

The Productivity Shift

Why Multilingual Workers Need AI



grammarly



The Harris Poll

Introduction

In today's global workforce, multilingual employees play a critical role in driving business success. Yet many face daily communication hurdles that slow productivity, increase frustration, and add unnecessary complexity to their work. Without the right system-wide tools, they spend extra time refining messages, adapting their tone, and navigating translation challenges—all while trying to maintain clarity and efficiency.

AI offers a powerful solution, but only when designed to fit into multilingual workers' workflows. By addressing key areas like translation, writing fluency, and content creation, organizations can empower their teams to work more effectively and confidently. The right AI tools don't just save time—they remove barriers, enhance collaboration, and enable multilingual employees to do their best work.

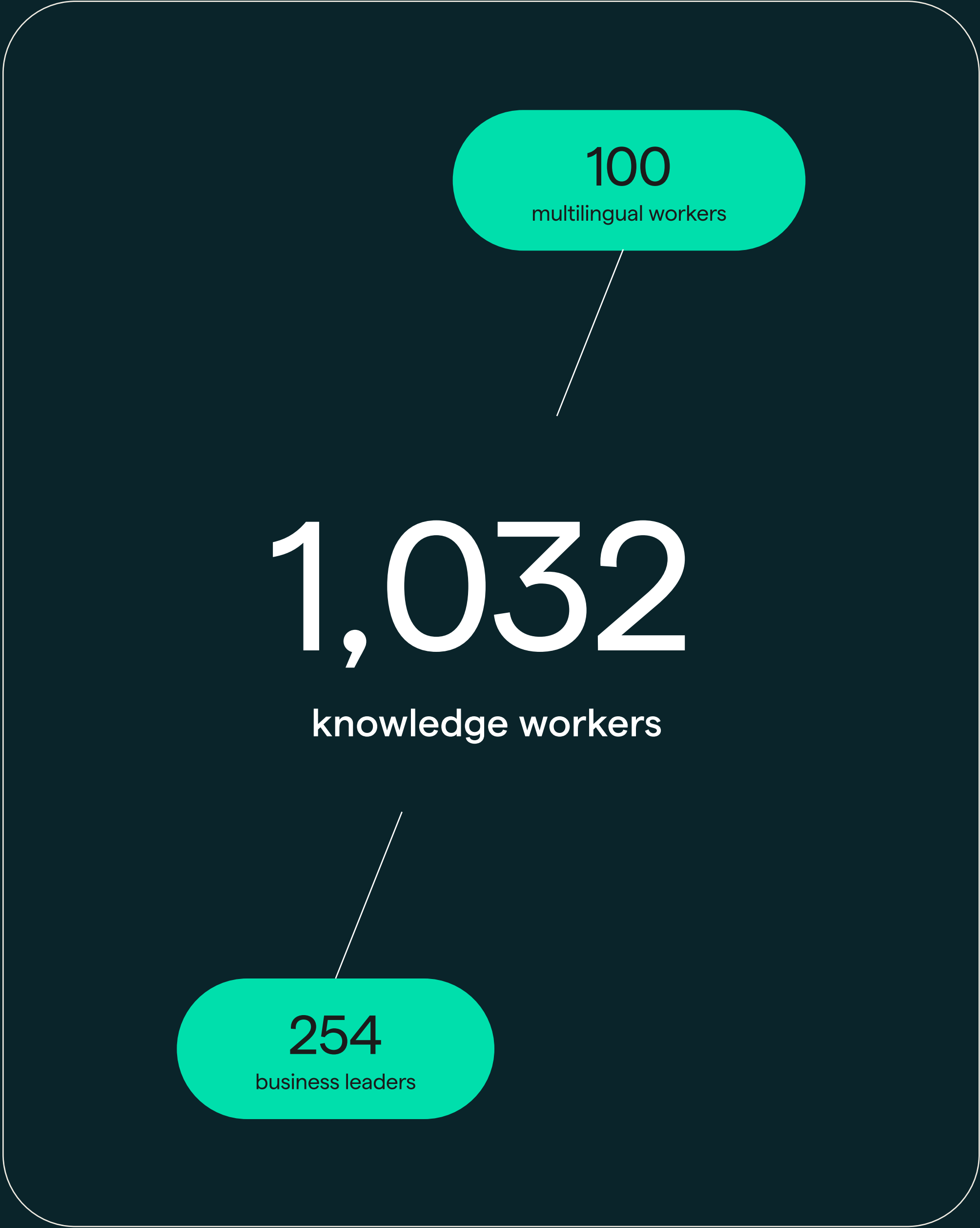
Methodology

This study was conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of Grammarly from September 24 to October 1, 2024, among 1,032 knowledge workers and 254 business leaders. This report specifically looks at one subgroup of those surveyed: multilingual knowledge workers.

This online survey is not based on a probability sample; therefore, no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. Year-over-year percentage changes and percentage gaps between groups should be interpreted as percentage point changes and are statistically significant.

Multilingual workers

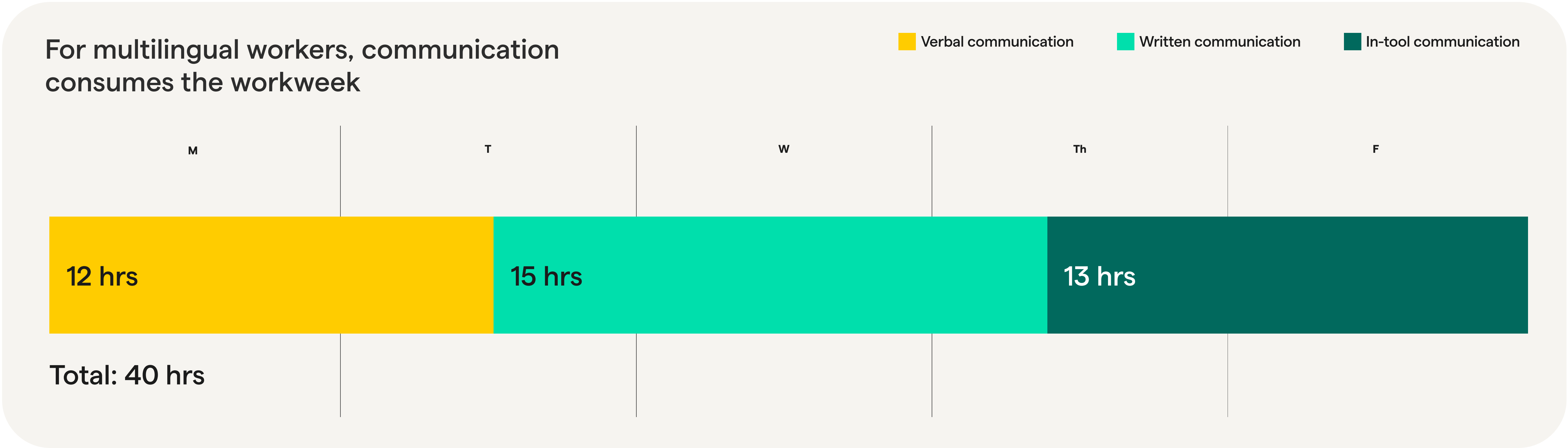
Employees proficient in two or more languages, whose primary language is not English, but who use English in the workplace.



The communication landscape for multilingual workers

For multilingual knowledge workers, communication is work. According to the latest data, they spend every minute of their 40-hour workweek exchanging information—whether through verbal conversations, written messages, or collaboration within workplace tools. Their productivity hinges on effective communication.

What sets their communication apart is its highly asynchronous nature. With teams and customers spread across languages and time zones at global companies, 65% of their communication happens outside of real-time conversations—24 percentage points higher than the average worker. Verbal interactions, including meetings and in-person discussions, account for just under a third of their week. The majority of their time is spent writing: 15 hours drafting emails, messages, and chat responses, and another 13 hours collaborating in knowledge management systems, project collaboration platforms, and other work tools.



The hidden costs of communication challenges

Unlike their monolingual colleagues, multilingual workers often juggle translation, interpretation, and comprehension challenges that can slow productivity and create friction in their workflows. Most multilingual workers (84%) find it challenging to navigate the sheer volume of workplace communication—this is 30% higher than the average. The expectation to always be connected and the flood of work notifications only add to the strain. Even composing messages takes extra effort, with 77% saying they spend too much time working on clarity and tone.

These struggles come at a steep cost. Multilingual workers lose an average of 6.1 hours per week to poor communication and another 11.9 hours to **performative productivity**. The impact goes beyond inefficiency: 92% report increased stress at work (+10% above average), strained relationships with colleagues (+19% above average), and confusion over next steps (+15% above average). Frustration runs so deep that 90% have considered finding a new job due to their communication struggles (+27% above average).

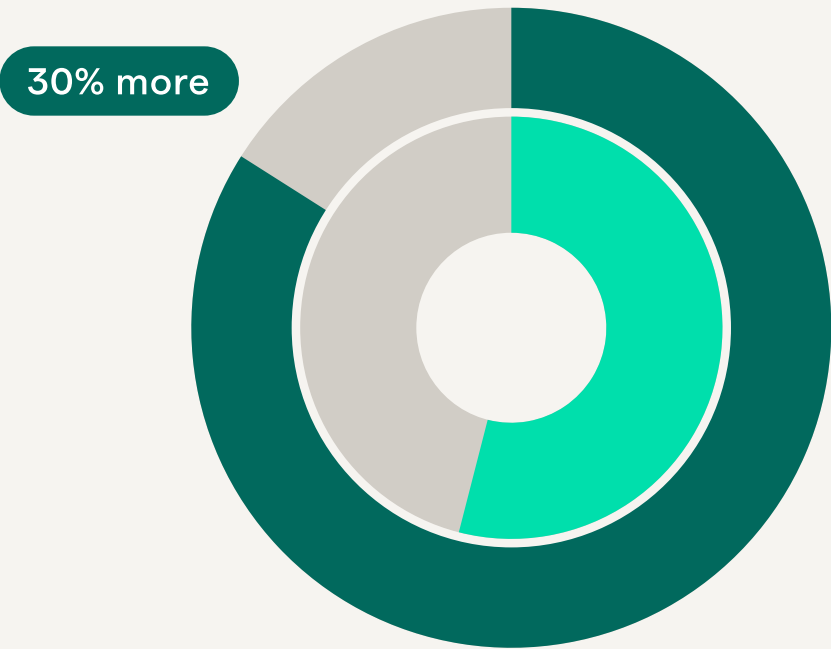
Performative productivity

The act of showcasing work or busyness primarily to create an impression of being productive rather than focusing on meaningful outcomes.

“I find it challenging to navigate through the multitude of communications I receive at work.”

84%
of multilingual workers

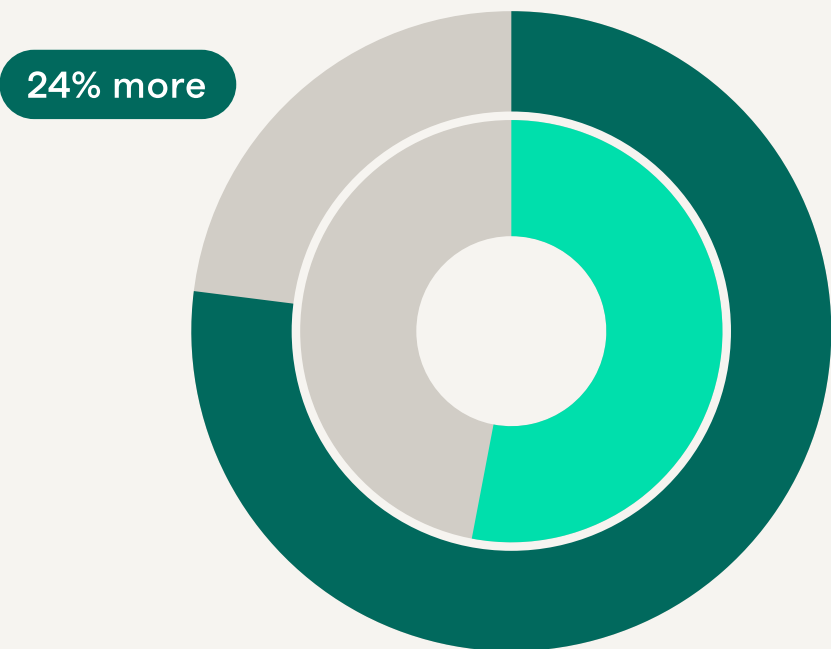
● Multilingual ● Average



“I spend too much time crafting messages in an attempt to avoid people misinterpreting my written communication at work.”

77%
of multilingual workers

● Multilingual ● Average



AI is a game changer for multilingual workers

For multilingual knowledge workers, better communication support isn't just a preference—it's a need. AI is already proving to be that solution, saving them over eight hours per week and transforming how they communicate and collaborate. This group is eager for tools that lighten their cognitive load, reduce friction, and enhance efficiency—and AI is meeting those needs across the board.

This group experiences the benefits of AI more than most. In fact, nearly every multilingual worker using AI sees tangible improvements: 100% report better communication and productivity, 99% experience reduced workload and stress, and 98% feel AI enhances their creativity and empathy. AI isn't just a convenience—it's a transformational tool that is reshaping how multilingual workers collaborate, express ideas, and thrive in the workplace.

Multilingual workers report positive impacts of AI

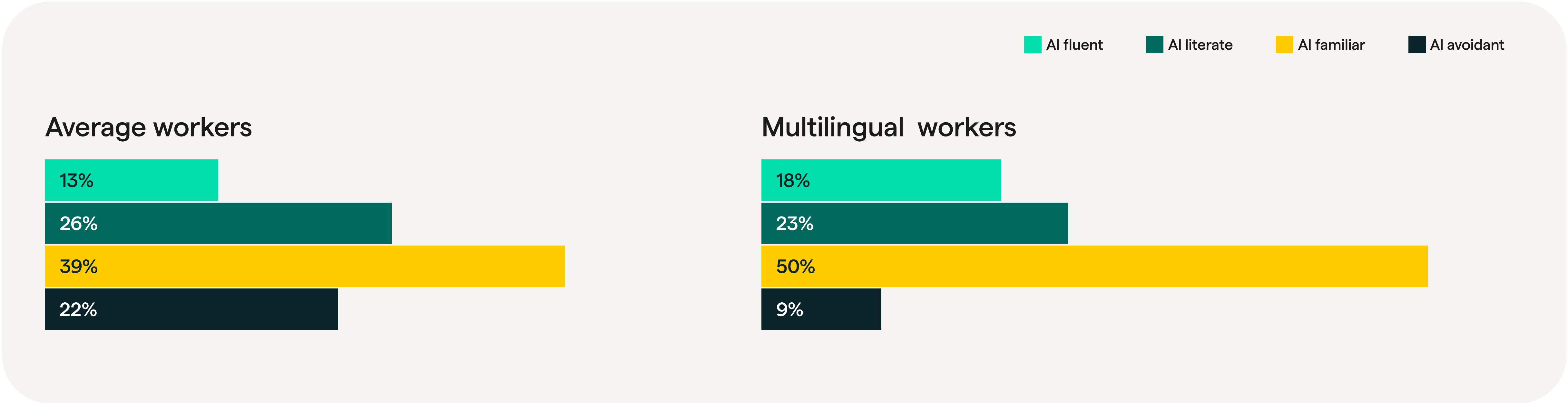


Multilingual workers are open to AI, but daily use remains low

Multilingual workers lead in AI familiarity, but fluency remains low

Multilingual knowledge workers are eager to embrace AI, yet most still aren't fully integrating it into their daily workflows. While more of this group consider themselves fluent in AI than the average worker (18% compared to 13% on average), the majority remain in the early stages of adoption—50% describe themselves as merely familiar, and 23% as literate, or just starting to use AI comfortably in their regular work. A notable 9% still avoid AI altogether, though this is significantly lower than the average worker (-13%).

Despite this gap, multilingual workers are ready to engage with AI—on their company's terms. The majority (85%) report using company-approved AI tools. This is 22% above average, signaling a strong willingness to adopt solutions that align with workplace policies. The opportunity for enterprises is clear: By providing AI tools that are accessible, intuitive, and tailored to multilingual communication needs, organizations can unlock significant productivity and efficiency gains.



Multilingual workers are ready for AI; they just need the right tools

AI has the power to make multilingual workers more productive, confident, and efficient, yet many still lack the right tools to support their communication needs. In fact, 71% say they don't have the communication tools necessary to be effective in their jobs.

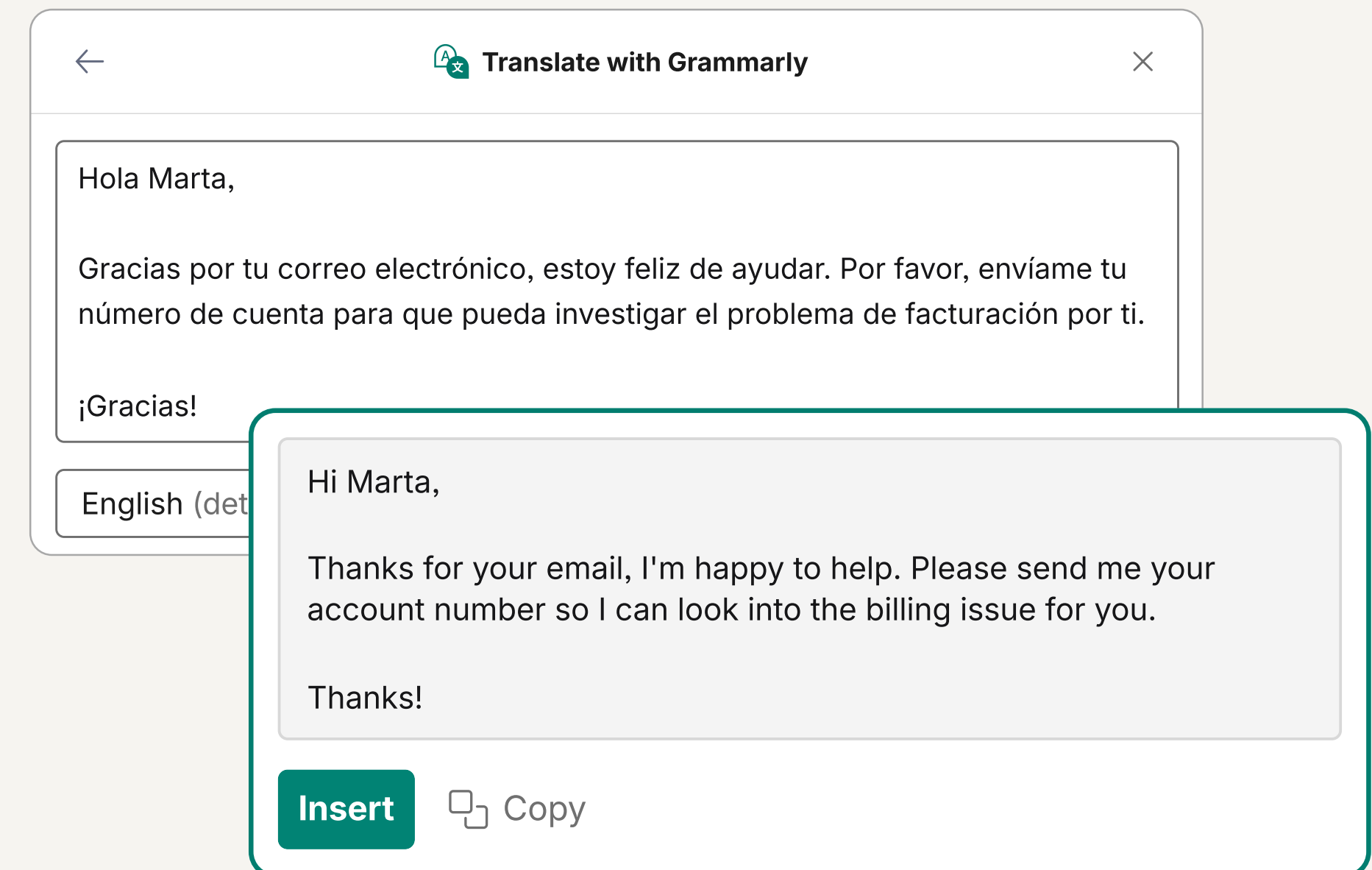
Organizations should focus on enabling AI fluency in three key areas where multilingual workers need the most support:

- Translation—ensuring accuracy and preserving intent across languages
- Writing fluency—streamlining message clarity, tone, and structure
- Content creation—enhancing the speed and quality of written work

Multilingual workers can improve all three with Grammarly's AI assistant, which works seamlessly across their apps and workflows—providing real-time writing suggestions and translation support without disrupting their flow.

1 . AI-powered translation that works in context

Many multilingual workers navigate language barriers daily, yet only 24% currently use AI for translation. Traditional translation tools often fail to capture workplace nuance, making it difficult to ensure that messages are both accurate and effective. This is especially true for CX agents who draft responses in their preferred language and then translate them into English before sending—adding extra time and complexity to every interaction. Grammarly seamlessly integrates across your entire tech stack, offering in-line translation assistance for 19 of the world's most widely spoken languages. With real-time support, employees can write fluently and strategically—without switching between tools.



2 . More fluent writing with less effort

Crafting clear, effective messages fluently is one of the biggest time sinks for multilingual workers—77% spend too much time fine-tuning their writing, and 71% struggle with tone and intent. While 60% use AI to enhance communication, only 34% leverage it for editing, leaving room for greater efficiency. Grammarly’s AI assistant helps streamline the entire communication process by helping to draft fluent, clear messages and replies from scratch and refining tone, structure, and clarity in real time, reducing the mental load of multilingual messaging. Unlike stand-alone language solutions, Grammarly acts as a real-time English coach, enhancing writing quality, clarity, tone, and fluency so non-native English speakers can communicate with confidence in every interaction.



Hi Tim,

Thanks for your interest in learning more about AcmeCo’s newest product, ToDo Lists. This new tool helps every team manage their workload efficiently and effectively. I’d love to chat about partnering for a co-branded campaign.

Are you free to discuss ideas next Wednesday?

Best,
Ana



What’s changed:

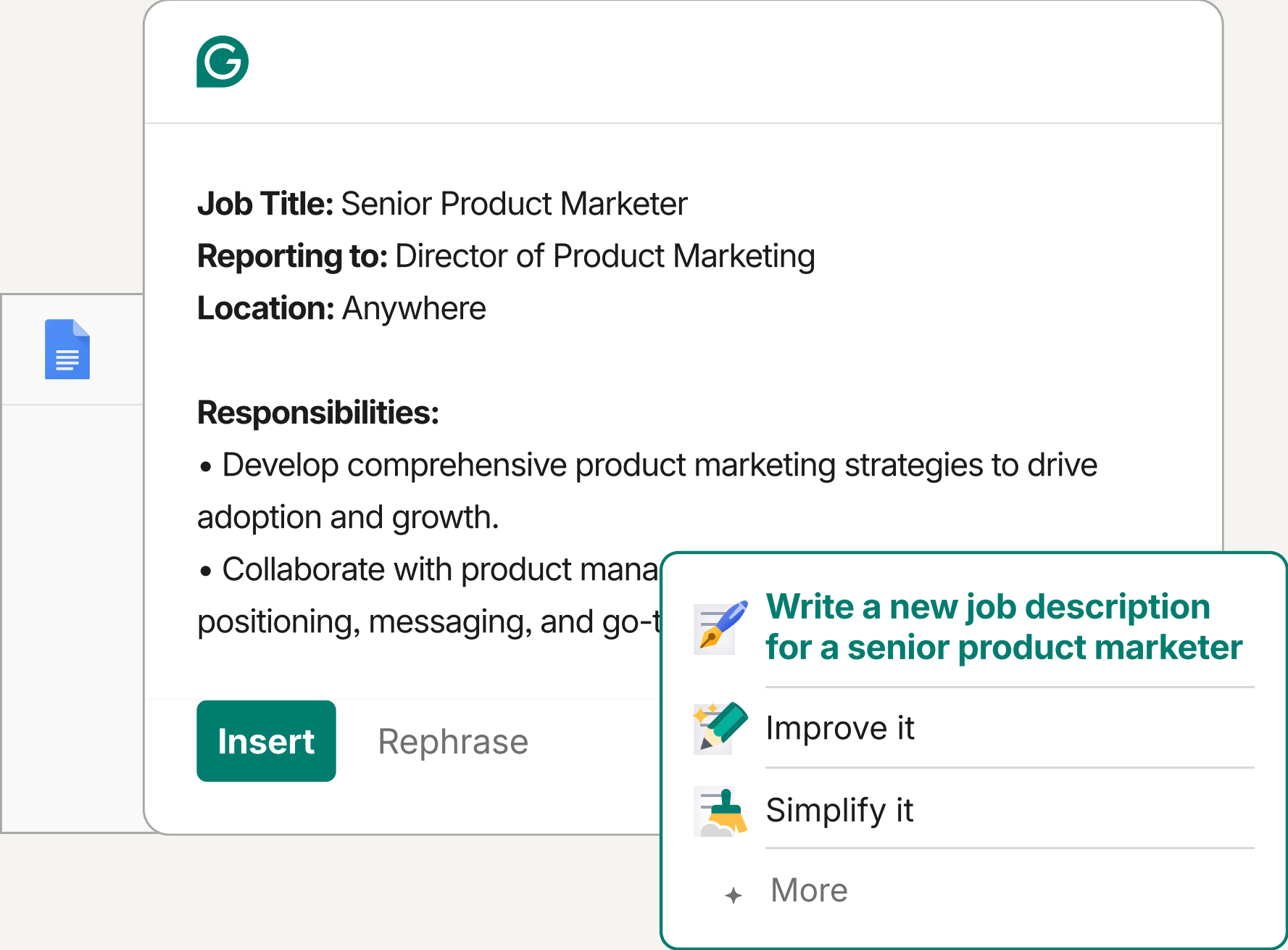
- ✓ Improved clarity and conciseness
- ✓ Adjusted tone to align with brand guidelines
- ✓ Added a more specific plan to reconnect

Insert

Rephrase

3. AI that elevates content creation

From writing help center articles and drafting job descriptions to producing blogs, ebooks, and reports, multilingual workers across roles create content as a part of their day-to-day workload—but only 40% currently use AI to assist with it. Grammarly’s AI helps take ideas from draft to polished content, offering real-time suggestions that enhance clarity, coherence, and consistency. By integrating seamlessly into everyday workflows, Grammarly enables multilingual teams to produce high-quality content faster—without second-guessing tone, structure, or language nuances.



Conclusion

// By adopting AI strategically to meet multilingual workers' needs, organizations can help them work more productively and communicate more fluently and effectively. With Grammarly as their AI partner, multilingual workers gain real-time writing support that ensures every message is clear, consistent, and high-impact—wherever they work. Empowering multilingual teams with the right tools removes communication barriers, drives productivity, and builds a more confident, high-performing workforce.



About Grammarly

Grammarly is the trusted AI assistant for communication and productivity, helping over 40 million people and 50,000 organizations do their best work.

Companies like Atlassian, Databricks, and Zoom rely on Grammarly to brainstorm, compose, and enhance communication that moves work forward. Grammarly works where you work, integrating seamlessly with over 500,000 applications and websites.

Learn more at grammarly.com/enterprise.