Language attitudes and perceptions of language identity in a multinational

company setting

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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract

Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma käsittelee monikielisyyttä ja kielellisiä asenteita monikansallisella työpaikalla. Tutkimus on toteutettu arvioimalla Wolt-yrityksen työntekijöiden asennoitumista englannin kielen käyttöön työpaikalla. Työntekijöiden kieliasenteiden lisäksi työ tutkii koodinvaihdon funktioita, esiintyvyyttä ja mielekkyyttä työpaikalla. Työ käsittelee kahta tutkimuskysymystä. Ensimmäinen kysymys kartoittaa sitä, miten koodinvaihto vaikuttaa Woltin työntekijöiden kieliasenteisiin monikansallisella työpaikalla, jossa englantia käytetään virallisena työkielenä. Toinen tutkimuskysymys tarkastelee sitä, miten englannin käyttö virallisena työkielenä vaikuttaa niiden työntekijöiden työpanokseen, jotka eivät puhu englantia äidinkielenään.

Merkittävimmät tutkimuksessa sovelletut teoriat liittyvät sosiolingvistiikkaan. Tutkielma nojaa Lewisin (1975) kieliasenteelliseen jaotteluun ja Giles & Ogayn (2007) teoriaan kommunikatiivisesta mukautumisesta. Tutkimuksen kannalta olennaisimmat ulottuvuudet Lewisin (1975) teoriassa ovat yleinen hyväksyntä, joka viittaa yksinkertaisesti kielenpuhujan yleiseen suhtautumiseen kieleen – pitääkö hän kielestä ja kokeeko hän sen itselleen arvokkaana. Lisäksi Lewisin (1975) teoria soveltuu tutkielmaan taloudellisen ja sosiaalisen kommunikaation merkityksen kautta. Taloudellisen ja sosiaalisen kommunikaation merkityksellisyys voidaan nähdä työntekijän halukkuutena suoriutua työtehtävistä tietyllä kielellä mahdollisimman hyvin ja oppia kieltä saavuttaakseen taloudellista hyötyä, kuten palkkaa tai parempia työtehtäviä.

Giles & Ogayn (2007) kommunikatiivisen mukautumisen teorian mukaan kielenkäyttäjät aktiivisesti pyrkivät keskustelussa samalle tasolle muiden keskusteluun osaa ottavien kanssa. Koodinvaihto voidaan todeta osaksi kommunikatiivista mukautumista. Koodinvaihdon lisäksi kommunikatiiviseen mukautumiseen katsotaan kuuluvaksi kielenkäyttäjän sanavalintojen, eleiden ja sisältöjen mukauttaminen niin, että kommunikaatiosta tulee mahdollisimman tasavertaista ja yksinkertaista.

Tutkimukseen otti osaa kymmenen Woltin työntekijää Tanskasta, Georgiasta, Norjasta, Virosta, Liettuasta ja Puolasta. Tutkimus toteutettiin haastattelututkimuksena, jonka lisäksi dataa kerättiin taustatietolomakkeella. Tutkimukseen osallistuvat työntekijät eivät puhu suomea tai englantia äidinkielenään ja heillä on erilaisia toimenkuvia Woltilla. Taustatietolomakkeella kerättiin tietoa tutkimukseen osallistuvien työntekijöiden kielitaustasta, toimenkuvasta Woltilla ja alustavista näkemyksistä koskien englannin kielen käyttöä Woltilla.

Tutkimuksessa arvioidaan Woltin työntekijöiden asenteita englannin kielen käyttöä kohtaan pääasiallisesti kuitenkin haastattelukysymysten kautta. Haastatteluissa kerätty data selventää muun muassa työntekijöiden suhtautumista englannin kielen käyttöön virallisena työkielenä, koodinvaihdon kommunikatiivisesta funktiosta ja yrityksenlaajuisen kommunikaation toimivuudesta.

Analysoimalla haastattelutuloksia käy ilmi, että valtaosa työntekijöistä Woltilla kokee koodinvaihdon keskeisenä osana työntekoa monikielellisellä työpaikalla. Haastattelutulokset osoittavat, että enemmistö Woltin työntekijöistä on melko tyytyväisiä kommunikaation nykyiseen tilaan. Tutkimustulosten pohjalta voidaan päätellä, että Woltin työntekijöiden työpanos ei ole sidottu kieleen, jota he työssään käyttävät.

Haastattelujen pohjalta on kuitenkin havaittavissa myös kielteisempiä lähestymistapoja monikielisyyteen työpaikalla. Työntekijät mainitsevat muiden kieli-ideologisten seikkojen ohella suhtautuvansa kriittisesti esimerkiksi kielten sekoittumiseen ja oman äidinkielen "likaantumiseen" koodinvaihdon myötä.

Haastattelutuloksien perusteella voidaan esittää myös konkreettisia kehitysehdotuksia liittyen kielikäytäntöihin Woltilla. Työntekijät nostivat esille esimerkiksi mahdollisuuden osallistua yrityksen tarjoamille englannin kielen oppitunneille. Lisäksi työntekijät tähdentävät läpinäkyvyyden ja selkeyden merkitystä yrityksenlaajuisessa kommunikaatiossa.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction to topic of research

In this MA thesis I am going to investigate attitudes towards using English as the official language in a Finnish multinational company. My intention is to approach this rather broad question by focusing on a more specified topic. For this purpose, I will investigate how code-switching takes place in office environment and how it can affect both the work flow and linguistic attitudes employees show towards using English as a language of communication. This study on English as a lingua franca discusses interviewees' different approaches to benefits and disadvantages of using language other than one's native language in working context.

My choice of company is Wolt. Wolt is a multinational company currently operating in eleven countries around Europe. Wolt is a technology start-up company based in Helsinki and each of the operating countries have local offices with local employees. Wolt provides ordering and courier services for restaurants. English is used as the official language in everyday communication between the countries. It is my intention to understand the attitudes non-native speakers of English have towards using English and code-switching in working environment.

The main reason I chose to study this topic stems from both personal interest and professional experience of using English as a communicative language at work. I should mention that I do work for Wolt myself – I am in charge of operational recruitment at Wolt Headquarters in Helsinki. Interviewing people, analyzing work applications and discussing "sufficient linguistic capabilities for working multilingually" sparked the idea for the topic of this research. I also find the topical nature of the research appealing – matters of work life combined with a linguistic approach make for a fascinating and fruitful research topic. Personally, I also enjoy being capable of linking my academic interest with my work life. This research functions as the first ever study conducted at Wolt, which is also exciting.

I chose to focus on code-switching for two reasons. Firstly, I am greatly interested in this linguistic phenomenon and I code-switch constantly during both work and free time. Secondly, I decided that focusing on a specific matter of language use would offer a focused starting point for both the

interviews I conduct for this research and the overall analysis. The reason I chose code-switching as the phenomenon observed in the analysis connects to communication at Wolt. Code-switching is a natural, re-occurring feature in the language use of Wolt workers across countries and operative teams as employees are in constant communication with teams from other countries through instant messaging and calls, for instance.

In work life fluent, fast-paced and successful communication is highly central in order to make prosperous business and have a pleasant work community. As discussed in Lüdi et al. (2010, cited in Apfelbaum 2010: 212), solutions for overcoming potential communicational challenges include choosing a common lingua franca for the company – in Wolt's case this is English.

As Fredriksson et al. (2006: 409) mention, it is not unusual to use English as the common communicative language in international business due to its significance as a language used for communication globally. English is used as the official and common language to avoid misunderstanding and translation work, to create a sense of unity among other beneficial aspects (Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999; Sørensen, 2005 cited in Fredriksson et al. 2006: 409).

Research questions for this thesis are as follows:

How does code-switching in work environment affect the language attitudes of employees in a multinational company where English is used as an official language?

How does using English as the official work language affect the contribution of non-native speakers of English?

As mentioned, the first research question concentrates specifically on code-switching for purposes on anchoring down this lingua franca study to a concrete matter. Code-switching occurs frequently in professional communication at Wolt – understanding how non-native English speakers perceive combining two different languages in working environment will help in analyzing matters of perceiving one's language competence. Research questions are designed to complement one another: the second question addresses the issues regarding language attitudes and perception. I chose to proceed with this type of execution method for the sake of clarity. It is likely that the informants find it easier to understand and take part in my research if they are first familiarized with a specific linguistic matter and then instructed to reflect their perceptions and attitudes more generally.

This paper is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter contains relevant introductory definitions of the key matters observed in terms of research including Wolt operations, lingua franca and multilingual communication. The second chapter features theoretical and thematical considerations regarding the main theories applied in this research. These theoretical presentations include observations on situational and metaphorical code-switching, (language) attitudes and their composition, productivity and linguistic perception. These concepts are intertwined in their relevance in terms of this research – converging these concepts and interview data related to these topics provides both the linguistic research community and workers at Wolt with understanding of the current situation of professional English use at Wolt. The aim of the second chapter is to describe the relevant theoretical framework to form ground for the following chapter, where the methodology is discussed.

The third chapter, dedicated to methods applied in this thesis, explores the concept of a Wolt operation in further detail. This chapter reports the process of data gathering while also discussing piloting the interview materials. The data for this research is of mixed methods – a round of interviews is conducted in addition to a background questionnaire. Finally, this chapter discusses ethical considerations regarding data gathering in the case of this research. In the fourth chapter data is discussed. Data observations include notions on both qualitative and quantitative data types. Quantitative data will be utilized in two ways – they serve as the foundation for the interview process and as material for constructing a profile of the informants. Interview data is analysed to gain an understanding about the language attitudes and perceptions the informants have in order to answer the research questions. The fifth chapter contains analytic discussion regarding the data findings. In this chapter data types come together as an entity and most notable points of interest are observed.

Chapter six draws from the contents of the previous chapter discussing the findings both on a personal level of Wolt's employees and on a company-wide level. Exploring personal and corporal levels of language attitudes require different theoretical applications in order to draw useful conclusions on these two levels. Finally, in the seventh chapter of this MA thesis conclusions are made based on the research questions, data and analysis. Additionally, significance of this research is depicted, practical implications are mentioned and directions for future research are presented.

1.2 Introducing Wolt operations

Firstly, I will determine the concept of a Wolt operation in further detail. As stated, Wolt is a technology start-up company offering ordering and courier services for restaurants. A Wolt operation, as discussed in this thesis, consists of a country-specific team of Wolt employees. These Wolt employees are responsible for running the Wolt operation – in practice this refers to working together with partnering restaurants, courier partners, customers and other co-operative partners locally as well as staying in close contact with colleagues in other Wolt countries for the purpose of sharing best practices and lessons learned, for instance.

The informants interviewed for my research hold varying occupations at Wolt. As the aim of my study is to shed light on language attitudes and perceptions of linguistic proficiency the aspect of occupation is irrelevant in terms of linguistic analysis. The employees interviewed work in fields of restaurant management, marketing, human resources, customer support, expansion and courier partner onboarding, for example. The aim in this thesis is to investigate language use at work – employees of different occupations all use English in various ways. Wolt employees use English when communicating with each other regarding Wolt's internal business such as marketing or sales – it should be noted though that English is often used in communication with partnering restaurants, courier partners and sometimes customers as well. Different contexts of language use function as examples of different communicational aims: internal language use at Wolt regarding sales or marketing aims at efficient business and growth. Language functions as a tool of reaching common and specific understanding of sales numbers, for example. Communicating with staff at restaurants and courier partners locally, then, targets common understanding quickly – perfectly correct language use or understanding complicated business insights is not required. Often these situations are related to immediate issues related to orders at the restaurant or courier partner locating the customer, for instance. Workers interviewed for this paper represent both so called entry-level occupations and managerial occupations. In this paper I aim to further understand how Wolt employees view the professional use of non-native language. The focus is not specifically on any given area of work – attitudes and experiences from workers across different areas of expertise are treated equally in this paper.

Employees of Wolt work locally – each Wolt operation is a country-specific, independent entity with local employees. Each operation is lead from the headquarters located in one of the cities where Wolt

operates. In all, the term *operation* in the context of my research regards to all functional aspects in running services for Wolt's customers, courier partners and partnering restaurants.

For this research I interviewed 10 informants from six countries where Wolt operates. Informants come from varying language backgrounds, which are described in further detail in the data section of this paper.

The lingua franca status of English at Wolt becomes evident in varying ways. All written and oral communication concerning the entire company is always in English. This policy applies on microlevels as well, for instance at the Helsinki headquarters all communication towards the office workers collectively occurs in English. It is true that at the Helsinki office there are workers who do not have native understanding of Finnish and for this reason using the office lingua franca works as fair communicational method.

All internal tools and documents designed for Wolt are in English. Unilingual materials for the entire company serve their purpose well as all employees hired for Wolt are required to have a good understanding of English. Anglophone elements in all company levels can also be viewed as a unifying factor among the workers – communicating with previously unfamiliar colleagues can be done in lingua franca regardless of respective language backgrounds.

As Wolt primarily is a technology company, many of the internal tools are designed and constructed by engineers working for Wolt. Being able to develop, re-new and design tools that would function optimally requires constant feedback from workers using the tools daily in their work. Forms and functions of internal tools can be effortlessly discussed with workers from all language backgrounds using the official company language.

Next, I will further describe oral and written company-wide communication taking place at Wolt in order to clarify the communicational aspects discussed in this thesis. Communication, as discussed in this research, refers to written and oral forms of exchanging information.

Most frequent and notable written discourse happens on an online messaging platform called Slack. Communication on Slack happens on two levels: channels, often dedicated to a certain topic or group of workers, and private direct messages between two or more workers. Informants taking part in this study are encouraged to consider this aspect of written communication when analyzing their own

language use. Wolt Slack features channels specific to local offices, separate operational teams and different aspects of public interest such as media, learning and marketing. Channels that are not tied to working also exist – company-wide lingua franca communication occurs with regard to video games and music as well, for instance.

Oral communication at Wolt is slightly harder to define comprehensively. The most notable instances of company-wide oral communication are weekly team calls where all workers of Wolt are encouraged to participate online via teleconferencing software Zoom. Weekly team calls are led by Wolt's head of people and company-confidential matters such as business insights, expansion and other contemporary business aspects are discussed collectively. Oral communication occurs constantly between workers both in person and over Zoom constantly either in forms of meetings or more casual encounters. Informants are also urged to consider oral forms of communication in the interviews.

Recruiting process at Wolt ought to be taken into further inspection when considering the multilingual situation at Wolt. Recruiting, naturally, determines the employee base – thus it is crucial to have defined and specific parameters for selecting the perfect fit for different positions. Any applicant's English skills are evaluated in the recruiting process for Wolt to make sure that the applicant would be capable of working in English. High standards for language skills in the recruitment correlate with high level English proficiency among the Wolt worker base.

As mentioned, the role of recruitment should not be overlooked when considering the role of lingua franca and multilingualism in working environment. Apfelbaum (2010) discuss how language requirements are visible in a German multinational company. The company Apfelbaum studied is a pharmaceutical company based in Switzerland – referred to as *Pharma A*. I chose to include a brief view of Pharma A's recruitment and onboarding process because it has similarities to how most suitable employees are chosen for Wolt. Pharma A's linguistic strategy also offers a contrast to how language matters are handled at Wolt.

At Pharma A, the recruitment advertisements made it clear that the company is English-speaking and knowing English is mandatory. 91% of the job postings for Pharma A were in English. Upon closer inspection, however, English was a required for only 77% of the jobs. In international business English is often prioritized – this is visible in the high percentage of job postings in English and the common use of English as the company-wide lingua franca. Lüdi et al. (2016: 72) also draw from the

same research around Pharma A. Lüdi et al. (2016: 72) specify that there was no official document found stating that English is the official corporate language at Pharma A.

At Wolt, all job postings are available in English. Job postings for roles that require local knowledge and ability to communicate with locals in the local language are also available in the local language. This is the case for customer support, for instance. Offering support and marketing in the local language is seen as an efficient way of localizing the service. Good English skills are a requirement for all roles at Wolt – for some roles native-level local language is required as well.

According to Apfelbaum (2010: 218) Pharma A hosts *Welcome days* every month for their new collaborators. Wolt offers a similar two-day introduction event for new Wolt employees monthly. At Pharma A the materials for Welcome days consisted of tours and workshops held in English, German and French among other activities aimed for new people affiliated with the company. Some of the materials were only offered in English. As Apfelbaum (2010) point out, this demonstrates Pharma A's linguistic strategy rather well: even though Pharma A appears to work towards a unilingual English-speaking atmosphere the company still recognizes the need and benefit of offering materials in other major languages as well.

Similarly to Pharma A Wolt hosts a two-day introduction event for its new workers. The event is held at Helsinki headquarters – participants travel to Finland from their local offices to meet other workers and learn more about the company. This event is known as *HQ introduction* within the company. All materials for this event are offered only in English: the event consists of speeches, workshops and office tours, for instance.

1.3 Aims of the study

In this thesis I aim to comprehend the matters of language identity and linguistic attitudes. I am interested in observing how one's language attitude is built and what are the central features that make for one's language attitudes. I will focus on code-switching in further detail as a linguistic phenomenon as well as its functions and applications. Through the aforementioned research foci, I will also discuss the matter of language competence and the workers' perception of their own English skills. I aim to locate areas where Wolt's language policies could be improved to better serve the needs of non-native English speakers.

I am highly interested in the concept of perceiving one's linguistic competence and I am expecting to draw conclusions regarding the possible connection between perceived competence and attitude. My aim in this research is to shed light on how workers of Wolt outside Finland perceive their linguistic standing and how using English as the working language affects workers' perceptions.

2. Theoretical background

In this chapter I will further clarify key terms used in this thesis. These concepts include code-switching, language attitude and contribution. Code-switching, more specifically situational code-switching, is elaborated as well. These matters are not only central in terms of the research questions investigated in this paper but also in key position in improving the language policies at Wolt.

To better understand multilingual work environments it is important to contextualize multilingual communication. House and Rehbein (2004) offer an overview of multilingual communication which I will reflect to Wolt.

A definition of multilingual communication seems like an appropriate place to begin. (Rehbein 2000, cited in House and Rehbein 2004: 2) describe multilingual communication as a "constellation of languages." According to House and Rehbein (2004: 2), multilingual communication is tied to participants' multilingual competence and the function of being multilingual. House and Rehbein (2004: 2) also differentiate between lingua franca and different levels of code-switching. Lingua franca is a language that has been mutually agreed to be used in communication whereas code-switching refers to mixing two different languages in discourse. English as a lingua franca and code-switching are central topics in this research as well.

Rehbein's (2000, cited in House and Rehbein 2004: 3) idea of language constellations is particularly relevant when researching multilingual communication. Language constellations include a set of variables which give an understanding of what parameters should be taken into account when investigating multilingual (corporal) environments. According to Rehbein (2000, cited in House and Rehbein 2004: 3) the following variables should be considered: the language or languages used, language skills of those taking part in the discourse and the degree of mixing languages (code-switching). House and Rehbein (2004: 3) highlights that the aforementioned variables are in key position in exploring interlingual relationships. Next, I will mirror Rehbein's (2000, cited in House and Rehbein 2004: 3) idea of language constellation to practice at Wolt.

In terms of this research, the informants taking part in the study report that languages they use at Wolt are English and their native tongue. Wolt employees taking part in this study are from a variety of language backgrounds; informants speak Estonian, Danish, Georgian, Lithuanian, Polish and Russian as their mother tongues. The English skill level of Wolt employees is high due to recruitment process

which places a lot of value on language fluency – effortless and efficient communication is greatly valued in the company. Roles of language users in this context refer to different occupational roles at Wolt – among informants taking part in the research these include operations associate, courier operations lead and support associate, for example. The degree of language mixing becomes evident when reviewing interview data for this study. Code-switching is commonplace at Wolt and it is used to express certain issues more clearly and effortlessly.

2.1 Code-switching

Code-switching occurs when an interlocutor alternates between either two different languages or language varieties within a single discourse. In its most practical application code-switching shows as interlocutor's capability and tendency to change interlingually in conversation. It is central to note that code-switching solely takes place on the level of utterances, as stated by Muysken (1995:177). Muysken clarifies that code-switching does not affect the lexicons of the languages involved in the discourse. This means that in code-switching words from two different languages are mixed but code-switching does not have an effect on the words themselves. Interlocutors taking part in code-switching are capable of understanding the languages used in discourse, whereas interlocutors with no common language at all could eventually formulate a common pidgin language to enable mutual understanding.

Code-switching happens on various levels in discourse. In terms of this research the most relevant instances of code-switching happen on intra-sentential level and inter-sentential level. Intra-sentential level refers to mixing languages within a single sentence, whereas inter-sentential code-switching occurs beyond the sentence level. Based on both the interview data and personal observations, code-switching at Wolt happens on aforementioned levels in discourse.

 Situational code-switching as presented in *Social meaning in linguistic structures* by Gumperz and Blom (2000: 126) is a relevant concept for this study. According to this definition situational code-switching enables and causes alternation between varieties and redefines a situation - being a change in a governing norm. Situational code-switching requires a straight-forward connection with a certain language variety and a certain situational environment (2000:126). This definition correlates with the professional language use at Wolt – situational environment refers to workplace and the language used is English. To clarify, code-switching occurs between English and another language in which the interlocutor is proficient. It ought to be noted that the other language is not necessarily one's

mother tongue. As Gumperz and Blom (2000) mention, it should be considered that situational code-switching often appears as alteration in the participants' definition of the rights and obligations of the opposing interlocutor. This can be viewed as expressional freedom – it must be considered, however, that different situations allow varying levels of linguistic flexibility. An example of the difference in expressional freedom would be contextual differences between an informal work meeting and a more ritual process with a strictly established protocol.

To further elaborate code-switching as described by Gumperz and Blom (2000), I would like to briefly mention the counterpart to situational code-switching – metaphorical code-switching. Metaphorical code-switching differs from situational code-switching by its purpose. While situational code-switching offers a more fundamental ground for purely understanding one's interlocutor(s), metaphorical code-switching specifically further enriches the discourse. Metaphorical code-switching builds on linguistic associations and functions different language varieties have within these associations. Metaphorical code-switching is often utilized by highly competent language users – thus I expect this level of code-switching to be relevant to language users at Wolt. The employee base has such high English language competence that code-switching is more often used to be more specific in one's expression rather than make the language easier to understand.

2.2 Language attitudes

Before further discussing language attitudes I am going to shed light on the concept of attitude on a general level in order to construct a definition and offer a more solid ground for my analysis. Attitude as a general term refers to one's way of thinking.

Attitude can be understood as the three-dimensional classification which dates back to Plato – division to cognitive, affective and readiness for action parts of attitude is considered a fundamental definition for attitude. According to Plato's definition, the cognitive element covers individual's thoughts and the affective element describes one's feelings towards the object of attitude. The final aspect, readiness for action, entails individual's willingness and capability to act according to the attitude they claim to have. It should be noted that the aforementioned components of attitude do not necessarily correlate with one another. It is possible, for instance, to appreciate a certain objectional entity and express negative feelings towards the same issue. Plato's three-dimensional model for

attitude construction has been discussed by Rosenberg & Hovland (1960, cited in Aizen et al. 2014: 242) in further detail.

Another definition of attitude is offered by Smith (1971, cited in Oroujlou et al. 2011: 997). Smith (1971) argues that "an attitude is a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or a situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner." It is also stated by Smith that "an attitude is relatively enduring because it is learned, it can be unlearned. Because it is learned, it can be taught." Liking another language, for instance, can be learned. Smith also suggests that positive attitudes improve productivity and learning.

Language attitude, as defined by Baker (1992: 29), functions as an umbrella term for a variety of attitude-related traits specific to language. These traits include individual language users' stance towards different varieties, dialects, language learning, language preference, language minorities and other such variables. In order to further clarify different levels of a language attitude, I refer to Lewis (1975, cited in Baker 1992) who presents the function of language attitudes. According to Lewis (1975, cited in Baker 1992), language attitudes can be divided into six different dimensional approaches. These approaches include general approval, commitment to practice, national ethnic tradition, economic and social communication importance, family and local considerations, and personal, ideological considerations. For the sake of relevancy, I will discuss general approval and economic and social communication importance – these approaches further elaborate the language attitudes as they are discussed and explored in this MA thesis. These two approaches are applicable to my topic of research. General approval serves as the ground variable for determining one's attitude towards language use. Observing economic and social communication importance, then, is relevant in a workplace environment such as Wolt.

Firstly, there is *general approval.* This refers to what one might consider as the most basic level of attitude – approval or disapproval. General approval in practice indicates language user's reaction towards the language variety in question. In practice this could refer to as mundane of an aspect as generally liking or not liking a certain variety or dialect.

Economic and social communication importance, then, specifically refers to linguistic knowledge being of functional help in communication – perhaps to economic gain. Practically this could manifest as fascination in a language prompted by desire to obtain communicational proficiency for better

professional performance. The research data is evaluated in the analysis section by applying Lewis's (1975, cited in Baker 1992) descriptions of language attitudes.

To offer a more complete introduction of language attitudes I will briefly discuss another approach relevant to analysis in this thesis as well. Gardner & Lambert (1972: 14) introduce an integrative attitude to language – an attitude that stems from primitive need to act alike surrounding members of the other linguistic community. Gardner and Lambert (1972, cited in Ghazvini & Khajehpour 2011) further highlight the interlocutor's high level of effort to learn a language in order to communicate with the surrounding group. Moreover, integrative motivation reflects an interest in language, a desire to learn the target language and an attitude toward the learning situation, and the target language community.

The approach suggested by Garner and Lambert (1972) is also supported by Giles & Ogay's theory on communicative accommodation (2007). In order to level theoretical background presented in this thesis with practical grassroot communication happening at Wolt, I will refer to Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles & Ogay 2007: 294). According to Communication Accommodation Theory, interlocutors are motivated to use language in different ways to achieve a desired level of social distance between themselves and other communicators. Language users often accommodate verbally and nonverbally to others and are aware of others accommodating their language use to enable successful communication. Communicational Accommodation Theory suggests that the focus in this theoretical framework is not as much about the exchange of referential information as it is about social togetherness and the establishing social identities.

Giles & Ogay's (2007: 295) theory on communicative accommodation entails the concept of *communicative converge.* According to Giles & Ogay (2007: 295), communicational converge can be described as "a strategy whereby individuals adapt their communicative behaviors in terms of a wide range of linguistic (e.g., speech rate, accents), paralinguistic (e.g., pauses, utterance length), and nonverbal features (e.g., smiling, gazing) in such a way as to become more similar to their interlocutor's behavior." When considering working in a multilingual and multinational environment such as Wolt the definition offered by Giles & Ogay (2007) can be considered relevant.

It can be argued that at Wolt communicative fluency and convenience are pursued by mirroring the principles of Giles & Ogay's (2007) theory to communication within the company. At Wolt interlocutors might, for instance, code-switch between languages in order to make communication

more effortless for all taking part in discourse – a common language works to increase the feeling of unity and thus makes communication more fluent and inclusive. A concrete example of this would be code-switching because internal tools used for running the operation at Wolt are in English.

2.3 Contribution and productivity

Productivity, as investigated in this study, refers to an extent of efficiency in production (Krugman, 1994). All data described in the analysis of this study is gathered from a set of ten informants. The views expressed in the analysis represent personal perceptions of those taking part in the study.

Cook (2003: 137) argues that in the process of socialization in one's second language conceptual restructuring might take place – but some areas of pragmatic knowledge are either not affected or little affected by L2 influence. Cook (2003: 137) describes lingual multi-competence as "two liquid colors blending in the brain" – while the interlocutor operating in two or more languages can successfully function in separate and unblended languages, there is also the blended (language) variety that develops constantly.

The concepts of contribution and productivity are especially important considering one of the research questions investigated in this study: how does using English as the official work language affect the contribution of non-native speakers of English?

In the data analysis section of this paper I will draw inspiration from Cook's (2003) idea of multi-competence and its effect on how Wolt workers perceive their contribution for the company and the role of language use. Lewis' (1975, cited in Baker 1992), Gardner & Lambert's (1972) and Giles & Ogay's (2007) ideas on attitudes combined with Cook's (2003) vision of productivity will be used as the basis for analyzing the research data.

3. Methodology

In this chapter I will elaborate the process of data gathering. I will shed light on designing the materials, piloting and finally the actual process of collecting the data. I will briefly discuss the form and function of utilizing mixed methods as a research strategy.

This research is conducted as a mixed methods study. As described by Johnson et al. (2007: 129), mixed methods research is a research paradigm that relies on qualitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, and inference techniques combined according to the logic of mixed methods research to address one's research questions. In terms of this research of mixed methods, a set of interviews and a background questionnaire, is utilized to collect multilateral data from the informants.

3.1 Designing questionnaire and interview questions and piloting

Next, I will elaborate the process of designing and preparing the materials for data gathering. This study of socio-linguistics is conducted with mixed methods. The data analyzed in this study consists of answers to a background questionnaire and answers to a set of interview questions.

3.1.1 Designing the background questionnaire

The function of this form was to provide me with central and relevant background information regarding the informants' linguistic background and approaches to language use at Wolt. The questionnaire is also designed to operate as a tool of guiding the informants to considering the topics discussed in this MA thesis. These topics include language identity, perception, productivity, attitudes towards language and code-switching. It should not be forgotten that the informants I interviewed for my research had no extensive knowledge of linguistics – there is no reason to assume that the informants would have already been familiar with aforementioned topics and concepts. The intention of this questionnaire is not to gather specific and coherent answers but rather to comprise sets of considerations which can then be discussed with the informant in the interview. For this reason, I deem the background questionnaire and its content fit for the purpose of encouraging independent reflection on the informants' part.

The background questionnaire (see appendix) features both open-ended and closed questions. Closed questions provide name of the informant, occupation at Wolt, duration of employment, gender, mother tongue and other languages the informant speaks. As described by Dörnyei (2003: 31), "closed questions provide answers that are straight-forward and leave no room for rater subjectivity." This means that answering questions regarding the informants themselves does not require descriptive input on the informants' behalf. The function of these questions is to help understand the profile of a Wolt employee and shed light on the linguistic and personal background of the informants.

The second part of the questionnaire more specifically explores the informants' perceptions regarding language and communication in business environment. These open-ended questions are intended to lead the informant to reflect their own perceptions and consideration about their respective language use at Wolt.

There are three open-ended questions in the form. In the first one, the informants are expected to describe the language they use while working at Wolt. The structure and purpose of this introductory open-ended question was not instantly clear for me – the final form of the question is a product of piloting and pondering. While planning and designing the background questionnaire I was not certain what type of answers this question would bring. I was not even convinced of the type of answers I was seeking. The relative ambiguity of this question is intended to both encourage the informant to answer spontaneously and honestly according to their own interpretation and perception.

The second question, then, is a bit more specific. The question is *Do you feel international communication within the company is effortless? Describe the everyday communication at Wolt*. It is true that implementing an imperative such as describe in a questionnaire often proves to be problematic. In this context I justify the use of this wording by a premise similar to the one in the first open-ended question in the form: this question is meant to get a spontaneous insight.

The third open-ended question is *Have there ever been instances of miscommunication? If so, please describe.* This final question is aimed to provide more specific perceptions and experiences regarding failed or lacking instances of communicative behavior.

As mentioned, the intention in data gathering for this thesis is to obtain two kinds of data, qualitative data from the interviews and some background information about the informants by handing out the questionnaire.

These types of data will also complement each other by providing complementary aspects and approaches from the informants. The qualitative data is gathered in the form of answers to interview questions. The questions are designed to further elaborate and discuss the topics introduced in the background questionnaire.

3.1.2 Piloting the questionnaire

The background questionnaire was piloted in November 2018. Seven people took part in the piloting – the group consisted of local Wolt employees and fellow students of English. According to Dörnyei (2003: 63) "field testing" is an integral part of questionnaire construction. Piloting the questionnaire at various stages of its development on a sample of people who are similar to the target sample the instrument has been designed for is an essential phase in designing a proper method of gathering research data. I chose to pilot both the background questionnaire and the interview questions with employees working at the Wolt office in Helsinki for two reasons. Firstly, it is true that employees in Helsinki share the same occupations with those taking part in the interview process and answering the background questionnaire. Workers taking part in the piloting represent varying language backgrounds. Secondly there was the matter of convenience - local employees were well available and eager to take part in the piloting which made the overall process of piloting fluent and quick-paced. University students taking part in the piloting were capable of giving feedback regarding readability and wording.

Piloting the questionnaire was highly fruitful. Those taking part in the piloting gave feedback mainly regarding the wording in the form. The form is rather brief – not many changes were implemented altogether since there is so little text. As Dörnyei (2003:64) proposes, piloting can highlight issues of ambiguous wording, questions that might not provide answers that are relevant for the research, questions that are too difficult (this is the risk most often with open-ended questions). The aforementioned issues were addressed in the piloting for my data collection materials as well. People taking part in the piloting mostly gave comments regarding the open-ended questions. The first open-ended question, *describe the language you use in your work at Wolt*, was a topic of discussion among the piloting process – it is true that the question can be understood in a multitude of ways. I included the question in its current form to gather the answers that primarily came to the informants' minds. The way the question is formulated was to gather impulsive thoughts and ways of understanding.

In terms of linguistic perception different approaches to the question from the informants functions as a part of the data – different understandings might reveal varying attitudes and conceptualizations. In the piloting process there were similar considerations regarding the second open-ended question, *describe the everyday communication at Wolt*.

Closed questions and the overall layout of the form were also discussed among the piloting informants. As mentioned earlier, the function of closed questions in the background questionnaire I designed for this research is to collect information regarding the informant's occupation, gender and language background among other general information about the informant as a language user. The final closed question, where informants are expected to list *other languages you speak,* was originally worded other languages you *know*. Following the feedback I received I decided to change the question to its current form to avoid confusion.

Another matter that was considered in the piloting process is the brief introduction to the background questionnaire right before the actual questions. The function of this piece of text is to express gratitude towards the people taking part in the research. Upon sending out the form I clarified the fact that taking part in the research does not affect their position at Wolt in any way. The sentences at the top of the form are not intended to explain code-switching, lingua franca or other matters of language. Linguistic terms such as code-switching and lingua franca were briefly explained in the interview to ensure that the informants are able to answer the interview questions in proper understanding of the research.

As mentioned earlier, existing understanding of linguistic phenomena such as code-switching ought not to be assumed from the informants. It is true, however, that a certain level of understanding of the aforementioned terms of linguistics is needed on the informants' part in order to be able to answer the interview questions. Therefore, it was necessary to provide the informants with a definition of code-switching before starting the actual interview. The definition was provided orally before the interview and also all other possible questions regarding the research and the interview were addressed and answered. The definition of code-switching provided for the informants consisted of a brief definition of code-switching, a linguistic phenomenon where speakers take words or phrases from two different languages and combine them in their communication. An example of code-switching was also mentioned to further clarify the topic.

The interview questions were similarly piloted at the same time with the background questionnaire – the informants piloting the questionnaire also piloted the interview questions. The aim of the piloting was to address potential cases of misunderstanding among the interview questions. Answers to open-ended question in the background questionnaire were considered when planning the structure and questions for the interviews.

The feedback regarding the questions was mainly focused on wording and potential ambiguity. Any issues of confusion or uncertainty on the informants' part was tackled by the semi-structured nature of the interview process: if it seemed that the informant was uncertain of what was meant with one of the questions it was easy to further elaborate the topic during the interview.

Overall there were little to no instances of misunderstanding or confusion in the actual interview process. The background questionnaire was received with no problems in understanding as well.

3.2 Gathering data with the background questionnaire

The questionnaires were handed out by one-to-one administration (Dörnyei 2003: 81). This method is the most relevant and fitting for this research as the aim was to reach out to a group of 10 workers specifically. Informants were chosen based on language background. Before reaching out to individual Wolt employees I requested permission to conduct my research from Wolt's Head of People. After being granted the permission for the research I sent out a request to General Managers of Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden, Georgia, Estonia, Hungary and Norway to explain the nature of the research and ask for permission to conduct interviews with employees running respective Wolt operations.

The background questionnaire was handed out electronically together with an invitation for the interview. The background questionnaire was created using the e-form service provided by the University of Helsinki. In some cases, the questionnaire was sent to the informant right after the interview was finished – in this case the questionnaire was briefly discussed during the interview. Being able to respond to the questions in the questionnaire was intended to function as an element that would guide the informants to think about the themes to be discussed in the interview – their own attitudes, experiences and views on code-switching and professional use of English at Wolt. Open-ended questions are utilized in the questionnaire form to gain understanding about language use at Wolt.

Open-ended questions include the following questions:

- Describe the language you use at Wolt
- Do you feel international communication within the company is effortless? Describe everyday communication at Wolt
- Have there ever been instances of miscommunication? If so, please describe

It is true that the second and third question mentioned above overlap with the interview questions. There is a possibility that the informants might understand the questions differently when they are presented in a questionnaire as compared to an interview situation.

As Dörnyei (2003: 47) suggests, "open responses can offer graphic examples, illustrative quotes, and can also lead us to identify issues not previously anticipated" – therefore open-ended questions are fit for serving the purpose of gathering data that is of descriptive nature yet still considered as background information.

The background questionnaire can be accessed at https://elomake.helsinki.fi/lomakkeet/93571/lomake.html and it can be found in the appendix of this paper.

3.3 The interview process

Interviews took take place in January and February 2019 over Zoom, a tele-conferencing service commonly used at Wolt. The General Managers of Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Georgian and Hungarian operations gave permission to interview their employees for research purposes. In this chapter I will describe the qualitative data analysed for this research. The data is drawn from a set of 10 interviews that were conducted in January and February of 2019.

I chose interview as a method of data gathering for this paper because it is a fitting method for gaining detailed insight to peoples' views. Seidman (2006: 9) explains that interviewing provides access to the context of people's behaviour and thereby a way for the researcher to understand the meaning of their behaviour. Seidman (2006) reminds, however, that interviewing as a research method ought not to be used to test hypotheses or evaluate the informant.

All interviews were semi-structured – the freedom in form gave space for additional questions and further elaborations. As mentioned, all interviews were conducted via a tele-conferencing service and the average duration for the interviews was 20 minutes. All interviews were scheduled beforehand with respective informants and upon confirming the interview a link for the background questionnaire was also provided. In the beginning of each interview the topic of the research was elaborated to the informant and the purpose for data gathering was mentioned. It was also confirmed with the informant that both the questionnaire data and the interview data will be used as a part of the analysis in research and the data will be analyzed anonymously.

The interviews were divided into two parts – it should be mentioned that this was not informed to the interviewees. In the interview situation I briefly introduced myself and the idea of the study and code-switching. I explained the nature of my study and my own occupation at Wolt to the informants. The nature of a semi-structured interview gave me space to derail from these pre-established questions as well – if the informant told me something especially noteworthy we were able to discuss that matter in further detail. The second part of the interview focused on language attitudes.

The set of interview questions is as follows:

- Do you consciously perform code-switching at work? When do you do it and with whom? What is your opinion on this matter?
- Do you think code-switching at work is more harmful or beneficial? How does it affect you as a language user?

- Have you ever felt forced to speak English at Wolt? If so, how did / do you feel about this?
- Have you ever encountered trouble in communication at Wolt? What do you think might cause these problems?
- What is your overall opinion on communicating at Wolt (with the English perspective in mind)? Are there areas of improvement?
- How would you describe your attitude towards using English? Do you feel confident?
- Do you feel that your contribution at work has ever been affected by using a non-native language? Negative / positive effects?

The first two interview questions listed are intended to produce data to answer the first research question (*How does code-switching in work environment affect the language attitudes of employees in a multinational company where English is used as an official language?*). The rest of the interview questions aim to answer the second research question (*How does using English as the official work language affect the contribution of non-native speakers of English?*).

3.4 Ethical considerations and practical challenges

Next, I will consider potential ethical considerations and practical challenges regarding research conducted for this thesis.

As pointed out, one might state that there are certain ethical considerations concerning my research. Conducting a study which relates to work life and business so closely comes with certain challenges of course. The biggest problem would probably be access to data and sensitivity of confidential company data. I have tackled this issue by having a talk with the head of people at Wolt – he told me that contacting employees on research matters is possible. The reliability of the research might seem puzzling as well – as I do not have any personal connection to Wolt employees not working in Finland I can process the data in an unbiased manner.

The integrity and authenticity of the interview data considering my personal work experience might come across as a potential complexity as well. It is true that my experience as a recruiter and an interviewer have been useful in terms of designing the interview materials and the interview process altogether. It is obvious, however, that when interviewing people in purposes of recruitment the function of the interview is different from an interview for gathering research data. In recruitment, interview questions are a tool for exploring determined characteristics in a candidate, whereas the aim in data gathering is to learn how the informants view the topics being discussed.

Another matter worth considering is GDPR – practically speaking storing and utilizing the interview data and responses to the background questionnaire. All informants were informed that their responses are analyzed for research purposes anonymously. All data will be deleted once the research is finished.

The data gathered and analyzed for this study cannot be connected to any of the informants. In the following I will elaborate the steps I took to protect the participants' anonymity.

The first step in the interview process was to make sure the informants understood who was using their answers and for what purpose. The informants were orally given the Privacy notice for scientific research as designed for University of Helsinki. The informants were aware of their rights and the purpose of the study before answering any interview questions. As determined by the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD), informants' rights regarding the data include right to access their data, right of erasure and right to restriction of processing. Informants were also informed about the freedom of cancelling their participation at any time.

Participants cannot be identified based on data gathered for this study. According to Data Management Guidelines set by the FSD there are two types of personal data: *direct identifiers* and *indirect identifiers*. Direct identifiers include all personal information sufficient to identify the person on its own. A person can be identified by their name, phone number, social security number or e-mail address, for instance. Indirect identifiers, then, cannot be connected to a person on their own. Indirect identifiers consist of information such as age, gender, occupation, mother tongue or country of residence. It should be noted, however, that even indirect identifiers can be connected to a participant when combined with other available information. In this study all research data is anonymized – the data or results of the study cannot be linked to any of the informants. The data gathered for this study consists of indirect identifiers and the informants were informed that their personal data will not be used for any third party purposes.

4. Data and findings

4.1 Data obtained from questionnaire

In this chapter I will discuss the data obtained from the research questionnaire. Eight out of ten informants taking part in the research filled in the form.

4.1.1 Background questions

The background questionnaire used in this thesis was used to gather background information of the informants. Questions in the first half of the form address the informant's name, occupation, duration of employment at Wolt, gender, mother tongue and other languages the informant speaks.

All data is naturally discussed anonymously and the following listings are in no particular order. The reason I chose to collect this type of data from the informants is to further understand who are taking part in the research and what are their everyday tasks and functions at Wolt.

The informants' occupations are Operations Associate, Support Associate, Courier Operations Lead, Baltic Customer Support Lead and Business Partnership Manager. The duration of the informants' employment relationships ranges between three months and two years. Five of the eight informants are male and three are female.

Informants come from varying language backgrounds – therefore the answers to questions regarding the informant's mother tongue and other languages they speak offer a broad variation of different languages. The list of the informants' mother tongues is comprised of Georgian, Estonian, Danish, Lithuanian, Russian and Polish.

The list of languages the informants report speaking is similarly diverse. The aim of asking the informants what languages they speak is partly to gain understanding of the variety of languages that are present in the life of the informants. The question was also included to observe how the informants approach the question and the concept of knowing or speaking a language. In addition to aforementioned languages the informants speak Russian, German, English, French, Estonian and Latvian.

4.1.2 Open-ended questions

In the following the responses for the open-ended questions are elaborated separately. Overall the responses for the questions are straight-forward and there were no instances of misunderstanding on the informants' part.

1) Describe the language you use at Wolt

As suspected, responses to this open-ended question do not vary greatly in form. All informants approached the question by listing the languages they use while working at Wolt. Complete list of languages informants mentioned they use at Wolt consists of English, Norwegian, Russian, Polish, Georgian, Lithuanian, Danish and Estonian. The most common combination in the answers is English combined with the language spoken at the worker's local office.

2) Do you feel international communication within the company is effortless? Describe everyday communication at Wolt

All of the informants claim that communication is effortless at Wolt. Responses to the latter part of the question are similarly homogenous. Informants describe a division between oral and written communication as well as different nuances in written communication. An example of a nuance of written communication would be, as suggested by an informant, concluding whether to send an e-mail or a private message in the internal instant messaging service utilized by Wolt.

In all, it would seem that majority of the informants associate effortlessness with easiness and simplicity. This can be seen in many of the responses – informants mention for how many years they have been studying English and other factors indicating that they perceive their own capability to qualify for communicating effortlessly at work.

3) Have there ever been instances of miscommunication? If so, please describe

Half of the questionnaire responses indicate no experiences of miscommunication. Informants who have faced instances of miscommunication elaborate that these are often not tied to English use.
A worker states, for instance, that all miscommunication they have encountered has occurred in their native language. One informant describes that they actually "fumble more" when using their native

language as opposed to English. The informant highlights that difference in using their native language and English is in the function: English is, for them, more business-oriented and direct whereas it is more comfortable to express feeling in their native language.

4.2 The employee profile

The interview data gathered for this research is utilized to construct a profile of a generalized Wolt worker operating multilingually in working context. This employee profile is intended to further elaborate the "standard" Wolt worker taking part in this research. The employee profile is constructed to provide ground for understanding the analysis section in this paper. This section also addresses variables that should be noted in order to be able to review the data both more comprehensively and critically.

The interview data indicates that six of the ten informants identify themselves as males and the remaining four identify as females. Men and women at Wolt do not represent equally large groups – around 2/3 of Wolt's employees are men. The sample of informants chosen for this study were not selected on basis of their gender, the men-women ratio in the data is coincidental.

A unifying factor for all informants taking part in the research is the multilingual nature of their everyday work. Based on the questionnaire data and personal observations this is due to two main reasons. Firstly, all Wolt employees regardless of their location and position are expected to communicate fluently with their international colleagues – English as the lingua franca is the tool for transnational communication at Wolt. Secondly, all internal tools and practices used, developed and designed at Wolt are constructed using the company-wide lingua franca so that workers could all mutually discuss and further develop the tools collectively regardless of their mother tongue.

4.3 Interview data

Seidman (2006: 9) explains that interviewing provides access to the context of people's behaviour and thereby a way for the researcher to understand the meaning of their behaviour. It is important to remember that interviewing as a research method ought not to be used to test hypotheses or evaluate the informant.

The first half of the interview focuses on code-switching and the considerations discussed among the questions in the first half are intended to answer the first research question examined in this thesis: *how does code-switching in work environment affect the language attitudes of employees in a multinational company where English is used as an official language?* I will discuss the interview questions and their responses as they were addressed in the interviews – as sets of separate questions. I will highlight the most common trends shown in the interview data and most relevant findings overall.

The semi-structured nature of the interview made it possible to concentrate on different aspects with different informants – the flow of the interview partly depended on how the informant responded. At the end of the chapter an overview of the qualitative data will be presented.

The first part of the interview, as mentioned, drills into code-switching. Below the interview questions elaborating the function of code-switching at work are separated as they were addressed during the interview:

Do you consciously perform code-switching?

Four out of ten informants answered that code-switching is not conscious for them. Two informants responded that code-switching is partly conscious – using English expressions and phrases when communicating in one's mother tongue "just happens," for instance. Four of the informants responded that they do not acknowledge code-switching at all.

When do you do it and with whom? What is your opinion on this phenomenon?

The informants reported that code-switching happens both outside the office environment and with Wolt colleagues. The most often mentioned interlocutors with whom code-switching occurred are staff working at Wolt's partnering restaurants, courier partners and local colleagues. Informants point out a functional difference in code-switching between these three sides although the main reason for code-switching appears to be unilateral. Nearly all informants mentioned that the main reason for code-switching is being able to use common terms. In practice this most often refers to technical terms, practices that are only referred to in English on company level and dish names. These terms include lexical items such as *iPad, weekly call, ops-tools* (Wolt's internal tools for running the operation), *screenshot, task, ticket, upload, french fries, bowl* and *merchant.* Informants reported that in some cases, especially when communicating with partnering restaurants and courier partners, code-switching is an effortless and easy method of getting an understanding of what languages the interlocutor understands and what is their level of English or any other language.

The interview data unveiled notions of separation between languages. Code-switching was also criticized as an issue that can negatively affect one's relationship with their mother tongue. This was depicted as a categorization of languages A and B and code-switching breaks the boundary between the two entities – this was seen in a negative light. Another informant also addressed their concern regarding the "contamination" of their own mother tongue. Code-switching was described as a device that distances and distracts one from using their native language.

Overall, the informants viewed code-switching very positively. Informants elaborated that being able to code-switch between English and one's mother tongue has great advantages at work. The most notable trend among the answers was that code-switching eases communication and understanding. Informants also mentioned that code-switching is a fun way of expressing oneself more vividly – this is, according to interview data, evident especially among young people. Those working in customer service reported that they sometimes code-switch when communicating with customers to make the communication smoother and youthful. Informants reported that they might utter something like "I've been there" or "bro" to better express their understanding and sympathy towards the customer. These examples suggest that code-switching has both communicative and psychological functions.

Do you think code-switching at work is more harmful or beneficial?

Half of the informants reflected that code-switching has definite benefits in terms of communication at work. None of the informants expressed that code-switching in their opinion would be more harmful than beneficial. When faced with this question, many of the informants mentioned that code-switching feels very natural and a standard aspect of the job.

How does it affect you as a language user?

Six of the informants stated that code-switching has no effect on their language use. Similarly to the previous interview question, informants commented here as well that code-switching feels so natural that describing its effects is surprisingly difficult. It was reported that when code-switching to English one of the informants consciously pronounces the English words more clearly than the words in their native language. Informants also described that the more English they have used at Wolt the more conscious they grow. It was also suggested by the informants that mixing languages creates new forms of language and that the informants tended to consciously pay less attention to correct language use when communicating with their local colleagues.

The second part of the interview aims at collecting relevant data for the second research question, *how does using English as the official work language affect the contribution of non-native speakers of English?* Here I will comprise the responses the informants gave concerning their language attitudes and perceptions of language use.

Have you ever felt forced to speak English at Wolt? If so, how did you feel about that?

Six of the ten informants directly denied having been forced to communicating in English at Wolt. There were also responses along lines of "not negatively forced" which in practice refers to experiences of the informants acknowledging that they would not have been understood if they had been communicating in their mother tongue at work. It was expressed, however, that using English has no negative connotations in this respect – all informants explained that the instances where English use was required were understandable situations with colleagues visiting from abroad.

Some informants mentioned that English was a necessity at the company-wide gathering that took place in Finland – workshops, casual socializing and all formal communication happened in the company lingua franca, English. One of the informants concluded that speaking English at Wolt is "a need, not a must."

Have you ever encountered trouble in communication at Wolt? What do you think might cause these problems?

The communicative problems the informants have faced at Wolt mostly occurred when communicating with Wolt's courier partners. Troublesome and very rare instances were also brought up in written communication with other Wolt employees. One of the informants stated that problems in communication are seldomly based on language itself but rather on cultural differences and different understandings. It should be noted that the interview data shows that accents or dialects were not pointed out as communicative hardships.

Informants working closely with Wolt's courier partners reported that nearly all communicative problems are related to insufficient language skill and lack of knowledge. Informants also stated that personal characteristics such as stubbornness causes problems – matters of language ideology play part in instances of miscommunication. In practice this refers to interlocutors not wanting to communicate in a common language (most often English). Informants also stressed that the communication with courier partners is very straight-forward and simple. Courier partners most often contact the office if they have problems locating the customer or confusion regarding the mobile application courier partner use to navigate and operate – in these instances highly correct and fluent knowledge of language is not mandatory.

Upon gathering data for this MA thesis language political observations were brought up during the interviews. In the data it is further specified that while language politics do not pose as problematic in the work informants do for Wolt these ideologies still surface in discourse occasionally. For the sake of clarity, I must specify that the instances of language political discord addressed here are associated to those working together with Wolt's partnering restaurants and courier partners.

The interview data indicates that Wolt workers have faced hardships in communication. Informants elaborate that communicational disagreements become unbearably problematic when the other interlocutor refuses to communicate in a common, mutually known language. In most cases the

mutually known language is English. When asked to further explain the obscurities in discourse I was given some examples of the issue. According to the data, most commonly language political hindrances in communication are rather simple and straight-forward. In practice this refers to an interlocutor refusing to communicate in a given language even though they are capable of understanding and becoming understood in said language. Informants explain that they are often certain of the other interlocutors' language competence based on the fact that they seem to understand the linguistic input they are receiving – the response they give is simply in another language.

To clarify the issue, I will offer an arbitrary example of the phenomenon:
A Swedish speaking Wolt employee contacts a restaurant worker in Denmark in English. The Swedish speaking worker explains their matter in English and the restaurant worker responds in Danish. From the context it can be deduced that the Danish employee has understood the matter but responds, for one reason or another, in Danish instead of English.

The interview data shows that concerns of language proficiency ought to be considered in this regard. Informants point out that refusing to communicate in a specified language might be caused by insecurity as much as be a matter of principle.

What is your overall opinion on communicating at Wolt? Are there areas of improvement?

Informants stated that communication at Wolt is open, transparent, easy and efficient. Many of the informants mentioned specifically that establishing a company-wide lingua franca is essential for functioning multinational communication and co-operation. While the workers I contacted expressed that they are content with the company-wide communication methods, potential areas of improvement were addressed. Informants mentioned that communication could be improved by having clearer guidelines of how they are expected to channel information they receive and who would be the correct person to contact in some specific, rarer cases. Some employees also hoped for further elaborations regarding the company's strategies and practices. A concrete suggestion for improvement was made by an informant as well: the company could offer English classes for those who might feel insecure about their professional English use.

How would you describe your attitude towards using English at work? Do you feel confident?

Workers described their attitudes being "amazing, highly positive, relaxed" and "open-minded" among other similarly uplifting attributes. Informants mentioned that they sometimes speak English at work even if it would not be necessary for mutual understanding. A few informants told that they are actively willing to improve their competence in English – it was indicated that Wolt functions as an environment for practicing language skills in addition to working. One of the informants stressed that better knowledge (of a language) leads to better results and thus it is crucial to further educate oneself.

Four of the informants stated that they are confident users of English at Wolt. Remaining six informants responded along the lines of being "more or less confident." None of the informants denied feeling confident when using English. Informants shared some examples of situations when they have felt insecure about English use – having to check the correct spelling of some English words was mentioned to prompt a feeling of insecurity, for instance. It was also mentioned that in interview situations conducted in English some meanings might get lost in translation.

Do you feel that your contribution for the company has been affected by using a non-native language? Negative / positive effects?

Six of the informants responded that using a non-native language at work has no effect on their contribution for Wolt. Some of the informants explained that they currently use English more frequently at work than their mother tongue. An informant stated that they do not believe that they could deliver any more information and content in their native language than in English. The importance of English use was particularly stressed in terms of sharing experiences and connecting with Wolt employees across Europe.

The interview data consists of zero instances of negative effects or experiences in regard to one's contribution at work and using a non-native language professionally.

5. Analysis

In this section I will present most common trends in the research data. In this section language attitudes will also be elaborated further from two viewpoints: attitudes towards code-switching professionally and attitudes towards using English as the company-wide lingua franca. The matter of linguistic identity will also be addressed – linguistic identity determines how employees view their competence, skills and perhaps even value for the company.

5.1 Most common trends in data

As expected, data from the background questionnaire aligns with the interview data. In this section the most common trends and directions visible in the data are discussed.

Reactions to code-switching as a communicative function are relatively similar among the informants. Interview data shows that informants were initially seemingly unaware of their own code-switching; as the interview progressed, however, more detailed and conscious considerations were presented. The majority of the informants report having a positive approach towards mixing languages in working context. Those who had more critical views towards code-switching mentioned that the negative connotations are not tied to Wolt as a company or work life – they rather stem from personal views.

Majority of the informants report similar functions for code-switching as well. One of the most notable reasons for code-switching is related to Wolt's internal tools. All company-wide tools and practices are designed and executed in the company lingua franca, English. Therefore, code-switching occurs naturally when referring to common tools and functions. Another frequently mentioned function for code-switching is simplifying communication with Wolt's partnering restaurants and courier partners. Code-switching is viewed as a communicational aid among the informants in this respect due to many of the menu items at the restaurant featuring anglophone expressions, for instance.

The function for code-switching at Wolt appears to be multidimensional. Code-switching occurs to enable mutual, understandable and successful communication between employees coming from different language backgrounds. An example of such function would be simply any instance of communication where code-switching occurs in order to simplify the communication and minimize

the risk of misunderstanding. This could, for instance, be as mundane as discussing business matters with colleagues. Topics discussed in formal meetings in English might, for instance, be discussed partly in English among non-native English-speaking employees.

Overall the informants report that they are generally happy with how communication is currently being handled at Wolt. The data suggests that Wolt workers are actively willing to learn more – eagerness to improve oneself is not restricted to matters of language, however. Informants show interest towards learning more about the company and communicational strategies as well.

Informants report that they are mostly confident about speaking English professionally at Wolt. While discussing the importance of confidence with the informants many elaborated that they are actively willing to master their language competence in order to communicate more fluently and confidently. The informants' active willingness and consciousness regarding the areas where they could improve correlates with Gardner & Lambert's (1972: 14) idea of integrative attitude towards language use. In other words, informants are eager to improve their language use to communicate more fluently with their peers and fit in the company. Giles & Ogay's (2007) Communication Accommodation Theory and more specifically communicational converge can similarly be applied to the research data – informants mention consciously striving towards effortless and easygoing communication.

Cook (2003:137) suggests that it is possible that multilingual competence plays little role in terms of pragmatic knowledge. Applying Cook's (2003) approach to how multilingual capabilities affect the working competence of an individual. From the research data can be deduced that the effect of working in one's non-native language is minimal to non-existent in Wolt's case. Informants' experiences of using English even when not necessary indicate not only willingness to improve but also familiarity and being comfortable communicating in one's non-native language.

5.2 Attitudes towards code-switching

The interview data shows that the majority of informants express positive reactions towards code-switching in working context. In practice this shows as high language competence and high-quality content linguistically both within the company internally (communication among the employees) and externally (marketing and public relations, for instance).

Even though the majority of informants report highly positive views and experiences regarding code-switching, concerns are also addressed in the research data. Instances of dissatisfaction with the current model of communication and language practices among the informants are very rare, as can be seen from the research data.

Examples of less enthusiastic approaches to code-switching among the research data are tied to one's mother tongue. Concerns of one's mother tongue being "contaminated" from mixing languages in discourse can be used as an example of such insight, for example. Informants stated that they actively recognize code-switching and consciously try to avoid code-switching as much as possible. Such communicational stance is linked to "love for one's mother tongue," as stated by an informant. The research data indicates that although all of the informants deemed work-related code-switching unproblematic and necessary, the ideological principles regarding language use shine through.

An explanation for such ideological language principle could be found in the difference between professional language use and the language use when the employee is off work. The research data shows that informants admitted to dividing their language use into "work selves" and "off-work selves" – the data elaborates that informants tended to avoid code-switching during their free time. It must be noted, however, that matters of practice come into play in this respect. The nature of the work at Wolt inarguably encourages and sometimes even calls for code-switching – all internal tools are designed in English, hence referring to the common tools and practices is simpler in English, for instance.

I must point out that this result is potentially partly due to the fact that Wolt only hires workers with sufficient English skills for working. The recruiting process varies between different positions at Wolt. The recruitment process primarily focuses on company fit and applicable skills rather than language competence – people applying for different positions are not required to take language tests or present previous English grades, for instance. The applicant's English competence is tested in the interviewing process – most often the interviews are held in English altogether. Observing the applicant's language skill in recruiting process ensures that all Wolt workers are competent to operate in English in their everyday work. High skill level among the worker base certainly affects the research data.

The research data shows evidence of language separation on the informant's behalf. The data indicates that some of the informants consciously recognize the division between their mother tongue and English. Code-switching was mentioned to contaminate one's native language and thus viewed as a linguistic occurrence harmful to one's native language. Among discussing the issue of language contamination informants described a division between two different languages – in this case English and their mother tongue. Informants described two languages as two differing entities that ought not to interfere with one another. Aforementioned separation between languages was explained as being strictly associated with non-working context, however.

5.3 Attitude towards English as professional lingua franca

The second part of the interview process was designed to gather data regarding the informants' perceptions of using English as the professional lingua franca.

The following interview questions were utilized to assess the informants' attitudes:

- Have you ever felt forced to speak English at Wolt? If so, how did / do you feel about this?
- Have you ever encountered trouble in communication at Wolt? What do you think might cause these problems?
- What is your overall opinion on communicating at Wolt (with the English perspective in mind)? Are there areas of improvement?
- How would you describe your attitude towards using English? Do you feel confident?
- Do you feel that your contribution at work has ever been affected by using a non-native language? Negative / positive effects?

Notable findings in terms of Wolt workers' language attitudes regarding using English as the company-wide official language of communication were made when the informants were asked the question *how would you describe your attitude towards using English? Do you feel confident?* The responses clearly indicate that English use as the lingua franca is unproblematic at Wolt – there are no instances where employees would describe feelings of uneasiness or discomfort relating to English use professionally.

Another interview question, *have you ever felt forced to speak English at Wolt? If so, how did / do you feel about this?* was also designed as a parameter for assessing the attitudes informants show towards English use at Wolt. Responses to this question show that while informants state that they are not feeling forced to communicate in English they recognize the fact that being capable to communicate in their non-native language, English, is a necessity at Wolt. An example of such an approach to professional English use at Wolt would be an informant stating that they feel communicating in English is "a need, not a must." The data also indicates informants claiming that they have not been "negatively forced" to speak English at work. It ought to be considered that the verb *force* has a lot of expressive power. During the interviews some of the informants pointed out that they have not necessarily felt "forced" but rather "encouraged" or "directed." Giles & Ogay's (2007) Communicational Accommodation Theory can be applied here: workers report that they actively strive towards the highest level of common understanding and clarity in communication. Giles & Ogay (2007: 294) elaborates in his theory that "interactants have expectations regarding optimal levels of accommodation." In Wolt's case this is supported by the interview data.

Based on the interview data it must be noted, however, that Communication Accommodation Theory ought not to be considered entirely applicable to communicational strategies utilized at Wolt. The fundamental idea behind code-switching at Wolt is divided into two. Firstly, employees code-switch among one another in order to communicate as effortlessly and successfully as possible. Secondly, internal communication and tools are altogether designed and constructed in English, which encourages borrowing words from English lexicon to individual's own mother tongue, for instance.

The interview data shows notes of Wolt workers assuming certain levels of competence from their peers. During the interviews the recruitment process for Wolt was appreciated. Informants report that they can confidently and casually communicate with everyone within the company regardless of their language background, position or any other variable. The interview data implies that high standards for language competence in English is viewed as a highly valued asset among Wolt workers. The data shows that high-level English competence in recruiting is appreciated for two reasons. Firstly, having passed the recruitment process and obtaining the desired position at Wolt reassures the worker of their own competence. An informant remarks that acknowledging that they have successfully gained their place in the company ranks gives reassurance of their multilingual working proficiency. Secondly, the research data implies that Wolt workers find the generally high English competence positive – informants state that the fact that Wolt workers obtain similarly high English skill makes

the communication effortless. The data indicates that similar language competence across the company is considered very beneficial.

5.3.1 Linguistic identity

The research data suggests that Wolt workers are happy with how Wolt operates in terms of communication. This becomes especially evident when observing how the informants interviewed for this research viewed their own linguistic confidence.

Delanty (2003, quoted in Block 2009: 11) highlights that "The self can be invented in many ways. The contemporary understanding of the self is that of a social self formed in relations of difference rather than of unity and coherence." On the basis of this depiction it can be deduced that (language) identity is an issue that is developed through social structures. This can be deemed true in Wolt's case on the basis of the research data.

Many of the informants referred to the importance of receiving feedback from the work they do for Wolt. Receiving and giving feedback were mentioned as very important instances of learning and improving one's skills and working methods. Interview data revealed that the informants' linguistic identity is affected by concepts of comparison and reassurance. Research data shows that the informants' perception of their competence is affected by the fact that informants admit to actively comparing their own language skill and performance to that of others. This implies that informants tend to learn and develop through a very specific social relationship. In this social relationship informants first evaluate their own linguistic capability and then assess how their own skill level compares to others working at Wolt. Informants mentioned that if they were to feel insecure about their language use they would possibly seek reassurance in order to feel more confident and comfortable to operate in non-native language. In practice this, as shown in the interview data, occurs when an employee checks the correct spelling of meaning of an English word or phrase before using them in written or oral communication.

Giles & Ogay's (2007) Communication Accommodation Theory is applicable to the aforementioned communicational behaviour as well. Communication Accommodation Theory addresses how individual interlocutors aim towards communicational unity by adapting their utterances to fit the social surrounding optimally. In Wolt's case pursuing better working proficiency can be seen in the

workers' communicational practices. The research data indicates that the informants acknowledge their linguistic imperfections and keenly work towards the most effective communication amongst their colleagues.

During the data gathering process the informants were asked whether they feel confident using their non-native language, English, in working context at Wolt. This question was specifically designed to provide insights to how Wolt workers perceive their linguistic working competence. The interview question *how would you describe your attitude towards using English? Do you feel confident?* is in key position in assessing how informants view their proficiency and language at work.

As mentioned in the data review earlier in this paper, informants report having remarkably positive attitudes and approaches towards English use at Wolt. Four out of ten informants state that they feel entirely confident about English use at Wolt while the remaining six informants claim that they are confident at least to some extent with communication in English both orally and in written forms. Upon addressing the feeling of insecurity in regard to operating in one's non-native language some of the informants highlighted the importance of guidance and feedback from one's colleagues. The interview data reveals that informants turn to their colleagues for second opinion if they are feeling insecure about how to express themselves in an important message, for instance. In this regard the data indicates, however, that the reason informants feel unconfident do not always lie in English use – feeling insecure and seeking guidance sometimes stems from concerns regarding the content of a message, for example.

5.4 Productivity

In this section the second research question of this MA thesis, *how does using English as the official work language affect the contribution of non-native speakers of English?* is inspected in further detail.

Productivity, as defined by Krugman (1994) "productivity refers to the ratio between the output volume and the volume of inputs." Productivity is certainly tied to contribution – it can be stated that productivity provokes contribution.

The research data indicates that the effect of operating professionally in one's non-native language is minimal in Wolt's case. Interview data demonstrates that Wolt workers do not believe that operating in one's non-native language has an effect on their contribution for the company. One of the interview

questions, *do you feel that your contribution for the company has been affected by using a non-native language?*, was especially designed to gather insights regarding how Wolt employees perceive their own contribution for the company and the role of language use. Responses for the aforementioned interview question were exclusively similar: interview data consists of zero instances of negative effects or experiences in regard to one's contribution at work and using a non-native language professionally. Informants implied that the language they use does not make a difference in their work. The interview data highlights that the employees taking part in the research do not believe that they could deliver any more content in their work if they could operate solely in their native language. Informants report sometimes preferring English at work over their native language even when using English is not obligatory – this implies that Wolt workers do not view English use as a factor that would weaken their contribution.

6. Discussion

In this section I will elaborate issues brought up in the research data. Ponderings presented in the following discussion are intended to support the data analysis and offer deeper, varied insight to language attitudes, perceptions and other themes addressed in the data gathering process.

Upon describing the practices and functions of their own language use some of the informants stumbled upon language political and ideological dilemmas. These notions sparked further discussion during the interviews and I will further elaborate the relevance of language politics and ideologies in multilingual context. This section will also cover two different approaches to English use at Wolt: English as a part of code-switching and English as the company-wide lingua franca.

6.1 Language attitudes and their effects on company level

Language attitudes and their effects on the company level are perhaps the most visible in terms of the workers' productivity. As Krugman describes, "productivity measures how efficiently production inputs, such as labour and capital, are being used to produce a given level of output (Krugman 1994)."

Krugman's (1994) rather straight-forward and economic view of productivity might seem like a declamatory approach to topics discussed in this thesis. It should be noted, however, that in this respect language use is considered as a part of work at Wolt – in other words language use can be viewed as a method for making financial gain.

Lewis (1975, cited in Baker 1992) mentions economic and social communication importance as an aspect of language attitudes. As mentioned, this refers to the workers' motivation to be as fluent as possible in a certain language in order to perform in their work. Research data indicates that on company-wide level workers strive for the most prolific and efficient working methods and best results.

Company-wide language attitudes can also be seen in the language policies at Wolt. All Wolt employees have been instructed to use English in all company-wide and international communication. Wolt employees have also been instructed to switch the language of a conversation to English as soon as a non-native speaker of the local language joins the conversation.

Language policies have been communicated to the workers collectively. The research data indicates that Wolt employees consider communicational policies at Wolt functional and clear in most cases.

6.2 Language attitudes and their effects on personal level

Operating in one's non-native language is certainly an aspect that both constructs and determines one's attitude towards language use. The interview data indicates that being able to operate in more than one language is viewed as a highly desirable trait. The same remark has been made by Alenezi (2010: 14) as he investigated how multilingual learners perceive code-switching. Alenezi (2010) found that while operating and learning unilingually is considered simple and functional, learners view code-switching as a linguistic tool that supports learning and understanding.

Both Alenezi's (2010) findings and the research data can be paralleled with Lewis' (1975, cited in Baker 1992) dimensional approaches to language attitudes. Lewis (1975, cited in Baker 1992) describes economic and social communication importance as an individual's valuation of language knowledge and desire to improve their competence in order to perform better in their work. Research data clearly indicates that Wolt workers taking part in the research actively strive towards the best possible performance and consciously seek for the optimal working methods. As mentioned, English language competence among Wolt workers is high. Regardless of the prevalent, significantly efficient language skill level workers still report that they are willing to perfect their English skills even further – this is supported by Smith (1971), who proposes that having a positive attitude towards a language boosts learning.

Research data shows instances where informants express "love for their mother tongue." Here I will refer to Smith's (1971) depiction of attitude. Smith (1971: 82) states that "an attitude is a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or a situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner." Informants claiming love for their mother tongue can certainly be described as an expression of attitude towards their native language. The interview data shows that even though nearly all informants specified that they cherish their native tongue and value it greatly, they still sometimes prefer communicating in their non-native language professionally.

Communicating multilingually is often viewed as a highly desirable and beneficial as suggested by Alenezi (2010: 10). The interview data, however, proposes an intriguing model of perception among

the informants. The interview data shows that informants admit to consciously separating languages into two entities – English and their mother tongue, for instance. Upon further analysis of the interviews it became evident that the division between languages is linked to the aforementioned "love for one's language."

Informants elaborate that they actively try to avoid mixing languages in order to honor their own mother tongue. It should be highlighted, however, that the notions of "contaminating one's own mother tongue" and "languages interfering with one another" were brought up on the informants' behalf solely during the first half of the interview. The first part of the interviews addressed code-switching specifically.

The research data implies that the some of the negative aspects regarding language use at Wolt are linked to code-switching. The interview data shows that while informants recognize that code-switching simplifies the work the everyday work at Wolt concerns regarding language contamination still arise. It is noteworthy as well that informants show doubts about English use solely in reference to code-switching.

The second part of the interviews focused on using English as the company-wide lingua franca. Upon discussing the function and importance of English in the informants' professional and personal lives the approach on the informants' behalf was more relaxed. As Baker (1992: 29) notes, one's language attitude indicates the interlocutor's stance towards language preference, for instance. Based on Baker's (1992) remark and the trends in interview data it can be argued that informants show differing attitudes and approaches towards English used in code-switching and English used holistically as the company-wide official language of communication.

The second part of the interviews focused on the informants' views and insights regarding professional English use and their own skill levels and contribution for the company. Relevant insights regarding informants' view of their (multilingual) contribution for the company are addressed especially in responses to one of the interview questions, *do you feel that your contribution at work has ever been affected by using a non-native language?* As can be seen in the interview data, informants are rather unanimous in this regard. Over half of the informants point out that the language they use at work does not play any role in their contribution for the company. Interview data shows instances of Wolt workers noticing their language skills developing further as they have used English frequently in their everyday work.

In regard to developing language skills Cook (2003) points out that lingual multi-competence not only means that interlocutors are fluent in their mother tongue and languages they have been studying for a long time they also are constantly developing in the blended language variety that could, for instance, occur during code-switching at work. Informants mention that their feeling of confidence regarding using English professionally has increased as the workers have gained more experience of speaking English at Wolt.

7. Conclusions

7.1 Re-visiting the research questions

In this thesis I have sought answers for two different research questions: *How does code-switching in work environment affect the language attitudes of employees in a multinational company where English is used as an official language?* and *How does using English as the official work language affect the contribution of non-native speakers of English*?

The data collected for this research indicates that the language attitudes Wolt workers have towards using English as the official working language are notably positive for the most part. The linguistic tool, code-switching, inspected in further detail in this thesis was also regarded as a positive and useful function on the informants' behalf. While the informants taking part in the research were nearly unanimously certain that both code-switching and using English as the company-wide lingua franca are effective communicational practices more hesitant insights were also raised. An example of a negative approach towards using code-switching would be the concern of mixing languages contaminating one's mother tongue.

This study has showed that using English as the company-wide lingua franca has little to no significance to the Wolt employees' contribution for the company. The data shows that most of the research participants do not believe that they could work more efficiently using only their mother tongue. Research data highlights that Wolt employees react mainly positively to using English as their working language and workers are eager to improve their language skills.

7.2 Significance of the study and findings

All relevant findings, where applicable, will be included in Wolt's internal handbook of communication. The main aim of the research was to gain understanding about Wolt employees' language perceptions and language attitudes – the interviews conducted for this research uncover communicational hardships that can be worked on Wolt's behalf and thus make the company a more pleasant work environment for people from all language backgrounds. In this thesis I have provided useful insights about linguistic dynamics in working context. I expect observing the linguistic

atmosphere in a multinational setting to provide useful summaries for anyone interested in research on language policies and multilingualism.

In addition to language ideological findings, data gathering for this thesis indicated concrete ways of improving communication and working methods at Wolt. The research data implies, for instance, that the company offering English classes for those feeling insecure about English use professionally would improve well-being and productivity at work. Employees who welcome the idea of English classes clarify that having English lessons would not only enhance language knowledge and learning but also familiarize the workers with one another. In addition to the aforementioned suggestion other similar improvements were also brought up – an instance of such would be higher level of transparency in communication. To further clarify, some of the informants claimed unhappiness with the current level of transparency regarding the company's business strategies and goals. This is certainly an issue that can easily be worked among managers at Wolt.

7.3 Suggestions for further research

Code-switching and professional use of a lingua franca are both widely studied phenomena. However, these matters can certainly be further researched. Research data gathered for this study shed light on the political and ideological fields of language attitudes among other issues – definitely an important and intriguing topic to be observed in future papers. The data analyzed in this research consists of both written and oral communication – another interesting aspect for future observation would be to inspect solely written or oral communication in business context.

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Appendix

The background questionnaire

A study on language use in a multi-national company setting

Hello and thank you for taking part in my MA thesis :) Below you can find a set of questions that help me learn with whom I am working. Please answer the questions as specifically as possible - there is no rush!

The aim of my MA thesis is to gain understanding about how matters of language use affect the work environment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

* Name:	
* Occupation at Wolt:	
* How long have you been working at Wolt?	
Gender:	
* Mother tongue:	
Other languages you speak:	

FURTHER APPLICATIONS

Describe the language you use in your work at Wolt	
Do you feel international communication within the company is effortless? Describe the everyday communication at Wolt	
Have there ever been instances of miscommunication? If so, please describe	

TIETOJEN LÄHETYS

[Tallenna]