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# Master Thesis

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The relationship between multicultural competence,  
foreign language mastery and job performance

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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

## **Abstract**

Multiculturalism and multilingualism form two of the main characteristics of the contemporary business environment. Simultaneously, they also present two of its main challenges. In order to perform well in internationally oriented jobs, employees have to match a certain competence profile. In order to provide more insight into what employers should bear in mind during their selection and hiring processes, this study investigated the relationships between multicultural competence, measured by the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ)'s personality dimensions, foreign language mastery, measured by amount and proficiency of foreign languages spoken, and self-assessed job performance.

With a set-up based on earlier research, 72 German professionals filled in a questionnaire and were divided into nationally and internationally working employees, called national and international internal stakeholders. In line with previous research, partial evidence for a relationship between multicultural competence and foreign language mastery was found. The two international stakeholder groups did to some extent differ in terms of foreign language mastery, and hardly in terms of multicultural competence. Only the amount of foreign languages spoken was found to be predictive of group membership, which contradicts with earlier results. Multicultural competence and foreign language mastery were found to be related to job performance in the international internal stakeholder group. The current findings enrich previous research in the field and help employers to get a more clear vision of the competences which are required in contemporary workplaces.

**Key words:** Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ), multicultural competence, foreign language mastery, job performance, personality

## **Introduction:**

In today's globalised world, multicultural understanding and acting have become crucial skills, both in the private sector and in the business world. National and cultural borders hardly exist in the job market anymore, both for employers and employees. Business networks reach across the globe (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000) and make effective interaction with international stakeholders an essential and critical tool for meeting the challenges of competing in such a multicultural working environment and being

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internationally successful.

Especially internationally operating organisations experience the encounter of different cultures in various forms and to differing magnitudes. This presents an extensive challenge for organisations. The importance of their employees' competences in approaching professional encounters with different nationalities and cultures in the best possible way is bigger than ever (Griffith, 2002; Black and Gregersen, 1999 as cited in Shay & Baack, 2006), since these competences are 'becoming important source of competitive advantage' (Zhang & Dodgson, 2007 as cited in Subramaniam, Ramalu, Wei, & Rose, 2011). Cultural differences in thinking and behaviour have to be taken into account when people from different cultures work together and organisations also have to adapt to a new linguistic situation. Rogerson-Revell (2007) stated that due to rapid global developments in science, technology, culture and media, the use of foreign languages in business contexts, predominantly English, has increased significantly over the past few years. Employees of international organisations are therefore likely needed to be proficient in at least one language that is not their mother tongue.

In today's globalised business environment, underlying cultural and linguistic differences have the potential to negatively influence personal and organisational performance, particularly if such differences hinder the creation of an effective intercultural communication environment (Griffith, 2002). For instance, cultural diversity in the workplace might result in resistance among employees (Thomas & Plaut, 2008) and insufficient proficiency in the language used at work may be evaluated negatively by business partners (Hendriks, 2010). Looking at these two main challenges of today's working environment, multiculturalism and multilingualism, employees of many organisations in the modern business world need certain competences in order to perform well in their jobs. They need multicultural competence in order to deal with clients and business partners from different cultures and they need to speak more than one language, in order to face the increasing use of foreign languages in business contexts. Of course, employers want to reach the highest possible level of organisational prestige, therefore they have to carefully choose their company's personnel, who eventually are responsible for its performance and achievements. In short, organisations are looking for professionals with a certain competence profile that fits the needs of the modern, international business environment.

This study will investigate the two specific competences multicultural competence and foreign language mastery, and test the potential relationships between them and a person's job performance, the aspect that is most important to employers.

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## **Theoretical background:**

### *Multicultural competence*

The concept of multicultural competence has gotten a lot of attention, which has led to a rich body of literature. The most recent theoretical and empirical developments have been reviewed by Leung and Tan (2014), who conclude that there is consensus among researchers that the term multicultural competence refers to an individual's ability to function effectively across cultures (Whaley & Davis, 2007). It can be classified based on personality traits, as for example in the Five-Factor model (McCrae, Costa & Piedmont, 1993), but also on attitudes and worldviews, capabilities, or a combination of these dimensions (Leung & Tan, 2014). Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) state that, in order to communicate effectively with another culture, individuals should have the following competences: To be open to the other culture, possess a sufficient degree of sensitivity to notice cultural differences and be willing to adapt their behaviour in a flexible way, and to show respect and accommodate to the other culture. Finally, Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) defined multicultural competence as successfully operating in a new cultural environment, a feeling of psychological well-being in that environment, and interest in and ability to deal with individuals from a different cultural background.

Both academics and practitioners have developed various models to assess multicultural competence in a variety of research areas and disciplines. Matsumoto and Hwang (2013) recently reviewed 10 different tests of multicultural competence and concluded that the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000) provides promising evidence for assessing multicultural competence, since both its ecological validity and construct validity were found to be strong. The factor structure validity and predictive value of the English version of the questionnaire has also been supported in a study among international employees by Van der Zee and Brinkmann (2004). Therefore, the MPQ will be used in the present study in order to measure multicultural competence, since it can be regarded a valid instrument. With several items it measures five dimensions linked to multicultural orientation and adaptation on a personality level (Leone, Van de Zee, Van Oudenhoven, Perugini & Ercolani, 2005). The first dimension cultural empathy refers to the 'ability to empathize with the feelings, thoughts, and behaviours of members from different cultural groups' (Ruben, 1976 as cited in Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p. 294). Open-mindedness summarizes an open and tolerant attitude towards other people, including their cultural norms and values, without having prejudices (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). The third dimension social initiative originated from a combination of scales for

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orientation to action and extraversion and describes the tendency to actively stand out in a different culture and strive for results (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). Emotional stability refers to staying calm and relaxed in stressful and unexpected situations in connection to other cultures (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). Finally, the dimension flexibility orbits the ability 'to switch easily from one strategy to another, because the familiar ways of handling things will not necessarily work in a new cultural environment' (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, p. 295). These five dimensions are regarded as antecedents of multicultural competence (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). They are more specific and narrow than for example the traits in the Five-Factor model (McCrae, Costa & Piedmont, 1993) and have been shown to have higher validities with respect to job performance criteria (Ashton, 1998). Several studies concerning the reliability and validity of the MPQ found that its scales appeared to be strongly predictive of adjustment of foreign students of an international business school in the Netherlands (Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002), and predictive of expatriates' personal, professional and social adjustment (Van Oudenhoven, Mol, & Van der Zee, 2003; Peltokorpi, 2008). In Van Oudenhoven, Mol, and Van der Zee's (2003) study of the adjustment of western expatriates in Taiwan, emotional stability appeared most consistently as a predictor of adjustment, social initiative was an additional strong predictor of psychological well-being, cultural empathy predicted satisfaction with life and of the amount of social support in the host country, and flexibility was a predictor of job satisfaction and social support.

For this study, the definitions of the five dimensions of the MPQ as in Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven (2000) are used, and the sum of these dimensions is regarded multicultural competence.

### *Foreign language mastery*

Increasing globalisation not only requires more competences on a personality level, but also increases the language contact between people from different countries, which increases the need for multilingual competence in employees. Many organisations have reached a situation where multilingualism in their daily operations is no rarity anymore, both internally and externally, and people involved in these operations have to be able to deal with this situation (Henderson & Louhiala-Salminen, 2011; Lin & Rancer, 2003). Thus, the need for employees of internationally operating organisations to master foreign languages is growing (e.g. Gerritsen & Nickerson, 2009) and language proficiency is a marketable skill for employees (Kramsch, 1989).

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Matsumoto (2000) suggests in a review of available tests about assessing multicultural competence that (language) knowledge and skills should be combined with certain personality traits in one's thinking and interpretations, since constructs measuring these concepts sometimes overlap. Onwuegbuzie, Bailey and Daley (2000) revealed that among cognitive, affective and demographic variables, personality variables were important predictors of foreign-language achievement. Carrell, Prince and Astika (1996) however, found in their study of the relationships between the personality types of a group of English as a foreign language students in Indonesia that the measured personality variables showed only low simple correlations with language performance measures, but they conclude that the 'relationships between and among these variables may not be simple, but complex and interacting' and deserve more attention (Carrell, Prince & Astika, 1996, p. 95). More research is necessary, in order to learn more about these relationships and interactions between foreign language mastery and personality traits.

The only study to date which suggests that foreign language mastery is not only linked to personality, but to developing multicultural competencies was published by Korzilius, Van Hooft, Planken, and Hendrix (2011). They investigated the relationship between multicultural personality dimensions and foreign language mastery in a Dutch-based multinational company in the agricultural sector. The employees, who will from now on be referred to as internal stakeholders, were divided into a group of international internal stakeholders, which consisted of people working in an international context and a group of national internal stakeholders, consisting of people who work only 'locally' in the Netherlands. The international internal stakeholders were found to score higher on the MPQ dimensions 'open-mindedness' and 'flexibility' than the national internal stakeholders. Additionally, the international internal stakeholders averagely reported speaking one foreign language more than the other group. The findings of Korzilius et al. (2011) therefore reflect partial evidence of a relationship between personality dimensions and foreign language mastery, as suggested by Matsumoto (2000), as the number of foreign languages correlated with the multicultural personality dimensions open-mindedness and emotional stability. This finding is supported by Grin and Faniko (2012), who found a significant relationship between the MPQ dimensions open-mindedness, cultural empathy, social initiative and language skills.

For the current study, the respondents' foreign language mastery will be measured in the same way than in Korzilius et al. (2011), namely by asking them about the number of foreign languages they speak and their self-assessed proficiency in these languages, in order to examine the relationships between this variable and multicultural competence. Results as in

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for example Oscarson (1989) suggest that speakers of a second language tend to estimate their own performance in a very similar way as an external judge would do. Additionally, Korzilius et al. (2011)'s method of dividing the respondents in two different internal stakeholder groups (national and international) will also be used, in order to compare the findings from the groups to each other and to enable a closer look into the international internal stakeholder group. Korzilius et al. (2011) also found that the dimensions 'emotional stability' and 'open-mindedness', and the number of foreign languages spoken were to some extent predictive of differences between the national and international internal stakeholder groups.

By using the method of Korzilius et al. (2011), and applying it to different sectors than the agricultural sector, and in another country, the current study's results can be compared to their findings and give more insight into the potential relationship between multicultural competence and foreign language mastery, their predictive value on internal stakeholder group membership and the differences between international and national internal stakeholder groups. By doing so, it is aspired to further carve out the ideal profile of an employee in today's globalized working environment.

### *Job performance*

The main goal of employers investing time in carefully selecting their employees is to reach a good fit between a candidate and an open position, in order to ensure that said candidate will perform well in their job. The concept of job performance has been included in various studies on role perceptions, organisational performance and job satisfaction (e.g. Brief & Aldag, 1976; Hunter & Hunter, 1984).

In a meta-analysis by Abramis (1994), eight reviewed studies involved independent assessments of performance, two involved both independent and self-assessments, and only one involved self-assessments of overall job performance. However, statistical tests within these studies suggested that there is more consistency and less variance across correlations based on self-assessed measures of performance. Apparently, measuring self-assessed job performance leads to more consistency across correlations, than when using other measurements. For that reason, the five items measuring job performance of Parker and Kulik (1995) will also be used in this study, in order to investigate its relationship with multicultural competence and foreign language mastery. Parker and Kulik (1995) examined how burnout is related to absenteeism and job performance in a sample of 73 registered nurses. They used, amongst other measurements, self-assessed performance, as their participants were asked to evaluate their own current levels of job performance in each of the following areas:

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knowledge of procedures, interaction with co-workers, dedication to work, quality of care provided to patients, and overall rating of job performance on 5-point Likert scales.

In a number of studies, the relationship between personality traits and job performance has gotten attention (e.g. Dalton & Wilson, 2000; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1999). Barrick and Mount (1991) investigated the relation between the earlier mentioned Five-Factor model and three job performance criteria, namely job proficiency, training proficiency, and personnel data. Their results suggested that ‘conscientiousness’, ‘extraversion’ and ‘openness to experience’ are related to these three measurements of job performance. The results of Caligiuri (2000) support their findings and the general hypothesis that personality characteristics are related to performance. Additionally, Mol, Born, Willemsen and Van Der Molen (2005) even found personality traits to be predictive of expatriate job performance. Certain personality traits seem to be related to a person’s job performance and for employers this could indicate that they should focus more on certain personality dimensions while searching for suitable employees in international positions.

### *Set up of this study*

The present study is to a certain extent similar to the research carried out by Korzilius et al. (2011) who, as mentioned earlier, investigated the relationship between personality dimensions, measured with the MPQ, and foreign language mastery. The authors state that the findings of their case-based investigation are necessarily company and sector biased, and can therefore not be regarded as representative for the international business community at large. Following their encouragement to further research this particular topic, this study aims to provide more insight into the relationship between multicultural competence, measured by the MPQ’s personality dimensions, and foreign language mastery. This takes place in a sector other than the agricultural sector and with the inclusion of several organisations, in order to eliminate the sector and company biases. Additionally, the study is based on data gathered in Germany and therefore adds a different culture to the results, which are based on data gathered in the Netherlands.

Furthermore, the current study will take a further step by expanding the approach of Korzilius et al. (2011) by adding the variable job performance and linking it to multicultural competence and foreign language mastery in the international internal stakeholder group. It has not been researched yet whether there is any relationship between self-assessed job performance, the five dimensions of the MPQ and foreign language mastery. A higher job performance is obviously a desirable goal for employers of all different kinds and sizes of

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organisations. It is particularly interesting for employers in internationally operating organisations to know to what extent there is a relationship between an employee's multicultural competence and foreign language mastery and his job performance, in order to more precisely aim their selection and hiring processes on these traits.

The present study aims to investigate the relationship between multicultural competence and foreign language mastery in the context of internationally operating organisations in Germany and examines the differences between two different internal stakeholder groups (national and international). Additionally, the predictive value of multicultural competence and foreign language mastery on internal stakeholder group membership will be investigated. The following research questions have been formulated:

*RQ 1: To what extent is there a relationship between multicultural competence, foreign language mastery and internal stakeholder group membership (national and international)?*

Since this question is formulated very broadly and the different relations will be looked at in more detail, this research question will be divided into three sub-questions, which have been slightly adapted from Korzilius et al. (2011):

*1a. To what extent is there a relationship between multicultural competence and foreign language mastery?*

*1b. To what extent do the two internal stakeholder groups (national and international) display differences in multicultural competence and foreign language mastery?*

*1c. To what extent do multicultural competence and foreign language mastery predict internal stakeholder group membership (national and international)?*

Furthermore, as this has not been investigated in this specific context before, the relationship between multicultural competence, foreign language mastery and job performance will be examined. This will only be done within the international internal stakeholder group, since only employees in this group are confronted with the challenges which are entailed by the multiculturalism and multilingualism in modern business environments. It is aspired to gain more insight into the requirements employees that operate internationally need to meet to

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perform well in their jobs. The following second research question has been formulated:

*RQ 2: To what extent is there a relationship between multicultural competence, foreign language mastery and job performance in the international internal stakeholder group?*

Based on the review of existing literature, several expectations can be formulated. As in Korzilius et al. (2011), a correlation is expected between at least some of the MPQ dimensions, such as open-mindedness and emotional stability, and foreign language mastery. Furthermore, differences in multicultural competence and foreign language mastery are expected to exist between the two internal stakeholder groups (national and international). It is also expected that multicultural competence and foreign language mastery will to some extent be predictive for differences between internal stakeholder groups (Korzilius et al., 2011). Lastly, it is expected that (some) personality dimensions and foreign language mastery are related to job performance (e.g. Barrick and Mount, 1991; Caligiuri, 2000).

### **Method:**

#### *Instrument*

To investigate the potential relationships between the variables multicultural competence (the MPQ's five dimensions), foreign language mastery, internal stakeholder group membership (national and international) and job performance, a questionnaire was developed using the online programme Qualtrics. It started with a short introductory text, information about confidentiality and procedure and contact information of the responsible researchers. Since this questionnaire was also used as an instrument in a similar study, it also contained questions about the variable self-efficacy, which is irrelevant for this study. The data from this construct was not used in any statistical analyses which are discussed later on. In the following, the variables and constructs of the questionnaire that were relevant to and used in the current study are explained in detail. The English and German version of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

As previously mentioned, multicultural competence was measured by 80 items, on the basis the MPQ's multicultural personality dimensions, consisting of five constructs: cultural empathy (14 items), open-mindedness (14 items), social initiative (17 items), emotional stability (20 items) and flexibility (15 items) (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001). Each construct was headed by the instruction 'Please indicate to which extent the following statements apply to you' and each item was measured by 5-point Likert scales, which were

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anchored with '1=Totally not applicable' – '5= Totally applicable'. The reliability for the items measuring cultural empathy ( $\alpha = .76$ ) was acceptable and the reliability for the items measuring open-mindedness ( $\alpha = .87$ ), social-initiative ( $\alpha = .91$ ), emotional stability ( $\alpha = .85$ ) and flexibility ( $\alpha = .82$ ) was good.

The items measuring job performance, which are 'knowledge of procedures', 'interaction with co-workers', 'dedication to work', 'quality of work' and 'overall job performance', were adapted from Parker (1995). The construct was headed by the instruction 'Please indicate how you evaluate your own current levels of job performance in each of the following areas:' and measured by 5-point Likert scales, which were anchored with '1=Poor' – '5= Outstanding'. The reliability of the items measuring job performance was acceptable ( $\alpha = .75$ ).

The respondents' foreign language mastery was measured by the questions used in Korzilius et al. (2011), who asked respondents about the number of foreign languages they speak (maximum 6) and their self-assessed knowledge of these languages (1 "poor" to 7 "excellent"). An average of all languages was calculated for each participant, with regard to their proficiency.

Furthermore, respondents had to indicate whether they see their current job as internationally or nationally oriented. After choosing one option (national and international), they indicated to which extent their current job was internationally oriented on a 5-point Likert scale, headed by 'Please indicate the extent to which your current job is internationally oriented', and anchored with '1=Not at all' – '5=Very high degree'. Additional questions determining the respondents' internal stakeholder group membership (national and international) were also taken from Korzilius et al. (2011), asking them about the basis on which they maintain international contacts, the number of weeks they worked, lived, studied and spent their holidays abroad.

Finally, some demographical and biographical questions were asked. They included the size and sector of the company they were currently working for, their gender, age, highest educational level and nationality. All participants were thanked for their participation and given the opportunity to leave their e-mail address in order to receive information about the overall results of the current study.

### *Procedure and respondents*

In order to answer the research questions and the related sub-questions, and to test the above mentioned expectations, the survey was conducted in several multinational German

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organisations in different sectors. The companies were contacted via an informational e-mail which contained the link to the survey. They were informed that their participation in this research would at all times be voluntary and that their responses would be kept anonymously. It was asked to let as many employees as possible fill in the questionnaire, which could be done in English and German. The gathering of the data happened in the period from 03.05.16 until 31.05.16.

Within this period, 92 persons followed the link to the survey and 72 of them actually completed the questionnaire. Only the data of these 72 respondents were used for the analyses. Of the counting respondents, 52,8 % were female ( $n=38$ ) and 45,8 % were male ( $n=33$ ), while the gender of 1 respondent was unknown (1,4 %). The respondents' average age was 43 ( $SD= 13.97$ ), with a range from 20 to 77 years. The most frequent level of education was a Master's degree (25 %), followed by a high school degree (22,2 %). However, 28 % of the respondents indicated to have some other kind of degree. While most respondents were German ( $n=67$ ), three had other nationalities and one person's nationality was unknown. The industries in which the respondents worked in were diversified, with the biggest umbrella terms being health care (17,8 %) and industrial construction (12,5 %). The biggest amount of respondents worked in companies with more than 1000 employees (29,2 %). In order to divide this study's respondents into the two different internal stakeholder groups (national and international), like it was done in Korzilius et al. (2011), the following guidelines were used. Respondents who chose for the option 'international' as an answer to the first question ('Please indicate the orientation of your current job') formed the international internal stakeholder group, as well as respondents who chose 'national' for the first question, but indicated a 'high' or 'very high' international orientation after the second question ('Please indicate the extent to which your current job is internationally oriented') ( $n=32$ ). All other respondents formed the group national internal stakeholders ( $n=40$ ).

The independent-sample t-test for age with as factor group membership showed no significant effect of group membership on age ( $t(69) = .53, p = .598$ ). The Chi-square analyses for gender ( $\chi^2(1) = .29, p = .590$ ), educational level ( $\chi^2(4) = 5.45, p = .244$ ), nationality ( $\chi^2(2) = 1.87, p = .393$ ) and sector ( $\chi^2(50) = 55.73, p = .268$ ) showed no significant difference between the two groups. However, the Chi-square analysis for company size showed a significant difference between the two groups ( $\chi^2(4) = 14.65, p = .005$ ). International employees more frequently worked in bigger companies ( $M = 3.59, SD = 1.34$ ) than national employees ( $M = 3.25, SD = 1.37$ ). Since this difference is relatively small and company size is the only thing that differs between the two groups, they are still regarded as

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equally distributed. Potential influences on the results will be discussed at the end of this article.

### *Statistical treatment*

In order to statistically test the relationships and correlations, the software package SPSS 23 was used. Research question 1a was answered by calculating descriptive statistics and correlations between multicultural competence and foreign language mastery. Question 1b was answered by carrying out independent sample t-tests in order to detect differences between the two internal stakeholder groups (national and international). To answer research question 1c, a logistic regression analysis was run to measure whether multicultural competence and foreign language predict internal stakeholder group membership (national and international). In order to answer research question 2, descriptive statistics and correlations between multicultural competence, foreign language mastery and job performance were calculated.

### **Results:**

#### *The relationship between multicultural competence and foreign language mastery*

After statistically testing the gathered data, conclusions about the relationship between multicultural competence and foreign language mastery could be drawn. All results can be found below in Table 1. First of all, no significant correlation was found between the amount of foreign languages spoken and the MPQ's cultural dimension cultural empathy ( $r(71) = .11$ ,  $p = .375$ ). The amount of foreign languages spoken was therefore not related to cultural empathy. There were also no significant correlations found between the amount of foreign languages spoken and the dimensions social initiative ( $r(71) = .15$ ,  $p = .204$ ) and emotional stability ( $r(71) = .06$ ,  $p = .608$ ). Thus it was shown that the amount of foreign languages spoken was not related to social initiative or emotional stability. A significant positive correlation was found between amount of foreign languages spoken and open-mindedness ( $r(71) = .25$ ,  $p = .032$ ), as well as between the amount of foreign languages spoken and flexibility ( $r(71) = .31$ ,  $p = .009$ ). The amount of foreign languages spoken was related to the dimensions open-mindedness and flexibility.

Concerning the proficiency, significant positive correlations were found between the proficiency of foreign languages spoken and cultural empathy ( $r(71) = .26$ ,  $p = .029$ ), open-mindedness ( $r(71) = .40$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and flexibility ( $r(71) = .35$ ,  $p = .003$ ). The proficiency in foreign languages was therefore related to cultural empathy, open-mindedness and flexibility.

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No significant positive correlations were found between the proficiency of foreign languages spoken and social initiative ( $r(71) = .22, p = .066$ ) and proficiency of foreign languages spoken and emotional stability ( $r(71) = .19, p = .106$ ). It was shown that the proficiency in foreign languages spoken was not related to social initiative and emotional stability.

Also notable, there were several significant correlations found between the MPQ's dimensions, with cultural empathy and social initiative as well as cultural empathy and emotional stability being the only dimensions that were not related to each other. Furthermore, there was no significant correlation between the amount of foreign languages spoken and proficiency of the foreign languages spoken ( $r(71) = .05, p = .694$ ). The amount of foreign languages spoken was not related to the proficiency in those languages.

Table 1. Correlations between foreign language mastery (amount of foreign languages spoken and proficiency of foreign languages spoken) and multicultural competence (the MPQ's five dimensions)

Variable	Amount of foreign languages spoken	Proficiency of foreign languages spoken	Cultural empathy	Open-mindedness	Social initiative	Emotional stability	Flexibility
Amount of foreign languages spoken		.47	.11	.25*	.15	.06	.31**
Proficiency of foreign language spoken	.47		.26*	.40**	.22	.19	.35**
Cultural empathy	.11	.26*		.43**	.22	.21	.29*
Open-mindedness	.25*	.40**	.43**		.57**	.52**	.55**
Social initiative	.15	.22	.22	.57**		.65**	.63**
Emotional stability	.06	.19	.21	.52*	.65**		.60**
Flexibility	.31**	.35**	.29*	.55**	.63**	.60**	

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\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

*The differences in multicultural competence and foreign language mastery between the two internal stakeholder groups (national and international)*

All results concerning the differences in multicultural competence and foreign language mastery between the two internal stakeholder groups can be found in Table 2. An independent-samples t-test for amount of weeks spent on holiday abroad with as factor group membership showed no significant effect of internal stakeholder group membership on the amount of weeks spent on holiday abroad ( $t(70) = .24, p = .811$ ). The respondents belonging to the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 2.88, SD = 1.39$ ) did not spend more weeks on holiday abroad than the respondents in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.08, SD = 4.54$ ).

Independent-samples t-tests for amount of weeks spent on studying abroad and for amount of weeks spent on living abroad with as factor group membership did also not show a significant effect of internal stakeholder group membership on amount of weeks spent on studying abroad ( $t(23,260) = 1.02, p = .317$ ), as well as on the amount of weeks spent on living abroad ( $t(23) = 1.82, p = .082$ ). Respondents in the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 1.83, SD = 8.15; M = 4.33, SD = 11.66$ ) did thus not spend more weeks on studying abroad or living abroad than respondents in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = .13, SD = .71; M = 4.33, SD = 11.66$ ). However, an independent-samples t-test for amount of weeks spent on working abroad with as factor internal stakeholder group membership showed a significant effect of group membership on the amount of weeks spent on working abroad ( $t(29,337) = 3.54, p = .001$ ) This means that the respondents in the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 5.61, SD = 7.73$ ) spent more weeks on working abroad than the respondents in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = .33, SD = 1.74$ ).

An independent-samples t-test for amount of languages spoken with as factor internal stakeholder group membership showed a significant effect of group membership on amount of languages spoken ( $t(69) = 2.06, p = .043$ ). Therefore, employees in the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 2.06, SD = 1.06$ ) spoke more foreign languages than employees in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = 1.60, SD = .84$ ). Additionally, an independent-samples t-test for proficiency of foreign languages spoken with as factor internal stakeholder group membership did not show a significant effect of group membership on proficiency ( $t(69) = 1.41, p = .162$ ). This means that employees in the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 4.33, SD = 1.01$ ) were not more proficient in their foreign languages

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than the employees in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.93$ ,  $SD = 1.30$ ).

Independent-samples t-tests for cultural empathy and open-mindedness with as factor internal stakeholder group membership did not show a significant effect of internal stakeholder group membership on cultural empathy ( $t(70) = .25$ ,  $p = .805$ ) or open-mindedness ( $t(70) = 1.20$ ,  $p = .233$ ). Employees in the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.88$ ,  $SD = .36$ ) did not show more cultural empathy than employees in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.86$ ,  $SD = .39$ ), and employees in the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = .53$ ) were not more open-minded than employees in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.57$ ,  $SD = .48$ ). However, an independent-samples t-test for social-initiative with as factor internal stakeholder group membership showed a significant effect of group membership on social initiative ( $t(70) = 2.06$ ,  $p = .043$ ). Employees in the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = .44$ ) showed more social initiative than employees in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.38$ ,  $SD = .65$ ). Finally, independent-samples t-tests for emotional stability and flexibility with as factor internal stakeholder group membership did not show a significant effect of internal stakeholder group membership on emotional stability ( $t(70) = 1.40$ ,  $p = .167$ ) or flexibility ( $t(70) = 1.52$ ,  $p = .132$ ). This means that employees in the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = .434$ ) were not more emotionally stable than the employees in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.27$ ,  $SD = .52$ ), and that the employees in the international internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.38$ ,  $SD = .41$ ) did not show more flexibility than the employees in the national internal stakeholder group ( $M = 3.19$ ,  $SD = .58$ ).

Table 2. Means and Standard deviation for foreign language mastery (amount of foreign languages spoken and proficiency of foreign languages spoken, 1= low, 6= high for proficiency) and multicultural competence (the MPQ's five dimensions, 1 =low, 5= high) in the two internal stakeholder groups (national and international)

Variable	<i>M</i>		<i>SD</i>		<i>n</i>
	National	Intern.	National	Intern.	
Amount of foreign languages spoken	1.60*	2.06*	.84*	1.06*	71
Proficiency of foreign languages spoken	3.93	4.33	1.30	1.01	71

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Cultural empathy	3.86	3.88	.39	.36	72
Open-mindedness	3.57	3.71	.48	.53	72
Social Initiative	3.38*	3.66*	.65*	.44*	72
Emotional stability	3.27	3.43	.52	.43	72
Flexibility	3.19	3.38	.58	.41	72
Weeks spent on holiday abroad	3.08	2.88	4.54	1.39	72
Weeks spent on studying abroad	.13	1.83	.71	8.15	56
Weeks spent on working abroad	.33**	5.61**	1.74**	7.73**	61
Weeks spent on living abroad	.00	4.33	.00	11.66	56

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

*The predictive value of multicultural competence and foreign language mastery on internal stakeholder group membership*

A logistic regression was performed in order to examine the effects of foreign language mastery (amount of foreign languages spoken and proficiency of foreign languages spoken) and multicultural competence (the MPQ's five dimensions) on internal stakeholder group membership (national and international). The results can be found below in Table 3. The model was not statistically significant  $\chi(9) = 11.00, p = .276$ . The analysis showed that the variables entered explained 14,4 % of the variance in internal stakeholder group membership and correctly classified 64,8 % of the cases. Only the amount of foreign languages spoken ( $b = .74, \text{Wald } \chi^2(1) = 4.24, p = .040$ ) has been shown to be a significant predictor of group membership. For each unit that the amount of foreign languages spoken increases, the change in the odds of belonging to the international internal stakeholder group is 2.09. The more foreign languages respondents spoke, the more likely it was that they belonged to the international internal stakeholder group.

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Table 3. Results of logistic regression predicting internal stakeholder group membership (national and international)

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE b</i>	Odds ratio
Amount of foreign languages spoken	.65	.31	1.91*
Proficiency of foreign languages spoken	.30	.26	1.40
Cultural empathy	.23	.76	.79
Open-mindedness	.08	.77	.92
Social-initiative	1.26	.79	3.52
Emotional stability	.80	.86	2.20
Flexibility	.45	.76	.63
<u>Model</u>			
Likelihood ratio test	$\chi (9) = 11.00, p = .276$		
R <sup>2</sup> Cox and Snell	.14		
R <sup>2</sup> Nagelkerke	.19		
Correct-classifications:	<i>n</i>		
group, <i>n</i> correct, % correct			
National employees	40, 30, 75		
International employees	32, 15, 51,6		

\* $p < .05$

*The relationship between multicultural competence, foreign language mastery and job performance in the international internal stakeholder group*

In order to examine whether multicultural competence and foreign language mastery are related to the job performance in an internationally oriented job, correlations between these variables were calculated within the international internal stakeholder group. The results

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can be found in Table 4. A significant positive correlation was found between job performance and cultural empathy ( $r(32) = .42, p = .017$ ). It was shown that job performance was related to cultural empathy. A significant positive correlation was also found between job performance and open-mindedness ( $r(32) = .48, p = .006$ ). It was shown that job performance was related to open-mindedness. Additionally, there were significant positive correlations found between job performance and social initiative ( $r(32) = .59, p < .001$ ), as well as between job performance and emotional stability ( $r(32) = .40, p = .023$ ). Job performance was thus related to social initiative and emotional stability. Finally, a significant positive correlation was found between job performance and flexibility ( $r(32) = .38, p = .031$ ). Therefore, job performance was related to flexibility.

There was no significant correlation found between job performance and amount of foreign languages spoken ( $r(31) = .23, p = .209$ ). Job performance was not related to the amount of foreign languages spoken. However, a significant correlation was found between job performance and proficiency of foreign languages spoken ( $r(31) = .57, p = .001$ ). It was shown that job performance was related to the proficiency of foreign languages spoken.

In the international internal stakeholder group, all of the MPQ's five dimensions were found to significantly correlate with each other, with cultural empathy being the only dimension which only correlated with open-mindedness. Furthermore, there was not found a significant correlation between the amount of foreign languages spoken and proficiency of the foreign languages spoken ( $r(31) = .13, p = .489$ ). The amount of foreign languages spoken in the international internal stakeholder group was not related to the proficiency in those languages.

Table 4. Correlations between foreign language mastery (amount of foreign languages spoken and proficiency of foreign languages spoken), multicultural competence (the MPQ's five dimensions) and job performance in the international internal stakeholder group

Variable	Amount of foreign languages spoken	Proficiency of foreign languages spoken	Cultural empathy	Open-mindedness	Social initiative	Emotional stability	Flexibility	Job performance
Amount of foreign languages spoken		.13	.08	.27	.26	.02	.33	.23

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Proficiency of foreign language spoken	.13		.08	.43*	.48**	.44*	.38*	.57**
Cultural empathy	.08	.08		.48**	.21	.25	.13	.42*
Open-mindedness	.27	.43*	.48**		.45*	.44*	.51**	.48**
Social initiative	.26	.48**	.21	.45*		.49**	.54**	.59**
Emotional stability	.20	.44*	.25	.44*	.49**		.63**	.40*
Flexibility	.33	.38*	.13	.51**	.54**	.63**		.38*
Job performance	.23	.57**	.42*	.48**	.59*	.40*	.38*	

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

### Conclusion and Discussion:

The goal of this study was to provide more insight into the relationship between multicultural competence (measured by the MPQ's personality dimensions), foreign language mastery (measured by amount and proficiency of foreign languages spoken), and self-assessed job performance, in order to further clarify what competences employers should focus on during the selection and hiring process for internationally oriented working positions. In the following, the results per research questions are explained in more detail and compared to findings of previous research. Furthermore, possible explanations are presented, the limitations of the current study are discussed, and directions for future research are given.

#### *The relationship between multicultural competence and foreign language mastery*

With regard to research question 1a, concerning the relationship between multicultural competence and foreign language mastery, the findings revealed the following. As expected, correlations between some of the MPQ's dimensions and foreign language mastery were found. Open-mindedness and flexibility were found to be related to the amount of foreign

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languages spoken by the respondents. This goes partly in line with the findings of Korzilius et al. (2011), who also found a relation between the amount of foreign languages spoken and the dimension open-mindedness. However, Korzilius et al. (2011) did not find a relation between the amount of foreign languages spoken and flexibility, but between the amount of foreign languages spoken and emotional stability. The found relationship between two of the MPQ's dimensions and the amount of foreign language spoken also supports the findings of Grin and Faniko (2012), who found a significant relationship between open-mindedness, cultural empathy, social initiative and language skills. Since open-mindedness summarizes an open and tolerant attitude towards other people, including their cultural norms and values (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), people who score higher on this dimension might also be more interested in foreign languages and more open towards the idea of learning them. Higher flexibility, as an indicator of the ability to switch easily from one strategy to another (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), might also facilitate learning a different language and switching to this language in situations when that is necessary.

Concerning the second measurement of foreign language mastery, correlations were found between the proficiency of foreign languages spoken and the dimensions cultural empathy, open-mindedness, and flexibility. As expected, this again suggests that multicultural competence correlated with foreign language mastery. This partially goes in line with the findings of Korzilius et al. (2011), who found a correlation between the proficiency of foreign languages spoken and cultural empathy, and the previously mentioned findings of Grin and Faniko (2012). A possible explanation for the correlation between proficiency and cultural empathy might be that people who score higher on this dimension are more able to emphasize with the feelings and thoughts of members of different cultural groups (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), and therefore also with their language. By putting themselves into the position of foreign language speakers, they might be able to more easily earn proficiency in said language.

Looking at the variable foreign language mastery as a whole, correlations between foreign language mastery and three of the MPQ's dimensions, namely cultural empathy, open-mindedness and flexibility were found, and no relations between foreign language mastery and the two dimensions social initiative and emotional stability were found. This finding to some extent reflects the results of Korzilius et al. (2011), who did also not find any correlations between foreign language and social initiative. Since social initiative describes the tendency to actively stand out in a different culture (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), this might lower people's willingness to adapt to a foreign language. At the same time,

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emotional stability, as the ability to stay calm and relaxed in stressful situations in connection to other cultures (Van Der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), might also not support the motivation to learn a foreign language, since with a calm mind also unexpected situations can be solved without necessarily speaking a local language. Also matching Korzilius et al. (2011) and Van Oudenhoven et al. (2003), almost all of the MPQ's dimensions were intercorrelated.

It can be concluded that the current study's findings reflect partial evidence of a relationship between multicultural competence, measured with the MPQ's dimensions, and foreign language mastery. The current study therefore complements the existing literature on that particular topic and provides more insight into this relationship. This knowledge is not only interesting and useful for researchers, but also for business practitioners. Awareness of the relation of multicultural competence and foreign language mastery helps employers see a clearer picture of how these two competences are connected to each other. This information is relevant during the recruitment process and when choosing employees for an internationally oriented job.

### *The differences in multicultural competence and foreign language mastery between the two internal stakeholder groups (national and international)*

Research question 1b dealt with the differences in multicultural competence and foreign language mastery between the two internal stakeholder groups, in order to investigate if internationally working internal stakeholders are more multicultural competent and better in speaking foreign languages. As expected, the two different internal stakeholder groups displayed difference in their foreign language mastery. The analyses revealed that the international group on average spoke more foreign languages than the national group, but that the average proficiency of the respondents in both groups was similar. This coincides with the results of Korzilius et al. (2011), which also displayed differences in the amount of foreign languages spoken, but not in the proficiency. Matching this finding, there was no relationship found between the amount of foreign languages spoken and the proficiency of foreign languages spoken. This could possibly be explained by the logical thought that learning a foreign language, while already having reached a certain proficiency in another foreign language, does usually not higher or lower the proficiency in the first learned language. The proficiency in a language is influenced by the time and effort devoted to it, and not by how many other languages a person speaks.

Regarding the differences in multicultural competence, it became apparent that against the expectations, the two groups did not significantly differ from each other in most of the

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MPQ's dimensions, except for the difference between nationally and internationally working internal stakeholders in the dimension social initiative. The international group showed more social initiative than the national group. This deviates from the results presented in Korzilius et al. (2011), which showed differences between the groups concerning open-mindedness, emotional stability and flexibility. Since the MPQ consists of relatively general statements, they might not only apply to people who are in regular professional contact with other cultures, but also to people who are generally interested in and open to foreign cultures, resulting in equally high scores for nationally and internationally working people.

Concluding, it can be said that the national internal stakeholder group differed to some extent from the international internal stakeholder group in terms of foreign language mastery, and hardly in terms of multicultural competence. This finding yields more insight into the differing characteristics of nationally versus internationally working employees. It became clear that even if employees do not work internationally, they are not necessarily less multicultural competent. This knowledge might for example be relevant when employers consider putting employees on an internationally oriented job, even if they have only worked in a national context so far. The current study suggests that these employees who only worked nationally are equally multicultural competent as employees who are already regularly in contact with international clients or partners. Employers do therefore not have to expect that nationally working employees function less effectively in an internationally oriented position. The only thing that the nationally working internal stakeholders would have to be trained in, are respectively the languages which are needed in such a position. At this point it has to be kept in mind that the two internal stakeholder groups differed in terms of the size of the companies that the respondents worked for. Even with this difference being very small, it could have possibly influenced the outcomes, since working in a bigger company (as it was more frequently the case for the international group) might result in more frequent contact with foreign languages and the employees therefore being more used to and/or trained in these languages.

### *The predictive value of multicultural competence and foreign language mastery on internal stakeholder group membership*

With respect to research question 1c, regarding the predictive value of multicultural competence and foreign language mastery on internal stakeholder group membership, it was shown that only the amount of foreign languages spoken was a significant predictor of group membership, going in line with Korzilius et al. (2011), who found evidence for the same

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relationship. This might again be explained by the fact that international internal stakeholders are more frequently confronted with foreign languages, and therefore at least familiar with a number of them. Neither proficiency of foreign languages spoken, nor any of the MPQ's dimensions were predictors, which goes against the expectations and contradicts with the results of Korzilius et al. (2011), who also found a predictive relation of emotional stability and open-mindedness on differences between the groups.

To conclude, multicultural competence did not predict internal stakeholder group membership and foreign language mastery only partially predicted internal stakeholder group membership. This is again relevant for employers, since this finding suggests that nationally working internal stakeholders have very similar characteristics to internationally working internal stakeholders, and could therefore be put on an internationally oriented job. These employees would only have to be trained in the language(s) which are relevant for executing said job.

### *The relationship between multicultural competence, foreign language mastery and job performance in the international internal stakeholder group*

Lastly, research question 2 investigated the relationship between multicultural competence, foreign language mastery and job performance in the international internal stakeholder group, in order to gain more insight into the special profile requirement of internationally working professionals. In line with the expectations, results showed that all of the MPQ's dimensions measuring cultural competence were related to job performance in the international internal stakeholder group. This goes in line with the results in Barrick and Mount (1991) and Caligiuri (2000), who also found personality traits to be related to job performance. Since the internal stakeholders in the international group are significantly more weeks per year working abroad and presumably also more often in contact with clients or partners from a different culture while working in their home country Germany, it makes sense that their job performance relates to their scores in the MPQ's dimensions, and therefore their multicultural competence.

As expected, a relation was found between the proficiency of foreign languages spoken and job performance. However, no relations was found between the amount of foreign languages spoken and job performance. This finding might be explained by the frequent use of English as a lingua franca in many international business actions (Rogerson-Revell, 2007). Professionals that often work together with people who do not share their mother tongue, communicate in English in most cases. This results in them being more proficient in English,

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rather than being a little proficient in many different languages.

Like already calculated for all respondents, the MPQ's dimensions were almost all intercorrelated within the international internal stakeholder group. Also, the amount of foreign languages spoken and the proficiency of foreign languages spoken were shown not to be related.

It can be summarized that in the international internal stakeholder group, multicultural competence is fully related to job performance and foreign language mastery is partly related to job performance. This presents an important new finding for researchers and business practitioners. The results of the current study suggest that within a group of internationally working employees, their multicultural competence and foreign language mastery are connected to their job performance, the aspect that is most important to employers. With this knowledge, employers can pay special attention to multicultural competence and foreign language mastery of candidates during the selection and hiring processes for internationally oriented jobs.

### *Limitations and directions for further research*

The current study is connected to certain limitations that have to be kept in mind when discussing the generalizability of the results. First of all, a dropout rate of 22% led to a relatively low sample scale, which of course limits the possibility to generalize the findings for the professional working world as a whole. Additionally, it was only possible to gather data from respectively a small number of respondents per company that was involved in this research. While eliminating the sector bias mentioned in Korzilius et al. (2011), this made the comparison of international and national internal stakeholders more difficult, since this particular division might be different in every company, and the sample might include respondents from companies that only belong to one of the groups. Further research should include larger samples that include only a few companies with a respectively equal amount of international and national internal stakeholders, in order to make the groups more comparable and the findings more generalizable for the professional working environment as a whole.

Furthermore, the earlier mentioned unequal distribution of company size between the two groups plays a role when interpreting the results, since this might lead to a more frequent contact with foreign languages, making the employees more used to and/or trained in these languages. However, since said difference is relatively small and company size is the only thing that differs between the two groups, they are still regarded as equally distributed. Researchers who want to contribute to gaining more insight into the field of differences

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between internal stakeholders should pay special attention to assuring that general characteristics are equally distributed between the groups, in order to simplify the possibility to compare them.

Another aspect that has to be taken into account is the possibility that the respondents of the current study chose socially desirable answers when being asked about personality traits and job performance. This is an aspect which is hard to eliminate, even when encouraging thorough self-reflection and honesty multiple times. Related to that, it could be the case that respondents overrated their proficiency in the foreign languages they speak. But, as previously mentioned, earlier research has shown that speakers of a second language tend to estimate their own performance in a very similar way as an external judge would do (Oscarson, 1989).

A last limitation to the current study is the different terminology that is and has been used in different studies in this research field. While many studies mentioned in the theoretical background chose the Five-Factor model to measure personality traits (e.g. McCrae, Costa & Piedmont, 1993), it was chosen for the MPQ in this study. The comparability of different studies becomes more difficult by that.

In general, future research should focus on enlarging the scale of the current study's set-up, ensuring the comparability of the respondents in the internal stakeholder groups, and adding a cultural aspect by carrying out this research in a different country, as the study of Korzilius et al. (2011) and the current study are both based on data gathered in Western cultures (Dutch and German).

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## **Appendix**

### **A. English questionnaire**

Dear participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study into intercultural competence in global business context, being conducted by the department of Communication and Information Sciences at the Radboud University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands. You will need about 10-15 minutes to answer all the questions in this questionnaire.

#### **Confidentiality**

The information in the study records will be kept confidential. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons conducting the study unless you specifically give permission in writing to do otherwise. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link you to the study. Your participation in this study is voluntary, you may decline to participate without penalty.

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

## **Procedure**

The questionnaire consists of three parts: first you assess a number of statements that relate to your views of yourself, subsequently we will ask you some questions about your language competence and lastly we ask some demographic questions. Please note that there are no false answers. We ask you to fill out the questionnaire with as much as accuracy possible.

*Thank you for your consideration.*

Kind regards,

Alina Kortmann

Lara Wolff-Hagdon

If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact either Alina Kortmann, MA Candidate on [alina.kortmann@student.ru.nl](mailto:alina.kortmann@student.ru.nl) or Lara Wolff-Hagdon, MA Candidate on [lara.wolff@student.ru.nl](mailto:lara.wolff@student.ru.nl) or Dr. Andreu van Hooft, Chief Investigator/Supervisor on [a.v.hooft@let.ru.nl](mailto:a.v.hooft@let.ru.nl) or Brigitte Planken Chief Investigator/Supervisor on [b.planken@let.ru.nl](mailto:b.planken@let.ru.nl)

The following statements are related to the views you have about yourself; to what extent do they apply to you? Please take your time to answer the statements openly and truthfully. (1- “totally not applicable”; 2- “not applicable”; 3- “neutral”; 4- “applicable”; 5 “totally applicable”)

### Cultural Empathy

Understands other people's feelings

Tries to understand other people's behavior

Takes other people's habits into consideration

Finds it hard to empathize with others

Sympathizes with others

Has problems assessing relationships

Is attentive to facial expression

Asks personal questions

Enjoys other people's stories

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Remembers what other people have told

Is able to voice other people's thoughts

Is a good listener

Notices when someone is in trouble

Has good insights into human nature

### Open mindedness

Is interested in other cultures

Is fascinated by other people's opinions

Is looking for new ways to attain his/her goal

Is curious

Finds (other) religions interesting

Tries out various approaches

Is intrigued by differences

Starts a new life easily

Gets involved in other cultures

Has a feeling for what is appropriate in another culture

Seeks contact with people from different backgrounds

Has a broad range of interests

Puts his or her own culture in perspective

Is open to new ideas

### Social initiative

Takes initiative

Makes contacts easily

Finds it difficult to make contacts

Keeps to the background

Is inclined to speak out

Waits for others to initiate contacts

Takes the lead

Is a slow starter

Is always busy

Is easy-going in groups

Easily approaches other people

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Knows how to act in social settings

Likes to speak in public

Tends to wait and see

Likes action

Is often the driving force behind things

Leaves things as they are

### Emotional stability

Is nervous

Is not easily hurt

Is troubled by conflict with others

Is afraid to fail

Remains calm in misfortune

Takes it for granted that things will turn out right

Radiates calm

Considers problems solvable

Is timid

Is under pressure

Can put setbacks in perspective

Is sensitive to criticism

Has ups and downs

Forgets setbacks easily

Is self-confident

Gets upset easily

Worries

Is apt to feel lonely

Is insecure

Has a solution for every problem

### Flexibility

Likes low-comfort holidays

Avoids adventure

Changes easily from one activity to another

Avoids surprises

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Likes to work on his/her own

Dislikes travelling

Wants to know exactly what will happen

Functions best in a familiar setting

Works mostly according to a strict schedule

Feels uncomfortable in a different culture

Works according to plan

Likes routine

Has fixed habits

Seeks challenges

Enjoys unfamiliar experiences

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements. (1- “totally disagree”; 2- “disagree”; 3- “neutral”; 4- “agree”; 5- “totally agree”)

### Self-efficacy

I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.

I am confident that I could deal effectively with unexpected events.

If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.

I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.

Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.

I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.

If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.

I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.

When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.

Please indicate how you evaluate your own current levels of job performance in each of the following areas (1 - “Poor”; 2- “reasonable”; 3- “good”; 4- “very good”; 5- “Outstanding”)

- Knowledge of procedures
- Interaction with coworkers
- Dedication to work
- Quality of work
- Overall rating of job performance

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

How many foreign languages do you speak (maximum 6)?

Which foreign languages do you speak?

Please indicate the level of proficiency of each of the foreign languages you speak? (1- “Poor”; 7- “excellent”)

Please indicate the orientation of your current job:

- national
- international

Please indicate the extent to which your current job is internationally oriented. (1- “not at all”; 2- “Small degree”; 3- “Moderate degree”; 4- “High degree”; 5- “Very high degree”)

Please indicate the number of weeks you spent on the following activities:

- Holiday abroad
- Studying abroad
- Working abroad
- Lived abroad

How big is the company you are currently working for?

- 0-10 employees
- 11-50 employees
- 51-100 employees
- 100-1000 employees
- Above 1.000 employees

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

What is your highest educational level?

- Doctoral
- Master’s degree
- Bachelor’s degree
- High School

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What is your nationality?

- German
- Dutch
- British
- Spanish
- Italian
- French
- Other

In which industry are you currently working?

Thank you for your participation. If you want to be informed about the overall results of the study please enter your e-mail below.

## **B. German questionnaire**

Lieber Teilnehmer,

Sie sind dazu eingeladen, an einem Forschungsprojekt über interkulturelle Kompetenz im globalen Berufskontext teilzunehmen, durchgeführt durch die Abteilung für Kommunikations- und Informationswissenschaften der Radboud Universität in Nijmegen, den Niederlanden. Für die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen benötigen Sie 10-15 Minuten.

### **Vertraulichkeit**

Sämtliche Informationen werden absolut vertraulich behandelt. Alle Daten werden sicher verwahrt und sind nur zugänglich für die Personen die an diesem Forschungsprojekt beteiligt sind. Sie oder Ihr Arbeitgeber werden in schriftlichen oder mündlichen Präsentationen dieses Projektes nicht erwähnt, die Ergebnisse sind also nicht auf Sie zurückzuführen, es sei denn, eine Veröffentlichung ist explizit gewünscht. Ihre Teilnahme an diesem Forschungsprojekt ist freiwillig und kann zu jeder Zeit abgebrochen werden.

### **Verfahrensweise**

Der folgende Fragebogen besteht aus den drei Teilen Selbsteinschätzung, Fremdsprachenkenntnis und Demographie. Bitte bedenken Sie, dass es keine falschen Antworten gibt. Wir bitten Sie alle Fragen ehrlich zu beantworten.

Vielen Dank!

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Alina Kortmann  
Lara Wolff-Hagdon

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Wenn Sie Fragen haben oder mehr Informationen erhalten möchten, wenden Sie sich gerne an Alina Kortmann (alina.kortmann@student.ru.nl), Lara Wolff-Hagdon (lara.wolff@student.ru.nl), Dr. Andreu van Hooft, Begleiter (a.v.hooft@let.ru.nl) oder Brigitte Planken, Begleiterin (b.planken@let.ru.nl)

Die folgenden Aussagen beziehen sich auf Ihre Selbsteinschätzung. In wie weit treffen die folgenden Aussagen auf Sie zu? Bitte nehmen Sie sich die Zeit um die Aussagen offen und wahrheitsgemäß zu beantworten. (1-“trifft überhaupt nicht zu”; - trifft überwiegend zu; 3- trifft teilweise zu; 4- trifft überwiegend zu; 5-“trifft völlig zu”)

### Cultural Empathy

Versteht die Gefühle anderer Menschen

Versucht das Verhalten anderer Menschen zu verstehen

Nimmt Rücksicht auf die Gewohnheiten anderer Menschen

Findet es schwierig sich in andere hineinzusetzen

Hat Verständnis für andere

Hat Probleme soziale Beziehungen einzuschätzen

Achtet auf Gesichtsausdrücke

Stellt persönliche Fragen

Genießt die Geschichten anderer Menschen

Merkt sich was andere gesagt haben

Kann die Gedanken anderer in Worte fassen

Ist ein guter Zuhörer

Merkt es wenn andere in Schwierigkeiten sind

Hat Einsicht in die Natur der Menschen

### Open-mindedness

Interessiert sich für andere Kulturen

Begeistert sich für die Meinung anderer Leute

Sucht nach neuen Wegen sein/ihr Ziel zu erreichen

Ist Neugierig

Findet andere Religionen interessant

Probiert verschiedene Herangehensweisen

Findet Unterschiede interessant

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Beginnt mühelos ein neues Leben  
Lässt sich auf andere Kulturen ein  
Weiß sich zu verhalten in bestimmten Kulturen  
Sucht Kontakt mit Menschen anderer Herkunft  
Hat ein breites Interesse  
Hat einen Blick für seine/ihre eigene Kultur  
Steht offen für neue Ideen

### Social initiative

Ergreift die Initiative  
Schließt leicht Kontakte  
Findet es schwierig Kontakte zu schließen  
Hält sich im Hintergrund  
Sagt gern seine Meinung  
Überlässt anderen die Initiative Kontakte zu schließen  
Übernimmt die Führung  
Ist ein Spätzünder  
Ist immer beschäftigt  
Fühlt sich wohl in Gruppen  
Geht gern auf andere Leute zu  
Weiß sich in sozialer Umgebung zu verhalten  
Spricht gern in der Öffentlichkeit  
Wartet ab was auf ihn/sie zukommt  
Mag Action  
Ist oft die treibende Kraft  
Lässt die Dinge so wie sie sind

### Emotional stability

Ist nervös  
Ist nicht leicht zu kränken  
Leidet unter Streit mit anderen  
Hat Angst zu versagen  
Lässt sich durch Pech nicht aus der Ruhe bringen  
Ist überzeugt, dass die Dinge gut ausgehen werden

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Strahlt Ruhe aus

Betrachtet Probleme als lösbar

Ist schüchtern

Steht unter Druck

Kann mit Rückschlägen umgehen

Reagiert sensibel auf Kritik

Hat Höhen und Tiefen

Vergisst Rückschläge schnell

Hat Selbstvertrauen

Verliert leicht die Fassung

Macht sich Sorgen

Neigt zur Einsamkeit

Ist unsicher

Hat für jedes Problem eine Lösung

### Flexibility

Macht gern Urlaub ohne viel Komfort

Meidet Abenteuer

Kann leicht von einer Aktivität zur anderen wechseln

Vermeidet Überraschungen

Arbeitet gern allein

Geht nicht gern auf Reisen

Will genau wissen was geschehen wird

Funktioniert am besten in gewohnter Umgebung

Arbeitet meist nach einem strikten Schema

Fühlt sich unwohl in einer anderen Kultur

Arbeitet nach Plan

Mag Routine

Hat feste Gewohnheiten

Arbeitet nach strikten Regeln

Braucht Veränderung

Sucht Herausforderungen

Macht gern neue Erfahrungen

Braucht Regelmäßigkeit im Leben

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Bitte geben Sie an in wie weit Sie den folgenden Aussagen zustimmen (1- "trifft überhaupt nicht zu"; 2- trifft überwiegend nicht zu; 3- trifft teilweise zu; 4- trifft überwiegend zu; 5- "trifft völlig zu")

### Self-efficacy

- Ich bin in der Lage ruhig zu bleiben wenn ich mit Schwierigkeiten konfrontiert werde, weil ich mich auf meine Bewältigungsstrategien verlassen kann.
- Ich bin mir sicher, dass ich mit unerwarteten Ereignissen effektiv umgehen kann.
- Wenn sich mir jemand widersetzt, finde ich Mittel und Wege um das zu bekommen was ich will.
- Ich kann normalerweise mit allem umgehen was sich mir in den Weg stellt.
- Es fällt mir leicht meine Ziele zu verfolgen und zu erreichen.
- Dank meines Einfallsreichtums weiß ich wie ich mit unvorhergesehenen Situationen umgehen muss.
- Ich kann die meisten Probleme lösen wenn ich den nötigen Einsatz aufwende.
- Wenn ich in Schwierigkeiten bin, fällt mir normalerweise eine Lösung ein.
- Ich kann schwierige Probleme immer lösen, wenn ich es stark genug probiere.
- Wenn ich mit einem Problem konfrontiert werde, kann ich normalerweise mehrere Lösungen finden.

Bitte geben Sie an wie Sie Ihre aktuelle berufliche Leistung in diesen verschiedenen Bereichen einschätzen. (1- schwach; 2-annehmbar; 3-gut; 4- sehr gut; 5- herausragend)

- Kenntnisse über Handlungsabläufe
- Interaktion mit Arbeitskollegen
- Hingabe und Engagement bei der Arbeit
- Qualität der Arbeit
- Insgesamte Einschätzung der beruflichen Leistung

Wie viele Fremdsprachen sprechen Sie (maximal 6)?

Welche Fremdsprachen sprechen Sie?

Bitte geben Sie an wie gut Sie diese sprechen (1- schlecht, 7- exzellent)

Bitte geben Sie die Orientation Ihres aktuellen Jobs an.

- National

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- International

Bitte geben Sie an in wie weit Ihr aktueller Job international orientiert ist. (1-überhaupt nicht; 2- in geringem Masse; 3- in mittlerem Masse; 4- in hohem Masse; 5- in sehr hohem Masse)

Bitte geben Sie an wie viele Wochen Sie mit den folgenden Aktivitäten im Jahr verbringen.

- Urlaub im Ausland
- Studium im Ausland
- Arbeit im Ausland
- Wohnen im Ausland

Wie groß ist die Firma in der Sie aktuell arbeiten?

- 0-10 Arbeitnehmer
- 11-50 Arbeitnehmer
- 51-100 Arbeitnehmer
- 101-1000 Arbeitnehmer
- Über 1.000 Arbeitnehmer

Was ist Ihr Geschlecht

- Mann
- Frau

Wie alt sind Sie?

Was ist ihr höchstes abgeschlossenes Ausbildungsniveau?

- Doktor
- Master
- Bachelor
- Abitur

Was ist Ihre Staatsangehörigkeit?

- Deutsch
- Niederländisch
- Britisch
- Spanisch
- Italienisch

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE, FOREIGN LANGUAGE MASTERY AND JOB PERFORMANCE

- Französisch
- Anders

In welcher Industrie arbeiten Sie aktuell?

Danke für Ihre Teilnahme. Wenn Sie über die Resultate der Studie informiert werden wollen, geben Sie bitte Ihre E-Mail Adresse hierunter ein.