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**УПРАВЛЕНИЕ ЯЗЫКОВЫМИ ПЕРСПЕКТИВАМИ В БАНКОВСКОМ  
СЕКТОРЕ: ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ НА ПРИМЕРЕ ПАО СБЕРБАНК**

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**Аннотация**

Данные свидетельствуют о том, что три из четырех многонациональных компаний в настоящее время управляют сетями из двадцати или более зарубежных организаций (John et al., 1997) [4]. Бремя координации управления такими географически, культурно и лингвистически разнообразными сетями является колоссальным, главным образом из-за языковых различий, существующих за пределами границ (Feely & Harzing, 2002) [1]. Тем не менее, многие многонациональные компании, движимые двумя целями транснациональной модели (реагирование на местном уровне в сочетании с сильным глобальным направлением), справляются с этой задачей и стремятся укрепить свою позицию на глобальном уровне. Сбербанк не является исключением из этой проблемы, поскольку также является игроком на

глобальных рынках. Сбербанк присутствует в 9 странах Центральной и Восточной Европы (Sberbank Europe AG, бывший VBI) и в Турции (DenizBank), а также в странах СНГ (Казахстан, Украина и Беларусь). Кроме того, представительства Сбербанка можно найти в Америке, Швейцарии и Китае. Планируется, что к 2050 году Сбербанк может иметь множество филиалов в других частях мира. Этот непрерывный рост дает возможность притоку экспатриантов переезжать в Россию и выезду из России в другие части мира на работу. Указанные факты требуют развития языковых навыков для обеспечения более высокой производительности и интеграции экспатриантов. В статье показано, как применение языковых перспектив открывает дополнительные возможности осознания новых способов реализации корпоративной ответственности, препятствует или облегчает усилия компании в части управления корпоративными действиями в более сбалансированных отношениях с природой и обществом.

**Ключевые слова:** Управление, иностранный язык, перспективы, банковское дело, транснациональная компания, Сбербанк.

***MANAGING LANGUAGE PERSPECTIVES IN A BANKING SECTOR: CASE  
STUDY IN SBERBANK OF RUSSIA***

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## **Annotation**

Evidence suggests that as many as three out of four multinational companies now manage networks of twenty or more overseas operations (John et al., 1997) [4]. The co-ordination burden of managing such geographically, culturally and linguistically diverse networks is daunting, mostly due to the language differences that exist across borders (Feely & Harzing, 2002) [1]. Nevertheless, many multinational companies spurred on by the twin goals of the transnational model (local responsiveness allied to strong global direction) have accepted the challenge and have sought to strengthen their global co-ordination. Sberbank is no exception of this problem as it stresses to compute in the global world. Sberbank is found in 9 Central and Eastern Europe nations (Sberbank Europe AG, former VBI) and in Turkey (DenizBank), and in addition to CIS countries (Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Belarus). It is also on the record that Sberbank branches can be found in America, Switzerland and China. It is believed that by 2050, Sberbank may have a lot of branches in other part of the world. This continuous growth offers the opportunity for the influx of expatriates to move to Russia and from Russia to other parts of the world to work. This call for managing the language perspective to ensure higher performance of impetrates and expatriates. The article shows how the application of a language perspective opens up new avenues for understanding how certain ways of talking about corporate responsibilities may hinder or facilitate our efforts to steer corporate actions into a more balanced relationship with nature and society.

**Keywords:** Managing, Language, Perspective, Banking, Multinational, Sberbank.

## **Problem Statement**

Recent research has shown that many of the multinational companies have accepted the challenges of managing networks overseas and the co-ordination burden thereof and are working to strengthen their global co-ordination in different ways.

This study investigates those determinants necessary for managing language perspective in Sberbank of Russia.

### **Aims**

The aim of this article is to comprehend how language practices within Sberbank influence the career of international assignees (impetrates and expatriates). This article looks at practices that Sberbank apply to cope with language barriers (i.e. language brokers, language switching etc.). It also looks at the implications of language barriers for HR practices and power distribution within Sberbank.

### **Research Questions**

For the study, the following questions were addressed:

1. What language is use as a corporate language in Sberbank?
2. What are the ways of managing language perspective in Sberbank?
3. What benefits can Sberbank can get in managing language perspective?

### **Hypotheses**

1. The use of corporate language in Sberbank has a significant effect.
2. Different ways of managing language perspective in Sberbank has significant effects.
3. Managing language perspective will lead to greater adaptation in Sberbank.

## **Theoretical issues**

A number of theories were used to analyze managing language perspective in Sberbank of Russia. These include but are not limited to the theory of language management; decision-making theory, sociolinguistic theory, modernization theory, systems theory, management theory [especially as advanced by the public value management paradigm], phenomenology, and human development theory that seeks to understand and explain the interactive dynamics of language in society and language and society” (Mwaniki, 2011) [9]. These theories were reviewed and insights were developed for sound theoretical basis for the project. The management of language perspectives on an international career in Sberbank of Russia is of essence to many.

## **Literature Review**

In a multinational business environment several languages are used in day-to-day communication and people from different linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds are brought together. Méndez Garcia & Pérez Cañado (2005) [8] use of the notion “multilingual reality” to describe a typical European business context and role of language in the workplaces where globally operating business professionals all are likely to need two or more languages to do their work. Language policies at the workplace seem to be highly contextual depending on the extent of the company’s global network of subsidiaries, customers, suppliers and joint ventures (Feely & Harzing, 2003) [1].

To achieve this, some companies have decided to adjust their staff selection policies taking into account the required language competence in the recruitment process so that the required mix of languages is obtained (Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999) [7].

Marschan-Piekkari et al. (1999) [7] demonstrate how vulnerable such language-based communication flows are, mainly because they are extremely person-bound, but yet their power and positive or negative influence may be considerable. Language ends up to be an issue concerning individuals and their competences,

which can be concluded by citing Marschan-Piekkari et al. (1999, p. 382) [7] “Companies don’t have languages, people do!”

A common corporate language facilitates informal communications between operating units and within cross-national teams fostering a sense of belonging as an element in diffusing a corporate culture (Feely & Harzing, 2003) [1] and language’s influence in social structures of the company is highlighted (Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2012) [6].

## **Methods**

Organizations face multilingual reality in their everyday actions and there is evidence suggesting that language awareness plays a crucial role in regulating workplace behavior (Méndez Garcia & Pérez Cañado, 2005) [8]. This research project adopted both positivist and post-positivist (interpretative) perspectives. Consequently, the multi-method research approach was also used. Techniques from both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms were also used to collect and analyze data. The study was conducted mainly in Sberbank of Russia because the management of language perspectives on an international career in the Sberbank of Russia is crucial among many people. This provides the reason for selecting this area for the study.

## **Data Collection**

As Seibert and his colleagues (2004) [10] have implicated, researchers usually adopt a multiple-level model integrating macro and micro approaches to practice in management research. Russia is taken as the macro level per the research (the target population), and Sberbank is taken as the micro level (the sampling frame) selected for data collection.

## **Primary Data**

Thirty expatriates working in Sberbank-Russia were made to answer questionnaires and some interviewed through Skype to collect primary information. The interviews were conducted separately from each other, to make the information more reliable whilst twenty nine were made to answer questions. Critique against the reliability should, however, be mentioned. The interview questionnaires were e-mailed to the respondents one month time. This could cause answers to be planned. The purpose of this study is, however, to find out how managing language perspective could improve the performance in Sberbank of Russia.

### **Secondary Data**

Although this study mainly is based on primary data, I also used some secondary sources to verify information, as well as to gain a deeper understanding of the issues addressed. The main source of secondary information was internal documents, such as training materials for the employees. These internal documents were provided by Department of Human Resource Management at Sberbank, Krasnoyarsk. Some secondary information were also accessed through Sberbank's homepage.

There is an issue with reliability when obtaining information from the subject of the study, but since the information is unavailable elsewhere it had to be acquired from Sberbank. The secondary information is, however, very factual in nature and is mainly used to confirm primary data.

### **Data Analysis**

Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS) software version 21.0 was used to analyze the field data that were collected by survey questionnaires. SPSS is important software for entry and analysis of the data collected (Dennis & Dowsell, 2013). However, qualitative data collected were analyzed by descriptive methods with QDA Miner Lite.

## **DISCUSSION**

Employing a variety of management methods most notably Total Quality Management, Global Sourcing, Virtual Organizations, Co-Design, Human Resource Management, Concurrent Engineering, Corporate Culture, Extended Enterprise Management, Systems Integration and Centralized Treasury Management are very important in managing language perspective. The performance benefits of these systems are indisputable (John, Ietto-Gillies, Cox & Grimwade, 1997) [4]. For example, Total Quality Management has enabled multinational companies to improve product and process quality enhancing company economics and customer satisfaction in tandem, Global Sourcing allows companies to balance trade, hedge exchange rate risks and to buy materials at “world-best” prices. Centralized Treasury Management has allowed companies to slash stock levels and minimize obsolescence while Concurrent Engineering and Co-Design have greatly shortened time-to-market spans and have improved product design by leveraging the know-how of suppliers and production engineers (Lehman-Wilzig, 2001) [5].

However, whilst it is easy to understand that co-ordination is a key source of competitive advantage, it is equally undeniable that such co-ordination makes global communication capability a prerequisite for success. According to Spinks and Wells (1997) [11], Physical distance makes effective communication necessary and cultural distance makes effective global communication essential. (Spinks & Wells, 1997) [11]. As a palliative, companies have invested heavily in the tools of modern-day communication. Global intranets, video-conferencing, e-mail networks, global integration of IT systems and workflow technologies have all contributed to making information flows faster, easier and more secure. However, these tools just like their less technologically advanced predecessors, literally breaks down when language is a serious barrier (Lehman-Wilzig, 2001) [5].

### **Project’s potential contribution**



At the end of the research project, it was discovered that management of language perspectives on an international career in Sberbank is very useful in the sense that. First, it helps expatriates to communicate very well with other colleagues at job without difficulties. Secondly, it also enhances the performance of expatriates as they are able to interact with anybody they come in contact with. Third, it also helps the expatriates to carry other duties that has to do with language. Doing another research in the proposed area will help build capacity language issues, develop skills in teaching and research to contribute to the discourse on the identification and analysis of language perspective in Sberbank.

Again, this project has helped to reveal the understanding of managing language perspectives on an international career in Sberbank. Findings from the project have added to existing knowledge and literature in the field of language management. Furthermore, it has deepens the importance of understanding using English as the corporative language to reduce language barriers in the MNCs, especially in Russia. Finally, it has brought to fore the different kinds of international assignments context in Sberbank of Russia.

## **Conclusion**

The management of language perspectives on an international career in the MNCs especially Sberbank of Russia requires a comprehensive and strategic research. However, how to achieve this and also just what form this might take has been limited. This project has contributed immensely to managing the language perspectives on an international career in the Sberbank of Russia using English as the corporate language for people and serve as source of knowledge for others who have interest in international language studies. Moreover, it has built the capacity of the international office Sberbank.

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