them bold or italic, by capitalizing them, by underlining them, by placing them in inverted commas, or by using exclamation marks. For maximum impact you should do this very sparingly. We use:
• quotation marks only for quotes and irony (see Quotation marks in this chapter);
• italics only for words and quotes in foreign languages and to emphasize a word;
• bold and underline, but never in a running text (that is reserved for sub-headings).

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