

# Multilingualism in University Council meetings

What contribution can Lingua Receptiva make to the inclusivity of an internationally oriented university?

---

Valentina Correale (6288588)

Master Thesis Intercultural Communication

Supervisor: Prof. Jan D. ten Thije

Second Supervisor: Prof. Manuela Pinto

Utrecht, 24 April 2020

# ABSTRACT

---

Utrecht University is now offering international students and staff the opportunity to be part of the University Council as full members. The university aims to be more inclusive, with the priority of hiring international staff, which would help improve the quality of research and education of the institution through internationalisation on a large scale. However, a language barrier arises, as the official language of the administration is Dutch and not many internationals have adequate proficiency in it. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the use of Lingua Receptiva as a potential solution to avoid the choice of a single language in the University Council meetings of Utrecht University, maintaining the current quality of the debate also during Dutch-English meetings. Lingua Receptiva (LaRa) is the multilingual communicative mode in which people use different languages and understand each other at the basis of the receptive proficiency in the language of the other.

This multilingual communication management, supported by communicative modes such as code-switching, English as lingua franca and translation/interpretation could facilitate communication between the two groups, leading to the maintenance of the current quality of debate and contributing to the involvement of Dutch and international members as part of the same academic community. These two factors have been the focus of this research, as the author is an international student herself, there has been personal involvement and interest in the issue. The text starts with a framework of the current situation Utrecht University is now facing, reaching its objective of innovation and improvement, and an explanation of the function of the University Council and the structure of its meetings. An important role is then given to the definition of Lingua Receptiva and the measures for its implementation, accompanied by a clarification of what is meant with quality of debate.

Cumulative interviews were conducted with 19 participants, among the university and Faculty Council members and the administrative support staff. Analysis of the responses demonstrated that the quality of debate does not generally depend on the language used, but there could still be an improvement if people were allowed to speak a language they are comfortable with. The results indicate that to achieve adequate communication, preparedness on the topics discussed during the encounters is essential, alongside the concepts of participation and inclusiveness. The attitude towards LaRa was mainly positive, since a more efficient conversation could be achieved with the aim of understanding each other despite the differences.

On this basis, it is advised to organise receptive language courses with a major focus on the language of administration, to allow international students and staff members to acquire the terminology needed to understand the University Council discussions on a high level of proficiency. Bilingual documents may be provided to support international members, with the addition of a small glossary of Dutch and English institutional keywords. Furthermore, a third party has been indicated by the majority of international and some Dutch respondents as necessary to arrange interpretation of the conversation and to mediate between the cultures. In case the implementation of LaRa would not result in a positive outcome, valuable alternatives proposed by the respondents of the research have been laid out, followed by recommendations.

# INDEX

---

<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 <i>Administration in the Netherlands</i>	7
2.2 <i>English, unless...</i>	8
2.3 <i>Utrecht University Council</i>	9
2.3.1 Meetings	9
2.3.2 Intercultural aspects: Dutch “Medezeggenschap”	10
<b>3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 <i>Receptive Multilingualism as a potential solution</i>	12
3.1.1 <i>Luistertaal /Lingua Receptiva</i>	12
3.1.2 <i>Language as a tool to express cultural identity</i>	13
3.1.3 <i>The effectiveness of Lingua Receptiva</i>	13
3.1.4 <i>Inclusion despite different cultural identities</i>	14
3.2 <i>What determines the quality of the debate during a meeting?</i>	15
3.3 <i>Multilingual meetings with the use of Lingua Receptiva</i>	15
3.4 <i>Possibility to implement Receptive Multilingualism in the language policy</i>	16
3.4.1 <i>Receptive Multilingualism in relation to the language planning</i>	16
3.4.2 <i>Three dimensions to facilitate the implementation of Receptive Multilingualism</i>	17
3.4.3 <i>Learning Lingua Receptiva</i>	18
<b>4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>5. METHODS</b>	<b>19</b>
5.1 <i>Qualitative research</i>	19
5.1.1 <i>Selection of participants</i>	20
5.1.2 <i>Language choice in the interviews</i>	21
5.2 <i>Research process</i>	21
5.2.1 <i>Cumulative interviews</i>	22
5.3 <i>Data analysis</i>	22
5.3.1 <i>Perspectives and Decentering</i>	23
<b>6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	<b>23</b>
6.1 <i>Attitude towards Lingua Receptiva</i>	23
6.2 <i>How to reach a qualitative debate</i>	24
6.3 <i>Snap je? ~ The adequate receptive Dutch knowledge</i>	25
6.3.1 <i>Intercultural aspects</i>	25
6.4 <i>The process of internationalization</i>	26
6.4.1 <i>The importance of feeling included</i>	26
6.5 <i>Proposals of respondents</i>	27

6.6 <i>Alternatives for LaRa</i>	28
<b>7. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>8. RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>9. BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>10. APPENDIX 1: Interviews – questions list and consent of participation</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>10. Appendix 2: Nvivo code system</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Nodes</b>	<b>39</b>

# 1. INTRODUCTION

---

Utrecht University is one of the oldest institutions in the Netherlands, as well as one of the largest in Europe. The University has both Dutch and international students and staff. For this reason, Utrecht University has started a program of comprehensive internationalisation in the last few years, to allow a significant number of future international students and staff to enrol or apply for a job (De Lange, 2019). However, education is not the only area in which internationalisation will improve the integration of students and staff. In fact, internationalisation could also lead to an enhancement in administration, developing teamwork, increasing the prospects and the quality of ideas. For administration in particular, one of the problems that arises from the integration of internationals within the university is the language that is selected, more specifically, for the meetings of the University Council. To include international students and staff, the University Council is looking for a solution to the situation that may have to be addressed shortly. The core of the case study is then to evaluate this problem in relation to the comprehension of the language in the administration departments, more specifically the language that will be used during University Council meetings, both with and without the Board. This would ensure inclusivity of non-native Dutch speakers when they are able to understand the topic discussed and participate in the conversation.

This research aims to investigate the possibilities of implementing the use of *Lingua Receptiva* as a potential communicative mode in the staff and student Council's meetings at Utrecht University. *Lingua Receptiva* (or *Luistertaal*), abbreviated as LaRa, is meant as a way of communication in which people speak different languages and still understand each other, due to the receptive skills of the language of the other (Backus et al, 2013). For example, when Dutch members speak Dutch and understand English, and international members speak English and understand Dutch. The maintenance of the linguistic quality of the debate is of interest because it contributes to a development of a feeling of inclusion of both international and Dutch students and staff members within democratic academic bodies.

The focus of this research will be specifically on Council members, who may experience some difficulties with the use of English as the only possible way of communicating considering the participation of international members during the University Council meetings. This regards not only the spoken language but also the one used for prepared documents, that must at least include an English summary of the main topics. Since mostly only Dutch natives work within the administration, they are less used to the internationalisation concerning the majority of the faculties, and consequently to the use of English language in meetings. Using a second language could cause insecurities and misunderstanding among participants, especially considering that people are better able to express themselves through their first language which is more comfortable and spontaneous. The Utrecht University Council is now entirely composed of Dutch members, hence the current used language is Dutch, it being the language of administration and the participant's mother tongue. However, with the entrance of internationals within the University Council things might change. There are different papers regarding the language policy used by the institution concerning education, but the topic of this research will be more oriented towards the language use of the administration, where little official policy has been established so far. This leads to the following research question:

**“Under what conditions can the use of *Lingua Receptiva* in the University Council of Utrecht University facilitate the participation of her Dutch as well as her international members and at the same time maintain the quality of the debate of the University Council meetings?”**

This research will be conducted with the aid of the existing documents regarding the language policy of the university, which will be laid out in the contextual framework. A parallel investigation is being conducted about what concerns the use of LaRa within other universities in the country.

First, an analysis of previous situations in which Lingua Receptiva has been experimented within other universities and the explanation of its definition and correct use will be the basis of the theoretical framework. This will be followed by a description of the methods used. Interviews with students, teachers and staff involved will be undertaken to understand the possibility of the implementation of LaRa as the official communicative mode of the *Universiteitsraad (University Council)* meetings. This will be achieved through an in-depth examination of what the participants regard as a debate of high quality, and how Lingua Receptiva could be used to create a feeling of inclusion within the administrative board. Finally, results will be explained and discussed, followed by a conclusion and recommendations.

## 2. CONTEXUAL FRAMEWORK

---

In order to provide a background about the language situation at Utrecht University, this chapter gives an introduction of the administrative law, information about the Council and the way meetings are currently structured in general. This is based on available documents (e.g. Utrecht University Language policy, 2016).

### 2.1 Administration in the Netherlands

Utrecht University's current language policy indicates Dutch as the official language of the institution. Exceptions are permitted in case of enrolments or job applications of international students and staff (Code of conduct, 2018). Dutch and English make up the linguistic landscape of the institution, with a concession of the use of English according to the situation and its participants. Still, this mainly concerns education and department meetings, while nothing about language use is specified when it comes to the administration. Dutch is almost taken for granted as the one to apply in this context, it being the official language of the country and the most used in the administration building (Algemene Wet Bestuursrecht, 2020). This is mainly affirmed by the fact that many high positions in administration are taken up by Dutch people, who use Dutch for the bureaucracy. Even if there is no document within the University which states which is the official language, this statement can be confirmed by the article number 2.6 of the *Algemene Wet Bestuursrecht (General Administrative Law)*, which quotes:

*“Bestuursorganen en onder hun verantwoordelijkheid werkzame personen gebruiken de Nederlandse taal, tenzij bij wettelijk voorschrift anders is bepaald. In afwijking van het eerste lid kan een andere taal worden gebruikt indien het gebruik daarvan doelmatiger is en de belangen van derden daardoor niet onevenredig worden geschaad.”* (Algemene Wet Bestuursrecht, 2020, p. 1 – General Administrative Law Act)

*“Administrative bodies and people working under their responsibility use the Dutch language, unless indicated otherwise by statutory regulation. Notwithstanding the first paragraph, another language may be used if its use is more efficient and the interests of third parties are not thereby disproportionately harmed”* (Translation by the author).

According to the law, then, Dutch is the official language all institutions must apply regarding administration. However, it does not apply when there is a more efficient language or if the use of the former could cause damage to any of the participants. Considering the law, this clarifies the reason why there is no policy where the mandatory language is specified.

It should be clarified, though, that the language used also depends on the department of the university: sometimes it is not the natural option to choose Dutch, considering that some of the faculties have more international than Dutch people, and consequently Dutch is not suitable for official communication (Non-educational language policy [NELP], 2018). Therefore, employees working within those departments are requested to speak or already speak both Dutch and English. Even though Dutch law specifies Dutch as the main official language, the need could occur to switch between Dutch and English when international participants are involved in the communicative process.

For the reasons illustrated, the language policy should be reconsidered, regarding both education and administration, to be able to offer a broader choice to the internationals who are expected to be part of these systems from September 2020 onwards. It is certainly important to include Dutch as it is the official

communicative system of the country, but another option should be accounted for in view of the above, giving more than one linguistic solution that will benefit everybody.

## 2.2 English, unless...

The main reason for selecting a dual language policy lies mainly in the openness that the university is trying to express towards international students and staff to make them feel more welcomed and involved. This was first specified in a Memorandum introduced in 2018. The document describes how the institution strives to achieve higher quality in terms of research and education (*Strategic plan 2016-2020*, 2016), and of course a better reputation due to the great social impact that this project could achieve, making the university more diverse, and through that more inclusive as well (De Lange, 2019).

The internationalisation process does not only concern Utrecht University. Other Dutch universities have adapted their language policy, to create a more inclusive environment for everyone (Bronkhorst, 2019). Both the University of Twente and Eindhoven University of Technology selected English as the official language to be used, including those in the highest positions such as Council and Executive bodies, which, even if they only contain Dutch participants, find themselves conducting meetings in English (Bronkhorst, 2019). Some parties of the House of Representatives (*de Tweede Kamer*) strongly disagree with English as the main language of a university and would prefer that Dutch, being the national language, remains the official communicative system of these institutions. A controversy that materialises itself in the new law of Language and Accessibility, which emphasises the relevance of the use of the Dutch language, strengthening its position within the institution's education, to which all universities have to respond (*Taal en Toegankelijkheid*, 2019). However, University of Twente considers the adaptation of English as the official language of their institutions as a better way towards the internationalisation of the institution, and supports the use of English in all their fields, since *"The language in which we communicate must contribute to inclusiveness and diversity. It is important that everyone can understand each other and be involved in what is happening"* (Bronkhorst, 2019, p.1).

In Utrecht University, the Executive Board has decided on a number of measures considering the eventual entry into the Council of new international members, whether they are part of the students or staff, so as to prevent an eventual linguistic problem among the parts (Nota Internationalisering medezeggenschap, [NIM], 2019). The first solutions proposed were the use of interpreters, to help the two parties with the opposite language. The university documents are already translated, although not all: many documents that mainly concern the administration are not always published in English, sometimes only with a small summary, depending on the target of the message included in the document (De Haes, 2019). Hiring professional translators and interpreters would generate a considerable cost. For this reason, some of the members of the board set out to formulate a document, a Nota-Memorandum named *Internationaliserig medezeggenschap*, which contained other possible solutions in this regard, including starting a Dutch receptive course as a third option for possible international participants next year (De Haes et al, 2019). As there are already several trainings to follow to become member of the University Council, and according to the Memorandum (2019), these could be accompanied by receptive language courses. This would aid new international members to acquire receptive knowledge of Dutch and enable them to make use of English during the meetings. To ensure understanding of and participation in the meetings, future international members can be accommodated by having them trained to learn the appropriate terminology

used at this level of the language and by arranging the documentation in two languages (NIM, 2019). International members will still be able to request an interpreter to assist them (De Haes et al, 2019).

Therefore, the present research has the aim of clarifying the essential characteristics of the contemporary situation, and consequently adapt the solutions discussed. This can lead to a better understanding that will benefit both Dutch and international members, with more effective and inclusive meetings (NIM, 2019). In this way Dutch as international members can focus mainly on content without any concern about the communication tool.

## 2.3 Utrecht University Council

Utrecht University Council is formed by twenty-four members and has the aim to represent students and staff members within the institution, declaring their interests and needs towards the Executive Board, and making decisions that concern and benefit them. Each faculty has its own council, but the University Council is the only one which can call a meeting and directly speak with the members of the Executive Board. It is composed of twelve students, twelve staff members, and a chairman who is chosen by the members to represent them and manage their encounters. Students are democratically elected for a one-year term and staff for two years. The conditions to become part of the Council are the enrolment in a Bachelor or Master programme for students, while for staff members it is to work at Utrecht University. Both students and staff members have organized themselves in different parties, which have different points of view about the university matters discussed. Representatives are elected by students or staff to be part of the Council as official members. (Reglement voor de Universiteitsraad van de Universiteit Utrecht, 2017)

The Council is allowed to discuss with the Board at least twice a year, to express its opinions and exhibit its proposals. The Council presents a strong decision-making power, influencing every change or confirmation of institutional plans, administrative rules or choice of participation schemes. Therefore, it is very important that both entities express their consensus on a rule or regulation, since it is something that can affect the entire university (Toelichting bij het reglement voor de Universiteitsraad [TBRVU], 2017).

The nationality needed to be part of the University Council is not exactly specified in the *huishoudelijk reglement (Internal regulations, 2017)*. It does not result relevant, since the Executive Board set the internationalisation of employees as a high priority, including the participation of international students and staff to University Council meetings as proper members (NIM, 2019). For this reason, the Utrecht University website includes a section with instructions for internationals that would be part of the Council, completely in English. Furthermore, on the web page there is a specific segment which includes information for internationals on the measures that will take place in case they would be interested to become candidate themselves. Among this information future candidates find the measures containing English summaries of the documents, the presence of an interpreter if necessary and a receptive Dutch course, meant to be used until future members master the language (<https://www.uu.nl/en/elections>, n.d.).

### 2.3.1 Meetings

According to the *huishoudelijk reglement (2017)*, which describes in detail the procedure to follow to work together and participate in a meeting, encounters are organised as stated by the need to discuss about important issues that concern the university. Either the Executive Board and the University Council can call

for a meeting, but its internal regulations are arranged and organised by the Council itself, as well as the order of the topics to discuss. There are different kind of encounters which take place in the *Bestuursgebouw (Administrative building)*, that regards the University Council and the meetings with the Board. The case study centres the attention around the University Council, which regularly gathers both with and without the Executive Board. During the first meeting, the encounter with the Executive Board is prepared and questions and standpoints are discussed (Huishoudelijkreglement, 2017).

Usually the Council meets six times with and seven times without the Board a year. Encounters are assembled by the chairman, and at least eight members should answer and participate to let it be official. Decisions are taken with the consensus of the majority, provided that more than half of the participants are present at the meeting. Since students and teachers belong to different parties, contrasting points of view are usually considered, because every party has its own perspective about the introduced arguments. This way it is easier to take into account all the possible implications a new regulation or decision can concern, with a more ample and complete discourse.

The Council reports its activities annually, so people who are not part of the Board or administration in general can be informed about the settlements for the university. In addition, the Council sends out email newsletters six or seven times a year and uses Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

The preparatory work regarding the meetings of the council occurs in three committees: e.g. *Commissie Financiën, Personeel en ICT; Commissie Onderwijs, Onderzoek & Studenten and Commissie Strategie, Huisvesting & Organisatie (Financial Committee, Staff and ICT; Education, Research & Student Committee; Strategy, Housing & Organisation Committee)*. All these committees have a separate meeting, in order to prepare the topics concerning the university matters to discuss with the Board. (<https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/governance-and-organisation/employee-and-student-representation/university-council>, n.d.)

The document of the *huishoudelijkreglement (2017)* describes in detail every procedure that should be accounted and any alternative that can be taken, so it is interesting that nothing specific is written regarding the language members should use to speak among each other. As already mentioned, this could be the consequence of the fact that all the members are Dutch native speakers; although, explained in a certain way, it might also seem that there is no actual language condition to take part in the event. The meetings of the Council with the Board are open for the general public.

### 2.3.2 Intercultural aspects: Dutch “Medezeggenschap”

A decidedly typical element of Dutch culture which candidates could certainly encounter in an organization such as Utrecht University is the concept of *medezeggenschap*, fundamental in this country and defined precisely as one of the key elements for participation in this type of meetings (Jansen et al, 2015). The University Council itself can be defined with the Dutch word *medezeggenschapsorgaan (administrative advisory body)*, since the right of the approval the entity has is connected to the strategic choices of the University. It is important to mention that every Council in the institution, including university and faculty ones, has the same power and can therefore employ the same rights (TBRVU, 2017).

The general idea is that the Council’s aims are agreed upon collectively; every participant must have a say in decisions that concern university status, that are taken if half of the members plus one reaches an agreement (Jansen et al, 2015). Besides the importance of the agreement that has to be achieved during the meetings, Council members also have the right to advise, consult and be informed about their activities

and what is implied in the conversation (Bomhof et al, 2018). Along with participation and consensus, in Dutch culture a large amount of value is given to minorities and their opinions. It is therefore important that international members are part of *medezeggenschap*, to increase their participation and integration within the group. Among the information obtained in the survey filled in by Dutch Council members of different organizations in the Netherlands (Bomhof et al, 2018), next to the concept of consensus the participants underlined the importance of trainings people should attend to be able to participate in the most suitable way. These trainings would help them to better understand how the meetings function on an organizational and cultural level.

The current University Council, as already mentioned, does not count any international participants amongst its members, but this can be solved. The Executive Board has already decided on the measures to adapt to facilitate international candidates, which promote the use of Lingua Receptiva (De Haes et al, 2019). The concept of *medezeggenschap* was not initially part of the case study, but it is important to mention it since the research focuses on the language policy of university administration in relation to the notions of inclusion and participation.

These concepts are also closely related to the research question to which this case study will respond:

*“Under what conditions can the use of Lingua Receptiva in the University Council of Utrecht University facilitate the participation of her Dutch as well as her international members and at the same time maintain the quality of the debate of the University Council meetings?”.*

In addition to participation and inclusion, other aspects will be analysed in the next paragraphs, as the efficiency of LaRa as a potential communicative mode (supported by other elements to reach an inclusive multilingualism), and the measures both sides should respect to adequately participate to the meetings, which can be related to the correct use of Lingua Receptiva.

## 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

---

After contextualizing the current situation of Utrecht University, the concept of quality will be explained, in correspondence with meetings and debates. In addition, the definition of *Lingua Receptiva*, proposed by the present case study as a potential solution to the linguistic problem faced by the University Council will be explained. In the next paragraphs, these two elements will be clarified, dwelling on the relevance they have to the board meetings for the former, and on the previous experiments carried out for the latter. Tests where receptive language has been successful will be presented, concluding with the possibility of implementation within the language policy and the exposure of the effectiveness of LaRa used as a tool for education.

### 3.1 Receptive multilingualism as a potential solution

For the first time Utrecht University is preparing for the participation of international students and staff in the Council meetings as effective members, side by side with the Dutch ones. This research would therefore support the use of *Lingua Receptiva* as the best option to ensure a debate of high quality within a meeting presenting these conditions. To clarify what type of solution is being introduced, what follows is the definition of receptive language, studied by different experts in the field.

#### 3.1.1 Luistertaal / *Lingua Receptiva*

*"Receptive language is the topic of two recent special issues, in which understanding between speakers of many different languages is studied"* (Backus et al., 2013, p. 16). The term receptive language means a communicative phenomenon that sees the interaction between two or more people who use their native languages, and manage to understand each other without the slightest difficulty. According to Holliday (2016), the interaction may involve the use of two languages belonging to the same or a different language family, or even the use of the native language by one of the participants and a *lingua franca* by the second one. The goal is to facilitate the conversation between two or more subjects by making sure that everything that is said is clear and free of misunderstanding, creating a more spontaneous conversation.

More specifically, according to Backus et al. (2013), *Lingua Receptiva*, also recognized as *intercomprehension*, is a form of multilingual communication in which people use different languages but can still understand each other on account of their receptive competences in the language of the other. Therefore, this allows speakers to use their own language or linguistic variant for interaction between parts. Certainly, all this would not be possible if none of the participants in the conversation had at least passive or basic knowledge of the opposite language, therefore there are some variables to be respected. The objective of the receptive language is simplicity, the conversation must be clear and understandable. In contrast to a single language conversation, the speaker is more concerned with making continuous checks while speaking to make sure the concepts reach the listener, marking the chosen words, which are often very simple, frequently re-elaborating and reworking what he says. The listener, on the other hand, usually finds himself nodding, participating receptively, suggesting to the speaker how much he is understanding the conversation with gestures and vocal signs (Backus et al., 2013).

Ten Thije(2018) describes *intercomprehension* as determined by factors such as relationships, the skills possessed, the topics involved, and regards it as an efficient way of communication. This type of communication could lead to an improvement in interaction in different fields, including organizations and the kind of meetings analyzed in this case study.

### 3.1.2 Language as a tool to express cultural identity

Through the use of their own language, speakers not only communicate a message, but also express their cultural identity (Backus et al., 2013).The use of a language that is not fully understood can lead to misunderstanding or mistakes in trying to express oneself, since most of the speakers who use *lingua franca* tend to prefer the transmission of the message rather than the use of a correct English grammatical or lexical form. Holliday (2016), describes the creation of a "third space", where the two cultures meet and communicate through a language of intermediation that both speakers know, but which limits them by not allowing the complete expression of themselves. The latter is difficult to achieve in another cultural dimension, where there is a kind of submission by speakers to a second stronger language identity and culture, which is often recognized in the English language. It can therefore be affirmed that almost no communication is culture free (Backus et al., 2013).

The utilization of a second language could lead others to define the speaker's identity, while it is often the case the latter would like to be known by his interlocutors for who he was before starting to speak another language (Holliday, 2016). Not to mention that there are many speakers of minor languages (Darquennes, & Soler, 2018),the importance of which is often overlooked giving prevalence to an "easier", more broadly spoken language.This situation could lead to their assimilation and disappearance caused by linguistic injustice, which sees the dominant language prevail and the lack of adaptation and integration of minorities (Grin et al., 2018).

Languages are integrated and interconnected communication systems, which can help to better develop learning and one's socio-cultural identity: it is possible to learn another language through the use of the mother tongue, since we feel more confident and less uncertain and discouraged if we use a system we master to understand and learn another one, which also leads to an increase in participation (Grin et al., 2018).

Multilingualism, therefore, tends to generate greater creativity as it brings integration and adaptation. The quality of the debate within meetings and the Council may remain unchanged if the speakers learned the receptive skills necessary to understand the different types of interactions (with specific training programs) in languages that the latter do not speak, but that can be recognized and understood due to similarities between the languages used,or competences in a language of the same family (Grin et al., 2018). This would also entail less time lost for learning as this method would bring quicker results, and above all the identity of the speaker would remain preserved (Holliday, 2016).

### 3.1.3 The effectiveness of Lingua Receptiva

By using Lingua Receptiva, Dutch employees and students and internationals can be on the same level of competence, since none of them would be limited by the knowledge of words or rules of the new language,and could freely express themselves without fear or uncertainty (Backus et al., 2013).

To better explain the effectiveness of Lingua Receptiva in relation to the case study, it will be compared to other modes of multilingual communication. Rehbein et al, (2012) propose a list of eight modes of

multilingual communication, among them the use of a second and/or foreign language, English as lingua franca, language of immigration, code-switching and code-mixing, bilingualism, and LaRa.

In multilingual communication, the involvement of the participants is fundamental (Rehbein et al., 2012). Some of the categories mentioned above, such as the foreign and the second language, do not include the participation of both speakers, who should collaborate in the same way to achieve an adequate understanding of what is being said. Rehbein et al. (2012) explain that most of the elements are often focused mainly on the hearer or the speaker, choosing the languages (or the mix of the two) depending on who is the interlocutor. The two options that are more suitable as applicable solutions to establish the next communicative mode of the University Council meetings are English as lingua franca and Lingua Receptiva. The main difference concerning these two communicative systems lies in the target language: English as lingua franca has its focal point on the use of just one language which functions as the only vehicular system. LaRa instead provides the use of two target languages (Dutch and English), which act together as a vehicle for a better understanding of the conversation through the collaboration of both hearer and speaker (Rehbein et al., 2012).

Lingua Receptiva entails a set of skills, among which are linguistic and cognitive abilities, that are applied by both interlocutors during the conversation (Rehbein et al., 2012). As stated in the article, LaRa has the potential to solve communication problems, but according to Backus (2013), this does not mean that the other modes cannot be used. In fact, to reach what Backus (2013) defines as a realistic concept of multilingualism, it would be necessary to adapt a more *inclusive* one, which comprehends the use of Lingua Receptiva with other communicative systems like English as lingua franca, code-switching and an interpreter as a support. It would be difficult for internationals to fully participate in the meetings with only receptive Dutch knowledge: with the described supportive elements, they can benefit from the use of code-switching or interpreters, together with LaRa as the dominant communicative system (Rehbein et al., 2012). This would allow them to reach a complete and effective understanding (Backus et al., 2013).

### 3.1.4 Inclusion despite different cultural identities

The term *inclusion* means “the degree to which individuals perceive that the group is giving him or her a feeling of belonging and room for authenticity” (Otten et al., 2013, p.18). This reflects how this concept is usually interpreted when related to a working environment featuring local and international employees. The presence of the latter automatically suggests an inclusive environment, only because it includes people with different nationalities. However, there is a difference in meaning between *cultural diversity*, which allows the right representation of different ethnic groups and cultures, and *cultural inclusion*, which concerns the ability of an organization to create a culture in which every employee feels at home and estimated (Diversity at work [DAW], 2019).

Several aspects are involved in the promotion of inclusion in the workplace (DAW, 2019). It is important, for instance, that an organization is aware of the impact multiculturalism might have on minority and majority groups. There is always a high risk that one of the two will feel less included than the other. Therefore, attention must be paid to the *support* that both groups give each other in their work, through which further understanding and involvement can be achieved. Another aspect concerns the *facilitation* of work, which requires that all members are heard. Listening and support among collaborators create *cultural awareness*, which prevents misunderstanding and discrimination, and a better *communication*, stimulated by the presence of an inclusion conducive policy (DAW, 2019). It is also underlined by Grin et al. (2018) that a first communication between parties is more advisable to take place in a common language. The use of bilingual documents for instance would aid, if compared, to accelerate the learning of Dutch, eliminating the feeling

of exclusion international members may sense. The revision of the language policy is also recommended, to be modified estimating both groups' opinions (Grin et al., 2018).

### 3.2 What determines the quality of the debate during a meeting?

The term quality means "*a degree to which a set of inherent characteristics of an object fulfils requirements*" (Zakota et al., 2017, p.1; ISO, 2015). This would therefore imply that an activity of any kind could be considered more efficient when it has a higher quality. With the advent of globalization many things have changed, including the world of education and its consequent administration. It must now persevere with an international world, which has changed the definitions of quality, leading to a number of factors such as diversification of national universities (Zakota et al., 2017).

There are therefore different methods according to Cohen et al. (2011), which would allow a more intelligent approach to setting and maintaining quality in a meeting. Through a questionnaire addressed to employees of different companies, Cohen et al. (2011) described the results obtained, which deal with researching what are the elements that can be fundamental to achieve an excellent quality of debate and a greater feeling of comfort during meetings.

The perception of the quality of the meeting was measured using a 14-item-scale. Participants had to choose from a list of adjectives which were most relevant to best describe the type of meeting they participate in during working hours. The procedural feature was particularly relevant to the perception of quality by the employees, which concerns the way in which the meeting is managed and organized in the company. To establish a certain quality, an agenda of the events to be addressed, an agreement by the participants on the type of development, and a continuous check and follow-up of the situation are essential. A predetermined agenda could help international members to better understand what is happening during the meeting, and continuous check and follow-up would be excellent considering that not everyone knows every specific term and word of the other's language. Reaching a situation where one is sure that everybody has understood what has been said would certainly lead to a debate of higher quality, and a greater feeling of belonging to the group (Cohen et al., 2011).

In order to respect a certain number of rules that lead to the achievement of the quality of the meeting, it is better to establish them first. One type of assessment described in the article by Zakota et al. (2017) is the institution's self-evaluation, a process that leads to the development of a strategic administration by the university for itself. This type of evaluation is particularly important, because it is the best type of connection to a perfect observation of what the right definition of quality can be for the administrative body. Moreover, according to Zakota et al. (2017), there are other important elements for the creation and development of a certain quality of the debate, being setting clearly defined goals, verifying the needs of the participants before the meeting begins, and establishing consensus in the interpretation of common concepts.

### 3.3 Multilingual meetings with the use of Lingua Receptiva

It is important to demonstrate how the receptive language is one of the elements necessary to maintain the quality of the debate, especially speaking of meetings whose members have different nationalities, and consequently speak different languages. Over the years, there have been several experiments to understand how Lingua Receptiva could be synonymous with functioning communication. Among these,

one of the most important is described by Beerkens' (2010) explorative study of receptive multilingualism as a language mode in the Dutch-German border area. The purpose of Beerkens' research (2010) was to understand if this modality could be considered at a higher level like governmental organisations. Through observations of the meetings and the help of a survey, it has been analysed whether receptive multilingualism is used in the border area as the language mode.

With a large response body consisting of two-hundred-and-fifty-two respondents, the results showed that multilingualism is present during the encounters, but with a lower percentage than English, Dutch and German. Differences in L2 (second language) competences are reflected in the active participation to repair misunderstanding, mostly found for lexicon and culture. The results of the research have shown that it is easier for the participants to admit they do not understand something with receptive multilingualism than with the establishment of a common language for the communication. Generally, this mode was considered positive and applicable during the meetings, since it was possible for both groups to understand what was said. It can be argued that this mode has actual potential for achieving understanding, and it can be successful if the participants have the capacities to check if everyone is on the same page during the interaction and to adapt the L2 competence of the speaker (Beerkens, 2010).

### 3.4 Possibility to implement receptive multilingualism in the language policy

Utrecht University is working to adopt a solution to the likely entry of international members into the University Council. As already mentioned in the contextual framework, to achieve this purpose it would be required to make the necessary adjustments to better address the problem. A Nota Memorandum (De Haes et al., 2019) has already been formulated, proposing the contribution of receptive language as one of the three present options.

#### 3.4.1 Receptive multilingualism in relation to the language planning

Receptive multilingualism could result especially effective in informal contexts and tends to establish a natural cooperative behaviour (Beerkens, 2010; Ten Thije, 2018). On the other hand, the risk of misunderstanding is still high (Conti et al., 2008; Ten Thije, 2018). There are some obstacles that might be faced adopting this kind of communication, described by Braunmüller (2013; Ten Thije, 2018) as the lack of awareness that receptive multilingualism has been proved and it can be successful, and the dominance of more standard languages, that cause the decline of minor languages. One of the main obstacles this mode has to face is surely the role of the English language, that being regarded as lingua franca, is often the most chosen option by the speakers. Through the analysis of the interviews conducted for the report "*Het gebruik van luistertaal in praktijk*" (*The use of LaRa in practice*, Ten Thije, Gulikers & Schoutsen, 2020), it was made clear that Lingua Receptiva is a frequent phenomenon in multilingual settings; yet, often there are no actual rules followed by the institutions to use it in its full potential. For this reason, the authors of the research report wrote a detailed list of important elements to consider when implementing LaRa (ten Thije et al., 2020). A perfect use of Lingua Receptiva is established when the participants decide together the conditions to follow, sharing opinions about the language of the conversation and the skills necessary to participate. It is certainly important that every participant is aware of the language level of the others, and that all stick to the language previously arranged. Considering the presence of non-native speakers, it is important that participants pay attention to the words they use and the rate in which they speak. To not

exclude anyone from the discussion, it is necessary that continuous checks are made. Lastly, evaluation of what happens is fundamental for the achievement of good communication with LaRa (ten Thije et al., 2020). Receptive multilingualism could present many advantages if implemented in the language policy. This is explained well in Ten Thije's (2018) discussion on the three dimensions of language planning, focusing on the strengths of this communicative method through concepts related to language, modernization and education. These will be briefly examined below.

### 3.4.2 Three dimensions to facilitate the implementation of receptive multilingualism

*"The relevant literature discerns three dimensions with regard to language planning. These are status and prestige planning, including attention to the vitality of languages/language varieties, corpus planning in respect of the standardisation and modernisation of languages, and, finally, acquisition planning regarding educational issues related to national standard languages and the question of how to handle multilingualism".* (ten Thije, 2018)

*Status and prestige planning* represent the first dimension (ten Thije et al., 2018). This is more related to the recognition of the importance and effectiveness of the communicative mode on a national level. It appears that receptive multilingualism is recognized and promoted on a more local or supranational level, but when it comes to the national one, monolingual ideology still prevails. It is mostly seen as a problem, while implemented it could bring more cohesion within entities. An example is reported from the European Union policy (Craith, 2006; European Commission, 2008; Ten Thije, 2018), which has developed a new language policy where standard languages are treated more equally, and translation is allowed (ten Thije et al., 2018).

The second dimension is represented by the *corpus planning*, related to the concepts of standardization and modernization of languages. An example of modernization caused by the intervention of receptive multilingualism is the *Intercomprehension pilot* currently used by the European Commission (2012; Singleton et al., 2018) for the translation of documents into the languages of the participants, allowing them to use their mother tongue to understand what is being treated. With the influence of this communication system, which is not opposed to other types of communication but can make use of other modes such as lingua franca as a complementary support, it is possible to achieve greater modernization of language policy. It would be fundamental to prepare the participants to overthrow the obstacles they might face in a more efficient way, letting them be aware of the possible use of different languages (ten Thije et al., 2018).

The third dimension can be found in the *acquisition planning*, which regards the educational environment. Among the years there have been several experiments which concluded to be successful in relation to the use of receptive multilingualism within universities. The issue that arises is more focused on how to increase the status of the communicative mode, because if people were more aware of the effectiveness it has and the benefits it would bring to different environments, starting with educational institutions, it would be probably more considered to be adapted and established in the language policy.

The implication of receptive multilingualism, in close contact with the exploitation of inclusive multilingualism, could present the best option for solving an issue such as the integration of international

members into a group where any is present. If guidelines are set in the language policy regarding Lingua Receptiva, an effective and successful outcome can be obtained, since being aware of its restrictions, all its potential can be exploited (ten Thije et al., 2018).

### 3.4.3 Learning Lingua Receptiva

*"People can be trained to acquire specifically receptive (or "intercomprehensive") language skills"* (Grin et al., 2018, p. 138). This means that it would be possible for people to learn a language without speaking it, since the focus of the receptive knowledge is merely based on understanding what is being said or written. This type of training was first suggested by Pierre Besnier, a philologist of the 17<sup>th</sup> century who considered languages as continuums, arguing that the best approach to adapt to learn a second language is through comparison. Nowadays, trainings are mainly based on the identification of similarities among two languages, and learners are stimulated to develop the ability to elucidate semi-transparent words meanings (words that are not completely pronounced as they are written). Receptive trainings usually employ a minor amount of time to learn a language, since education begins with listening and reading, deviating from the usual process, which aims to make the learner capable to speak and write the language as well (Grin et al., 2018).

Languages which belong to the same family are certainly easier to acquire than completely different ones. Still, one of the essential requirements a receptive language learner should have is motivation (Grin et al., 2018). If a person is motivated the process of receptive learning will definitely be more enjoyable, especially if supported by other communicative modes such as translation and English as lingua franca, which can support the training, making it less challenging (Backus et al., 2013).

## 4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

---

The previous paragraphs illustrated how the use of Lingua Receptiva could lead to improvements in multilingual environments. One of the cases described demonstrates how this communicative method can make communication more effective when dealing with closely related languages, such as German and Dutch (Beerkens, 2010). In this research it will be experimented whether the same adjustments can be applied to the University Council of Utrecht University, which presents a similar but not identical case. It would have different variables because it is about the use of Dutch, and English which, however, does not always represent internationals' native language. Furthermore, the language of the administration will be discussed, whichever is not easy to learn for those whose native language does not belong to a Germanic language family. This could therefore make the conversation difficult to follow and consequently lead to a low-quality debate.

This leads us to the following research question:

*RQ: Under what conditions can the use of Lingua Receptiva in the University Council of Utrecht University facilitate the participation of her Dutch as well as her international members and at the same time maintain the quality of the debate of the University Council meetings?*

To answer the research question, three sub-questions were designed:

*SQ1: Which circumstances would let both international and Dutch students and staff feel included as truly able to participate at the meetings, in conjunction with the existent international orientation the University tends to?*

*SQ2: If implemented, how would the use of Lingua Receptiva in combination with other communicative modes make the internal communication more efficient between Dutch and international members during meetings?*

*SQ3: What measures are needed to supply international students and staff with adequate receptive Dutch proficiency to participate in the Executive Board appropriately?*

## 5. METHODS

---

The aim of the research is to be aware of the possibility of LaRato maintain the quality of debate once implemented as the communicative mode of the University Council meetings. This explains why it was particularly important to hear and collect the opinions of the different groups. For this kind of research, then, cumulative interviews became the best way to investigate on the thoughts of the respondents (Dörnyei, 2007), who honestly expressed their enthusiasm as well as their concerns about LaRa, helping to create a clearer overview of the possible future issue they will face. The interviews were easily organised with the help of an Advisory Board, and the questions happened to change depending on the person or the information already accumulated. The next sections will present the advantages of using cumulative interviews, the importance of the selection of specific participants, and how the research was conducted in more detail. Qualitative analysis will also be discussed, followed by an attentive study of the results obtained (Dörnyei, 2007).

### 5.1 Qualitative research

For this research a qualitative method has been used. Interviews were conducted with those directly involved, members of the Council of the University of Utrecht, and support and academic staff of different faculties (as policy makers and communication advisers), which helped to give a more specific vision by adding an external perspective to the research target. Qualitative research is described by Dörnyei (2007) as a method based on the relevant literature which designs the instruments useful for the case study, and consequently helps in the collection and analysis of the data obtained. It is an interactive way to collect the needed findings, resulting a flexible method, which can involve subjective intuition and interpretation of the data (Dörnyei, 2007).

The interviews of this case study were conducted online, with a minimum number of face-to-face meetings and telephone calls. This was caused by the current quarantine situation imposed in the Netherlands due to the coronavirus, which interrupted the actual encounters, letting the rest of the research to continue more digitally. The first three interviews were held in the administrative and institutional structures of the University of Utrecht, in the offices and lobbies of the institution, while all the rest were carried out using programmes such as Skype, Google meet and Microsoft Teams. This deviation from the original project caused several obstacles to the methodology, but with the vast possibilities of technology, it did not prevent the research from continuing.

### 5.1.1 Selection of participants

Considering that the aim of the research was to investigate the implementation of LaRa in the administration building, the respondents are mostly people who work there or that are, more in particular, members of the Faculty and University Councils. It was important to interview them, to get an overview of the thoughts of the people who were directly interested in the matter.

The interviews took place according to the availability of the participants, whose positions and relations with the university's administrative building and the Council itself are illustrated in the table below, also including the language in which the dialogue was carried out. Respondents have been contacted by email, while some of them were firstly approached by the members of the Advisory Board. None of the people who were asked to be interviewed refused, with a totality of acceptances which made this research possible.

Table of participants in the research

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Connection with University Council</b>	<b>Language of the interview</b>
Respondent 1	Dutch student	Council member	English
Respondent 2	Dutch student	Council member	English
Respondent 3	Dutch student	Council member	English
Respondent 4	Dutch student	Council member	English
Respondent 5	International student	Council candidate	English
Respondent 6	International student	Faculty Council member	English
Respondent 7	Academic staff	Council chairman	Lingua Receptiva (NL-ENG)
Respondent 8	Academic staff	Council member	Lingua Receptiva (NL-ENG)
Respondent 9	Academic staff	Council member	Lingua Receptiva (NL-ENG)
Respondent 10	Dutch staff member	Council member	Lingua Receptiva (NL-ENG)
Respondent 11	Director Human Resources	Council member	Lingua Receptiva (NL-ENG)
Respondent 12	Secretary of administration	Secretary	English
Respondent 13	International staff member	Faculty Council member	English
Respondent 14	Policy advisor in administration	None	English
Respondent 15	Policy advisor inclusion	None	English
Respondent 16	Human Resources advisor	None	English
Respondent 17	Communication advisor	None	English
Respondent 18	Communication advisor	None	English
Respondent 19	Project manager	None	Italian

Respondents were both Dutch and international students and staff members: considering the topic of the research, it became necessary to hear the opinions of every party involved, to try to understand if common ground could be created, or in case of completely different comments about the issue, this would have been impossible to accomplish. Among the participants there is a majority of Council and Faculty members, so it was easier to get more information from the Dutch side than international one, since the Council is now still formed by only Dutch members. By means of the connections of the Advisory Board, it was effortless to approach Dutch participants than international ones. However, an important role was played by the large network of contacts of the respondents themselves, which in turn provided other names of people who might have been interested in the case, making it possible to intercept international members from Faculty Councils or support members working on the administration building. The connection network built by the members of the Advisory Board has branched out at the hand of participants themselves, who have helped to expand the contacts, acting as intermediaries for new interviews. This made it possible to collect different kind of points of view from people who share the same reality but that do not see it in the same way.

Conducting a quantitative research might have been more adequate to collect a higher number of data, and to cover all the categories that have not been reached with only interviews and the aid of the Advisory Board. Nonetheless, qualitative research still seems to better fulfil this kind of investigation, since the aim of the case study was to focus on the opinions and feelings of the people closely involved in the issue.

### 5.1.2 Language choice in the interviews

One of the key themes of the research is receptive language use, so it was proposed to all participants to feel free to choose to answer in Dutch or in any other language that could be understood by both parties of the interview. As far as the receptive language interviews were a success, it cannot be said that the participants were keen to elaborate, in view of Dutch not being the mother tongue of the interviewer. However, it was positive and gratifying to see how the methods to be used for *Lingua Receptiva* have also been helpful for conducting the interviews (ten Thije, 2020). Communication has become simpler because of the continuous checks by both sides of how much was understood of the answer but also of the question, to make sure that everything that was discussed was clear.

The choice of the language greatly influenced the results; allowing Dutch members to be able to use their native language gave them the spontaneity necessary to use technical and specific terms, and concepts that were completely natural to them as part of their own culture, while they were absolutely unknown to the interviewer. It was therefore possible, during the interviews, to ask for explanations on the specified concepts, such as the use of *themedezeggenschap* and its true meaning: in-depth information which proved to be essential, expanding the investigation to aspects that were not initially part of it.

## 5.2 Research process

Not all interviews involved the same questions, as there were participants with different nationalities, cultures and points of view. At the beginning of the research, basic questions were formulated on *Lingua Receptiva*. They mainly regarded the experience of the participants (Vierbergen et al., 2008) with it and the possibility of being able to implement it as a new communication system within the meetings, with a particular focus on the hypothesis it could maintain the quality of the debate. As the interviews took place,

the questions were modified or replaced, allowing a deeper explanation of some elements, which have been added to the research when relevant to the case study's topic (see Appendix 1).

Besides aiding with the selection of the participants, the Advisory Board, a group made up of teachers and staff (formed by Dr. Harmen Binnema, Drs. Manon Sas, Marleen Dermout and Emmy Gulikers) connected to the *Universitaire Bestuursdienst* (corporate offices), considerably helped with regards to the accumulation of information, the points on which further information where needed, and the interpretation of the preliminary findings, to ensure that the analysis was not too biased.

### 5.2.1 Cumulative interviews

The qualitative method used includes cumulative interviews, which served to accumulate data provided by people expert in a determined sector, with the knowledge necessary to provide data in relation to the research. Cumulative interviews are generally used to collect data on a specific problem (Vierbergen-Schuit et al., 2008); the participants clarify their knowledge and experiences with the aim of strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of their organization. Usually they are asked to talk about experiences or to express opinions regarding the topic proposed by the interviewer, and to share their knowledge to build and give a basis of introspection on the topic. The questions asked to the participants of the research may vary, since the main purpose of this method is to accumulate information, which will then lead to a more detailed analysis of the topic according to the different answers given. The objective of the interviewer is to multiply the knowledge concerning the problem studied, in order to be able to recommend improvements or solutions to be applied to the organization (Vierbergen-Schuit et al., 2008).

There are different types of interviews structured in different ways (Dörnyei, 2007), but cumulative interviews are essentially the best method to use in this case. The present research aims to solve a determined issue, which affects the members of the Council closely. Considering the future participation of international members, who for the first time would join the University Council of Utrecht, it was essential to try to find a solution that was in accordance with the needs and doubts of those directly concerned. By providing their own personal overview of the situation, the respondents have helped in the collection of useful information to propose not only the solutions, but also the expected problems that could arise, and the possible actions to be implemented in case this occurs. Shown below are then reported the information that proved to be most relevant to the case examined, and which could provide a useful overview to better address the problem.

### 5.3 Data analysis

Once the interviews were completed, they were transcribed and inserted in a coding programme named *Nvivo*, which is useful for the classification of the main elements to analyse through precise recording of code properties (Dörnyei, 2007). Coding is the activity of selecting the arguments the researcher finds most relevant for the case study. There could be different levels of coding, in fact the programme allows the creation of a tree system, where concepts can be related to other sub-concepts, generating categories usually connected by a motivation. With the use of this programme, it was possible to clarify which topics emerged most often, and how to divide and compare the opinions of the different participants (Dörnyei, 2007). Before starting to gather the codes, some elements were preselected. Among them, the knowledge participants had about multilingual meetings, or what determined the concept of quality of debate was analysed. During the process, though, other topics emerged, adding the concept of inclusion,

problems that may arise with the use of Lingua Receptiva, and the notion and meaning of *medezeggenschap* (see Appendix 2).

### 5.3.1 Perspectives and Decentering

The present research could appear to be focused on language only, but there are many cultural aspects to consider as well. Language is strongly connected to culture, so it was impossible to expect a type of response that did not include a more subjective point of view from the respondents. On the other hand, this is a factor which has also been valid for the researcher (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2009). The researcher being an international student, it arose the question of how to interpret the data, which could have been considered somewhat subjective, examining the different points of view on the same events. The ethnographic analysis process that took place for this research, in fact, certainly brings several advantages, including the investigation of unexplored territories and the sharing of different experiences and perspectives (Dörnyei, 2007). Although, this also includes problems. Cultural background always has a certain influence, making the researcher waver between an insider and outsider perspective. For this reason, it was essential to adopt a *decentering* process, to allow a better management of the findings.

By *decentering* (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2009) it is meant a detachment from one's cultural background, so as to be able to give equal weight and value to both perspectives. This can be more easily achieved through teamwork between members of the two opposite cultures, which by sharing experiences and thoughts can reach a common result, and therefore the appropriate response to the case study. For this reason, the aid of the Advisory Board was fundamental, since being formed only by Dutch members, it helped considerably in the interpretation of the findings of the interviews. The reflection with the opposite culture is a fundamental process, which has also guided many of the respondents to recognize that LaRa could benefit more Dutch than international members, realizing that they might be "more Dutch" than they expected. It happened to the researcher too: however important it is to detach oneself from one's point of view, a first observation by a member who was external and could interpret from a different perspective was necessary along with this type of research. The elaborated comments of the Advisory Board also contributed to the insight of the typical Dutch habitus with regard to democracy within the academics.

## 6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

---

In this section results of the research will be shown and described, with a focus on students and staff members' perspectives on the analysed topics. Among them are the potential effectiveness of Lingua Receptiva, the concept of quality of debate, the analysis of intercultural aspects and the consideration of how this communicative system could conduct to a feeling of belonging to the same group. Finally, proposals on how Lingua Receptiva could be implemented will be described, with in addition some alternatives in case, once experimented, it does not bring to the awaited results.

### 6.1 Attitude towards Lingua Receptiva

As the concept of Luistertaal was already discussed in the University Board, it was not surprising that the respondents were already familiar with it. Both Dutch and international participants had an immediate positive reaction to the possible implementation of this communicative system, since it could bring numerous advantages. Among them, the most important characteristics respondents underlined was the prospect to choose the language they would use during the conversation. Some of the Dutch students with larger part of staff members declared that it would be nice to continue using their mother tongue for the Council meetings, above all to discuss about difficult topics (Backus et al., 2013).

Concerns arose regarding some possible problems related to the use of LaRa. From the Dutch point of view, it mostly regarded the actual knowledge of Dutch language for internationals, and the certainty this experiment would cause the complete switch to English if failed. Dutch respondents expressed the possibility of international members feeling intimidated by the Dutch language during the meetings, finding it not easy to follow considering the language level the Council would require. This same concern about the language has been expressed by the international respondents, who described Dutch as intimidating, not considering that making it a prerequisite of being part of the Council could demotivate them to participate. Even if there were positive comments about it, Dutch is still perceived as a barrier that could prevent participation and a debate of high quality. Trying to speak in a more understandable way could imply a lower quality of Dutch, and some people within the Council would not be enthusiastic about welcoming English as the only language (Bronkhorst, 2019).

Utrecht University would prefer to preserve and protect Dutch, since it is true the institution wants to be more open, but at the same time it also wants to keep its own identity through the language as Holliday (2016) has argued. It will certainly take time to adapt to new measures, but if they are installed with the consensus of both sides and a clear declaration of the University Board, a satisfactory result can be achieved (ten Thije, 2020). Some international students described LaRa as challenging but not impossible, while others underlined the importance of explaining what Lingua Receptiva is in details instead of just proposing to learn the language as a prerequisite. The totality of respondents expressed consensus on the will of a more effective than perfect communication. Therefore, it would be better to feel competent than actually being competent. With Lingua Receptiva, supported by interpreters and code-switching as components of inclusive multilingualism (Backus et al., 2013), people would be more aware they might have to slow down while they speak, because there would be members who do not master the language, so this can help the effectiveness of communication (ten Thije, 2020). According to Dutch students, meetings might become less chaotic and easier to follow for international members. Effectiveness can be reached with LaRa, because the aim is not to be perfect (Backus et al., 2013). As respondent seventeenth affirmed: *“it is more than understanding each other, is wanting to do so”*.

## 6.2 How to reach a qualitative debate

Quality of debate, as already mentioned, is a fundamental element to make conversation proceed well and accomplish satisfactory work. The respondents gave similar answers about what can determine quality of debate, that can be divided into technical and emotional aspects. Council and Faculties members, both Dutch and international, focused more on the technical knowledge members should have to reach a good quality of debate, among them preparedness to the meeting, consciousness of the topic of the discussion, being familiar with the documents used to set the debate, and awareness about the concept of Dutch *medezeggenschap*. It would be fruitful, according to Dutch respondents, that future international members feel free to express their opinions and speak up their minds during the meetings, since it is not only

centered on sharing opinions, but also on the consideration of everybody's point of view (Cohen et al., 2011).

Some of the Faculty Councils are already using both English or Lingua Receptiva as the communicative mode of their meetings, due to the presence of international members joining them (NELP, 2018). Dutch students affirmed to experience a lower quality of debate when only English is used, because of the inadequate participation or comprehension of the topics from the internationals and the difficulty to think and phrase sentences in another language for Dutch members when it comes to complex concepts. The same concern has been expressed by international students, who find it difficult to fully follow the topic of a discussion through receptive language without a proper translation of the debate and the documents. Every interviewee expressed the need to provide all important policy documents in which participation is involved in two languages (NIM, 2019), so everyone can prepare themselves adequately, and still know what the conversation is about, even if not every word is understood (Agterberg, 2019).

High importance has to be given to the feeling participants experience during these meetings, especially trying to establish a certain quality in a more international environment. Dutch and international staff and students agreed on the need of creating a safe space, where everyone is able to choose the language they feel more at ease to use. To establish a debate of high quality it is not important to obtain consensus from every participant, but that all of them have had the possibility to express their opinions like anybody else (DAW, 2019). It appears that quality of debate does not really depend on the language. Instead, it is defined by the attitude of the participants towards the others, the ability to work together as a team and a good preparation for the debate. All members should be aware of the distinction between the quality of the debate and the quality of decision-making process.

### 6.3 Snap je? ~ The adequate receptive Dutch knowledge

Dutch staff and most of the students particularly agreed that a high level of receptive Dutch is needed to fully understand what is said during a Council meeting. The words used are difficult, technical, and sometimes the concepts behind them are also unclear for the Dutch members themselves. For this reason, it would be better to offer intensive language classes, since all respondents agreed that summer courses could not be adequate to attain the actual learning of the language. Therefore, these courses should mainly focus on the language of the administration, with the objective of helping international members to expand their vocabulary, that will surely help them in understanding the topics discussed (Grin et al., 2018). International students were clear about motivation as one of the most important elements to achieve this purpose (Grin et al., 2008). However, according to the majority of Dutch respondents, culture also plays a fundamental role. International members do not have to act like Dutch people, but Council members expressed that it would be better if they could be aware of some behavioural characteristics, described by respondent one as "typical Dutch directness" or genuine ability to speak their minds. Letting them understand that it would not be impolite to express themselves directly, or to not feel personally attacked if they receive negative feedback, is another way to encourage understanding between the two groups (Bomhof et al., 2018).

#### 6.3.1 Intercultural aspects

Intercultural aspects should be included as a part of receptive understanding, since there is some important information international members could put into practice, like the concept of Dutch *medezeggenschap*. During the interviews with Dutch students and staff members, it became clear how this element is fundamental not only in a cultural way, but also as a legal aspect. Everybody should participate in the discussion, to be sure every

opinion is heard, and that all the participants have had the possibility to express their concern on something (Jansen et al. 2015). It means comprehension of the way in which Dutch people manage things in the administration, working and settling things together, since the opinion of the majority means a better decision has been made because all different perspectives are taken into account. Every Dutch respondent particularly focused on the importance of being represented (Bomhof et al., 2018), and that it would be nice that international students and staff members could share their opinions too, especially for issues that concern them directly.

Through *medezeggenschap* high democratic level in the structure can be reached. Some Dutch staff members declared that it is not important that everybody agrees on something, but that there is a dialogue between sides. Confrontation between members can enhance the quality of a decision, consequently increasing the quality of democracy. All respondents agreed on how *Lingua Receptiva* could positively interfere in the democracy, helping to create it through giving everyone the possibility to participate and be represented (Bomhof et al., 2018).

However, this situation might also bring about inequality, since Dutch members would be able to speak their mother tongue, a language they completely feel comfortable with, while not all internationals' native language is English. It is important, then, that Dutch participants anticipate the elements that could be misunderstood by internationals. Receptive classes might be organized for Dutch participants as well, in case they feel the need to strengthen their knowledge of the specific terminology used during the encounters, or some intercultural aspects useful to better manage this new kind of discussions.

## 6.4 The process of internationalisation

The process of internationalisation the university is now facing is considered positive by the totality of participants. Having a Council formed by an international team could lead to numerous possibilities than a homogeneous group, like taking into consideration new perspectives or way to get things done. Even if this could slow down the process and let it be more complicated, it could lead to a more complete and interesting outcome (Grin et al., 2018). Still, some Dutch students and staff members think being more open towards internationals will not help preserving Dutch language and consequently Dutch identity. Since it is well known that Dutch people generally find it more natural and automatic to switch to English when there is at least one international person, some Dutch staff members expressed their concern about the possibility that this would turn out to be English as the only language. Some Dutch students thought there is no future in speaking Dutch, a concept sustained by the majority of international respondents too. Nevertheless, they were just a few against the majority composed by Dutch staff and students, who would prefer to preserve the language, since Utrecht University is, after all, a Dutch institution. Staff members seemed to be more cautious about internationalisation, but according to one of the respondents, as soon as the first international will become part of the Council, more will follow. This process, then, will help to erase the cultural and linguistic barrier between the two sides and create a feeling of inclusion for all participants (De Lange, 2019).

### 6.4.1 The importance of feeling included

There has been an interesting discussion about the concept of inclusion. During the meetings, as already described in the context, Dutch people abide by the concept of *medezeggenschap*, so participation is already one of the most important prerequisites of being and feeling part of a group (Jansen et al., 2015). According to some respondents, participation is at the basis of inclusion, as well as the language:

international and Dutch students and staff members both agreed that knowing the language will surely lead to a better feeling of understanding, empathy, and will definitely help building a bridge between the two groups, creating a community where people are more close and aware of one another (DAW, 2019). Culture is an important aspect internationals should be acquainted with, since it aids the process of learning to get to know one another and trusting each other. Regarding the relationships between people, Lingua Receptiva was considered as the best option to implement.

There were some exceptions from the international side, since Dutch is not considered as an easy language to learn by the respondents, so this could also bring people to feeling intimidated. In addition, according to one of the respondents, inclusion should not focus on the language but on the attitude (DAW, 2019): as well as everybody wants to accept internationals in the group, the rest will come by itself. On the contrary some Dutch staff member felt that if Lingua Receptiva does not work, it can cause the alienation of Dutch members. The response that can arise from this is the simple explanation of the idea behind this kind of communication: all participants agreed on the fact that if everybody is aware of the intent of Lingua Receptiva and the result it might bring, it would be possible to create a community in which everyone feels included (Rehbein et al., 2012).

## 6.5 Proposals of respondents

Lingua Receptiva has been designated as an interesting and possible solution to adapt. However, as discussed in the previous paragraphs, if not well organized it could lead to significant problems or the use of just one language. To avoid this from occurring, respondents suggested the implementation of a course based on Lingua Receptiva, to better explain to all the participants and future members its correct use and allow them to practice it before the meetings (ten Thije, 2020). Speaking one's own language could seem like a simple concept, but without some specific guidelines, like continuous checks from one or more people that everything has been understood or everyone had the possibility to be heard, it could present complications during the encounters. It is then important to consider the possible change of the current language measures used for the present meetings, trying to create a safe space where rules are established according to the benefit of both parties (ten Thije, 2018). This communicative mode does not have to necessarily be written on a language policy paper, since the language only represents a tool to be used by the parties: if introduced as simple possibility to let participants feel at ease with their native language, it could bring more advantages. Another element proposed by a larger part of respondents, that might be convenient for future international members, is the figure of a mediator or language coach, a third party who can observe what happens during each meeting, help with translation and understanding of intercultural aspects if necessary, and give feedback about the effectiveness of the conversation. This language coach or mediator could increase the council member's LaRa awareness with regard to relationship between the quality of debate and the quality of decision-making process.

In addition, the importance of the use of bilingual documents for the encounters has been underlined. Both Dutch and international respondents persevered on the fact that there should be a better English translation of the documents, which currently sometimes only present a summary, and does not allow internationals to fully prepare themselves for the meetings. Having a clear document would make it easier to formulate questions and to follow the discussion during the encounters. Furthermore, a glossary with the most technical and difficult institutional keywords in both Dutch and English could be created, to make conversation more fluid and let people share the same meaning of the topics used. A detailed list of conditions and prerequisites will be formulated in a proposal for the Board of Utrecht University.

In conclusion, it would be important to mention that experiments relating Lingua Receptiva within the University Council have already been carried out, but their details and outcomes will not be specifically dealt with in this text.

## 6.6 Alternatives for LaRa

Ultimately, respondents were asked if they were aware of any alternatives in case Lingua Receptiva does not work. The most common responses concerned all members to be provided with an interpreter, who can help with simultaneous translation, or the use of a screen with subtitles in one of the two languages. Moreover, what was interesting was the idea of Dutch members becoming buddies of the international ones, or the creation of small groups where people can help the others with the comprehension; this could be improved by using a shared bilingual document, will all the most important discussed points. If interpreters are too expensive, it can still be considered to hire specialized students instead of professionals, or to directly take notes of the meetings in English. The last option would require the use of only one language, which encountered more resistance from Dutch respondents rather than internationals, because it would mean that the meetings will be in English. But, according to the interviewees, if well implemented, there is a high possibility Lingua Receptiva will become the communicative system of Utrecht University Council.

## 7. CONCLUSION

---

This research aimed to investigate on the possibility of Lingua Receptiva to maintain the quality of the debate of the University Council meetings, facilitating the participation of both groups. Based on a qualitative analysis conducted through interviews of people inside and outside the University Council, it can be concluded that quality of debate does not generally depend on the language used, but there could still be an improvement if people are able to speak a language they are comfortable with, which should be understood by all of the participants. The results indicate the positive attitude all participants had towards Lingua Receptiva, that could bring many advantages, such as the possibility to speak a language which makes one feel at ease, and the preservation of Dutch cultural identity. However, some concerns arose about this communicative system. To fully understand the discussion, it would be necessary that future international candidates attend a receptive Dutch course, and more importantly, achieve a high level of the language. Dutch is still seen as a barrier, but not something impossible to learn. With a focus on the language of administration and vocabulary, internationals might be able to follow a discussion during a meeting. This might become easier with the aid of translated documents, that would facilitate members preparedness to the encounters, and consequently produce a qualitative debate. Receptive courses might focus on Dutch culture too, to let internationals be aware of concepts like the importance of participation (*medezeggenschap*), that can be useful and bring to a greater feeling of belonging. According to a great number of respondents, receptive knowledge will lead to a better understanding between groups. Some Dutch respondents dreaded a possible alienation of Dutch members if LaRa does not bring to the awaited result, but the majority agreed on the fact that, if people are aware of the aim behind Lingua Receptiva, both groups will put an effort to try to understand each other, focusing on an effective more than a perfect communication.

The choice of a qualitative method was essential to collect and elaborate the information needed to answer the research questions. The objective of the case study was to indicate *Lingua Receptiva* as a potential solution that might work for the members of the University Council, so it was fundamental to interview the people directly involved in the case. It allowed a clearer overview of the current situation and gave input on how this communicative mode could be implemented and benefit both parties. Through the interviews, it was interesting to discover that respondents were already aware of what *Lingua Receptiva* is. This was unexpected and represented the first deviation of the research from letting people know about this communicative mode to a deeper investigation about its effectiveness in the Council meetings. The results encountered the first expectations about the advantages of *Luistertaal* and the concerns it might arise, while the interviewees' perspectives helped in the addition of more unplanned topics to consider, such as the concept of participation and inclusiveness.

Based on these conclusions, Utrecht University Council and Board members should consider the regulations to apply to the current measures adopted for the meetings. *Lingua Receptiva* could be acknowledged as the communicative mode used for this kind of encounters, or as one of the options. It would aid the adaptation of the language policy to the new developments the university is now facing considering the internationalisation process it is tending to. Receptive multilingualism would address all languages in an equal way, and other communicative modes would be supported, since inclusive multilingualism and consequently a better understanding can be reached. As a result, participants would be more prepared to overcome cultural obstacles, and with the aid of continuous checks and the awareness of the other an efficient communication can be achieved. For an adequate preparedness of both groups, it would be necessary to provide the most important documents in two languages before the meetings, that would allow everyone to fully understand the concepts that will be discussed. Hence, even if not every word is understood, the concept will still be clear. In addition to the documents, a small glossary of Dutch and English institutional keywords might be provided, to help establish a common meaning for the terms used. Receptive courses should focus on these particular words, since it would be more constructive to centre the action on the administrative language. Furthermore, the presence of a third party might be advantageous, since it may provide translations for both sides and help with the clarification of intercultural elements, operating like a mediator between languages and cultures.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

---

Taking the three dimensions of language policy (status / prestige planning, corpus planning and acquisition planning, ten Thije 2020) as a framework, this section illustrates the recommendations elaborated with regard to the present case study, correspondingly formulated by Prof. Jan D. ten Thije and the researcher.

The first elements are related to the Status / prestige planning, which centres its attention to the vitality of languages /language varieties(e.g. multilingual communication policy in academia):

- The decision of the University Council to facilitate Lingua Receptiva in the Council meetings should be implemented in the administration within Utrecht University regarding the legal *development within the frame work of the new law 'Taal en Toegankelijkheid'* of Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.
- In an extension of this case study a language code for the administration for Utrecht University could be developed and formulated through a discussion and cooperation with the seven faculties. This can be done considering the potential and needs of use of English as Lingua franca, Lingua Receptiva, translation and interpreters at Council meeting at various organisational levels (including meetings of educational and appeals committees). The UU language policy should consider the different preconditions and needs of the all Faculties.
- In case of successful implementation, Lingua Receptiva could contribute to the elaboration of internationalisation, diversity and inclusion policy of Utrecht University and in the end contribute to a specific branding of Utrecht University.

The second segment is correlated to the Corpus planning, which focuses on the standardisation and modernisation of multilingual communication policy in academia:

- On the basis of investigation of Councils' minutes and policy documents, a glossary of institutional key words in Dutch and English should be established. Future English-speaking members of the council meetings should use these key words in Dutch to avoid misunderstanding.
- Regular Dutch meeting procedures should be made explicit in order to facilitate international to contribute to the quality of debate and decision making.
- The current practice on translation of policy documents should be elaborated and made more explicit by answering the question which document should be available for whom at what moment and with what translation quality. For financial reasons, the quality of translations could be considered by making a distinction between translation for only efficient understanding and translation with legal status. The quality of translation should be clearly indicated on the various texts.
- The position of the coach or mediator could be considered for a restricted period of time to implement the multilingual policy in cooperation with relevant employees at the administration.

The third fragment is associated to the Acquisition planning, which regards educational issues related to multilingual communication planning languages and the question of how to handle Lingua Receptiva as multilingual communicative mode:

- Receptive Dutch courses for administration should be developed. The aim of these courses is to facilitate non-Dutch speaking council members to participate in Dutch council meetings. The final

level should be B2-C1 for reading and listening. Depending on the starting proficiency of the internationals (ranging from A2 to B2) the available courses should be differentiated. The courses should have different tracks depending on the language distance between the native languages of the members and the Dutch language (e.g. Mandarin Chinese versus German).

- An intercultural awareness training should be developed for international and local members of the University council. The aim should be that all members should be aware and profit from the international expertise and knowledge available by international and local members.

## 9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

- Agterberg, R. (2019, November 13). University council wants English documents and interpreter for international council members. Retrieved from <https://www.dub.uu.nl/en/news/university-council-wants-english-documents-and-interpreter-international-council-members>
- Backus, A., Gorter, D. , Knapp, K., Schjerve-Rindler, R., Swanenberg, J., Thijs, J.D. ten, and Vetter, E. (2013). *Inclusive Multilingualism: Concept, Modes and Implications*. *European Journal for Applied Linguistics*. 1 (2), 179–215.
- Bomhof, M., & Bokdam, J. (2018). *Monitor medezeggenschap in het hoger onderwijs 2017-2018*. Retrieved from [https://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Monitor-medezeggenschap-in-het-hoger-onderwijs-2017-18\(1\).pdf](https://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Monitor-medezeggenschap-in-het-hoger-onderwijs-2017-18(1).pdf)
- Bronkhorst, X., HOP (2019, December 18). Will English become the working language at Dutch universities? Retrieved from <https://www.dub.uu.nl/en/news/will-english-become-working-language-dutch-universities>
- Cohen, M. A., Rogelberg, S. G., Allen, J. A., & Luong, A. (2011). Meeting design characteristics and attendee perceptions of staff/team meeting quality. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 15(1), 90–104
- College van Bestuur, Universiteit Utrecht. (2019). *Nota Internationalisering medezeggenschap (C & M, N21911)*.
- Darquennes, J. and Soler, J. (2018) *'New speakers' and language policy research: thematic and theoretical contributions to the field, Language Policy, January 2019*.
- Diversity at work. (2019). *From cultural diversity to inclusion: expert report ethnic, cultural and religious background*. Retrieved on 12/04/2020 from <https://www.raznolikost.hr/docs/cultural-diversity-150519.pdf>
- De Haes, V., & Lith, M. (2019). Internationalisering medezeggenschap. *Nota Universiteitsraad*.
- De Haes, V. (2019, October 28). Internationalisation starts with clear language policy. Retrieved from <https://www.dub.uu.nl/en/opinion/internationalisation-starts-clear-language-policy>
- de Lange, W. M. (2019). *Nota Universiteitsraad - Uitvoeringsplan Internationalisering (DMS nummer: N21005)*. Retrieved from <https://www.dub.uu.nl/sites/default/files/users/7929/19.138%20Nota%20Uitvoeringsplan%20Internationalisering.pdf>

- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Grin, F, CélioConceição, M, Kraus, P.A., Marác, L., Ozoliņa, O. Pokorn, Z, and Pym, A. (eds.) (2018). *The MIME Vademecum. Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe*. Brussels: European Commission: *The MIME project*: Retrieved on 19/04/2020 from [www.mime-project.org](http://www.mime-project.org).
- Holliday, A. (2016). *Difference and awareness in cultural travel: negotiating blocks and threads*. *Language and Intercultural Communication*. 16(3), 318-331.
- Jansen, Y., Groen-Reijman, E., de Bloois, J., & Celikates, R. (2015). *Uit het Maagdenhuis....* Retrieved on 02/05/2020 from <https://dare.uva.nl/search?identifier=e011ea9b-31cd-40f3-9026-4c8243ef1f4b>
- *Non-educational language policy - Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance*. (2018). Retrieved on 27/04/2020 from file:///C:/Users/evgfa/Downloads/non-educational\_language\_policy\_leg.pdf
- Otten, S., Jansen, W. en de Vroome T, 2013. *Werkt diversiteit? Arbeidsintegratie en sociaal vertrouwen in een kleurrijke samenleving* (Employment integration and social trust in a colourful society), Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.
- Reglement voor de Universiteitsraad van de Universiteit Utrecht. (2017). *Huishoudelijke reglement*, Universiteit Utrecht.
- Rehbein, J., Thijs, J.D. ten, & Verschik, A. (2012). *Lingua receptiva (LaRa)-remarks on the quintessence of receptive multilingualism*. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 16(3), 248-264.
- Singleton, D. & Aronin, L. (eds.) (2018) *Twelve Chapters on Multilingualism*, 327 -263 pp. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. Retrieved on 12/05/2020 from <http://www.multilingual-matters.com/display.asp?K=9781788922074>
- Soriano de Alencar, E.M.L , De Souza Fleith, D. and Pereira, N. (2017). *Creativity in Higher Education: Challenges and Facilitating Factors*. *Trends in Psychology / Temasem Psicologia – Junho 2017*, 25/2, 553-561.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. and Franklin, P. (2009). *Intercultural Interaction. A Multidisciplinary Approach to Intercultural Communication*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- ten Thijs, J.D. ten (2018). *Case Study 4 Lingua Receptiva at the Directorate-General for Translation (DGT) of the European Commission*, In: R. Beerkens, E. Le Pichon, R. Supheert and J.D. ten Thijs (eds.) *Enhancing Intercultural Communication in Organizations. Insights From Project Advisers*. Pp. 45-52. New York and London: Routledge.
- ten Thijs, J. D., Gulikers, E., & Schoutsen, K. (2020). *Het gebruik van Luistertaal in de praktijk: Een onderzoek naar meertaligheid in de bouw, de gezondheidszorg en het onderwijs in Nederland en Vlaanderen*. Retrieved on 13/05/2020 from <http://www.luistertaal.nl/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Het-gebruik-van-Luistertaal-in-de-praktijk.pdf>

- *Toelichting bij het Reglement voor de Universiteitsraad* . (2017). (Universiteit Utrecht).
- Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal. (2019). *Taal en Toegankelijkheid*. Geraadpleegd op 12/05/2020 van <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/wetsvoorstellen/detail?id=2019Z16820&dossier=35282>
- Utrecht University. (z.d.). *Elections*. Geraadpleegd op 12 mei 2020, van <https://www.uu.nl/en/elections>
- Utrecht University . (z.d.). *Organisation; University Council*. Geraadpleegd op 12 mei 2020, van <https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/governance-and-organisation/employee-and-student-representation/university-council>
- Utrecht University. (2016). *Strategic plan 2016 - 2020*. Geraadpleegd op 12/05/2020 van [https://www.uu.nl/sites/default/files/ubd\\_strategic\\_plan\\_utrecht\\_university\\_2016-2020.pdf](https://www.uu.nl/sites/default/files/ubd_strategic_plan_utrecht_university_2016-2020.pdf)
- Utrecht University Code of Conduct on the Language of Instruction. (2018). *Utrecht University*.
- Utrecht University language policy. (2016). Retrieved on 12/05/2020 from [https://www.dub.uu.nl/sites/default/files/attachments/93/16-115\\_university\\_language\\_policy\\_uu.pdf](https://www.dub.uu.nl/sites/default/files/attachments/93/16-115_university_language_policy_uu.pdf)
- Vierbergen-Schuit, K. and Thije, J. D. ten (2008) Key to knowledge. Knowledge accumulation in cumulative interviews by using institutional key words. In: A. Müller and F. Menz (Eds.) *Organisationskommunikation, ReiheManagementkonzepte*. München/ Mering: Hampp, 269-291
- Wettenbank, Overheid. nl. (2020). *Algemene wet bestuursrecht*. Geraadpleegd op 14 april 2020, van <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0005537/2020-04-01>
- Zakota, Z., Izsak, H., Nemeth, İ. (2017). *Quality in higher education*. The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational and Social Sciences , 7 ( ) , 216-220 . Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/epess/issue/30770/337292>

# 10. APPENDIX 1: Interviews – questions list and consent of participation

---

The present document is the first of two publications. Another version with transcriptions of the interviews will be published, but it will not be available for the public, since it contains personal information on the participants of the research, who have been guaranteed total anonymity.

## Interviews – List of questions

### - Personal details

1. What is your name?
2. What is your previous / current education?
3. Do you have any relation / What is your relation with the University Council?
4. Which language/s do you speak?
5. Which language/s you somehow understand but find difficult to speak fluently?

### - Questions about Lingua Receptiva

6. What do you think of a multilingual meeting where Dutch is the official language but English is allowed?
7. Have you ever participated to a multilingual meeting before?
8. Which problems do you think may arise from that?
9. Do you think it might be possible to switch to English during the conversation?
10. Which level of proficiency of Dutch do you think is needed to understand the language of the meetings?
11. Do you think there could be some other skills or cultural awareness that could be useful for internationals?
12. Do you think that Dutch members could also have a Receptive English course?
13. What consequences could LaRa have for the regulations? (Huishuidelijke reglement, 2017)
14. How would LaRa interfere with democracy?
15. Under what conditions could LaRa be installed as the communicative mode of Utrecht University Council?
16. Under what conditions could LaRa be implemented in the language policy regarding the internationalization of the university in general?
17. Are there inside the organization some concrete methods that can be used to develop LaRa?
18. What do you think of the possibility of having a language coach for next year's meetings?

### - Questions on quality of debate

19. What do you think determines quality of debate?
20. What do you mean by quality of debate yourself?
21. Do you think that multilingual meetings could improve or endanger the quality of debate?
22. How is quality of debate related to democracy?

- Internationalization

23. How do you think the presence of Dutch and international members will change because of multilingual meetings?
24. What do you think about the internationalization?
25. In your opinion, could the knowledge of both English and Dutch bring to a feeling of inclusion?
26. Why?
27. How would you feel about learning receptive Dutch as a prerequisite of being part of the University Council?
28. How much time do you think is needed to reach an high level of receptive Dutch?
29. Do you feel integrated now? Can you explain why?

- Medezeggenschap

30. How does the University Council work?
31. Do you participate to the meetings organized for the board?
32. What is the aim of these meetings?
33. How are encounters structured?
34. What are the positions of the four parties?
35. In which language/s are you allowed to participate?
36. What happens if another language rather than Dutch is used?
37. What are the different interests of participants/people and their conditions?
38. Could you explain what medezeggenschap is?
39. Is it important to you?
40. Why and whether do you think consensus on a decision is important?
41. Why and whether do you think is important that students and employees have a say in a decision?
42. Could you rank how important do you think being a U-raad member is for decision-making at Utrecht University?

- Language policy

43. What is the official language of your workplace?
44. Is there multilingualism?
45. Are you aware of the language policy at Utrecht University?
46. Which language should be used?
47. What happens in practice?
48. Is there a difference between the policy of administration and education?
49. How is language policy related to medezeggenschap?

- Final questions

50. Are you aware of any alternatives that can be used instead of LaRa?
51. Do you know someone else inside the organization that could be interested in the use of LaRa?
52. Do you have other questions or would you like to add something?

# TOESTEMMINGSVERKLARING

voor deelname aan:

**Interviewen voor Master thesis Interculturele Communicatie**

Ik, \_\_\_\_\_, bevestig als Universiteitsraad/bestuurslid:

- dat ik via de informatiebrief naar tevredenheid over het onderzoek ben ingelicht;
- dat ik in de gelegenheid ben gesteld om vragen over het onderzoek te stellen en dat mijn eventuele vragen naar tevredenheid zijn beantwoord;
- dat ik gelegenheid heb gehad om mijn deelname aan dit onderzoek na te denken;
- dat ik uit vrije wil instem met deelname van mijn organisatie.

Ik stem ermee in dat:

- de verzamelde gegevens voor educatieve doeleinden worden verkregen en worden alleen voor het onderzoek gebruikt;
- een deel van de resultaten geanonimiseerd gedeeld zullen worden met de docenten en studenten verbonden aan de master Interculturele communicatie (2019-2020) en niet extern gedeeld worden.
- er voor educatieve doeleinden eventueel ook geluidsopnamen tijdens het interview worden gemaakt na toestemming van de respondent;

Ik begrijp dat:

- ik het recht heb om mijn toestemming voor het gebruik van data in te trekken.

Naam: \_\_\_\_\_ Geboortedatum: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ (dd/mm/jjjj)

Handtekening: \_\_\_\_\_ Datum, plaats: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration of consent for participating in:**

**Interviews for Master thesis Intercultural Communication**

I \_\_\_\_\_ as University Council /Board member confirm that:

- I am satisfactorily informed about the thesis research via the information letter;
- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the study and that my questions have been answered satisfactorily;
- I have had the opportunity to think carefully about participating in this study;
- I participate voluntarily;

I give permission:

- That my data are collected for educational purposes and are used only for research purposes;
- That if applicable, audio recordings are made for educational purposes with the consent of the respondent;
- That part of the results can be included anonymously in the Master thesis and shared externally;

I understand that:

- I have the right to withdraw my permission to use my data after participation, without the obligation to give reasons why;

Name participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date, place: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Appendix 2: Nvivo code system

---

### Nodes

Name	Description
Alternatives	What to use in case LaRa does not work
Language coach	Mediator who can observe and give feedback
Dutch language	Cultural identity and preservation
English language	A threat or a necessity?
Inclusion	Feeling of belonging in the group for both Dutch and Internationals
Comfort	Feeling of comfort speaking the mother tongue / another language
Language policy	Documents, situations, awareness, language situation
Democracy	What LaRa and quality have to do with it?
Documents - translation	Prerequisite of good quality of debate
Documents- policy	Majority of participants do not know anything about it specifically
Internationalization	Tendency of university
NL INT Perspectives	Perspectives of both groups about the process of internationalization
LaRa	Lingua Receptiva
MLM - disadvantages	Potential problems that may arise with the use of LaRa
Receptive skills-levels	Which level internationals need to reach
Regulations to implement	Which regulations can be proposed to implement LaRa in the language policy

Name	Description
Medezeggenschap	Dutch culture: participation, consensus, to have a say
U-raad	University Council
Quality of debate	What determines the quality of debate?