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Presentation

Team Jargon and Team Performance

A natural consequence of knowledge-based work is the emergence of team-specific jargon. We conceptualize team jargon as a defining feature of an evolving language and examine how its intensity influences both the continued development of that language and its implications for team performance. While often opaque to outsiders, team jargon is both explicit and shared among members, facilitating language development while reducing misunderstandings that might otherwise impede language-based coordination. Empirical analysis of language formation among teams assigned a symbol identification task supports this argument. We operationalize jargon intensity as the proportion of content words in team communications. As jargon intensity increases, the relationship between experience and language development strengthens, and the positive effect of shared language on team accuracy increases in magnitude.