

INADEQUATE USE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EXPERT TERMS IN MANAGEMENT

Marija Runic Ristic

*College of Business Administration, American University in the Emirates,
Dubai, UAE*

Abstract: *Management is relatively new and unexplored field in this part of the world economy. Thus, the professional language of human resource management itself is largely undefined. The vocabulary of management found in referent texts in English is abundant with euphemisms and idioms. That is one of the reasons why these words cannot be adequately translated into Serbian. The authors have researched the level of inadequacy in use of foreign language expert terms in Serbian. The acquaintance with the certain number of foreign language expert terms has been examined among students of management. Finally, the authors have suggested how to standardise the vocabulary of management terms used in Serbian.*

Keywords: *Management, language management, foreign language expert terms*

1. INTRODUCTION

Given that the number of people who use the English language increased significantly in the last 50 years we can say that the English language received the status of “lingua franca” in particular in the fields of economics, management and finance. In the Serbian language in recent years there emerged a multitude of foreign technical terms in particular in the field that have their roots in the English-speaking world, and that are mostly developed there, such as marketing, management, human resources management, etc.

In this paper, we dealt with terminological ambiguity in using foreign experts terms in management. In the paper we present the results of an empirical study of knowledge of foreign technical terms in management students. For the purposes of this study, we selected a number of terms the knowledge of which was analyzed with the management students.

2. RESEARCH OF KNOWLEDGE OF FOREIGN EXPERT TERMS OF MANAGEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

2.1 *Subject, problem, goal, objectives and hypotheses of the research*

The subject of this work is the empirical study of knowledge of foreign terms in management with management students.

Further, the problem in this paper is to show that in order to complete the process of professionalization of managers as well as the appropriate use of intellectual capital it is necessary to build an accurate professional language of communication in this area.

This paper sets the following objectives:

- to emphasize the importance of proper use of foreign terms
- To determine the actual current state of knowledge of the meanings of foreign concepts of management with students of management;
- to develop a proposal for standardization of terminology in the field of management, which would contribute to more efficient professionalism of managers.

The aim of this study is to investigate the causal link between the lack of development of professional managers language and the use of foreign terms in this scientific discipline.

Based on the previously formulated research subject, tasks and research objectives, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

1. Students of management variously translate the terms of management resulting in potential mutual incomprehension.
2. In our language there has not been built a precise professional language of management which has resulted in the use of foreign words.

2.2. *Research description*

Collecting of data for empirical research “knowledge of meaning of foreign concepts of management in students of management” has been done with the testing technique. The instrument with which the management students were tested contained 36 questions. Of these 21 questions were related to the basic information about the respondent and his views on the use of foreign terms in everyday life, business communication, etc., while 15 questions were related to the actual knowledge of foreign terms with the surveyed students. The following terms were tested: “Absenteeism”, “Collective bargaining”, “Blackleg”, “Brain drain”, “Chief executive officer”, “Labour market”, “Incentive system”, “Performance appraisal”, “Job specification”, “Recruitment”, “Trade union”, “Redundancy”, “Burn-out”, “Labour turnover”, “Brand”, “Trade mark”, “Public relations”.

Questions that were related to the terms: “Absenteeism”, “Collective bargaining”, “Blackleg”, “Brain drain”, “Chief executive officer”, “Labour market”, “incentive system”, “Performance appraisal”, “Job specification”, “Recruitment”, “Trade union”, “Redundancy”, “Burn-out”, “Labour turnover” were closed questions, and students were offered translations, of which only one was correct, and they were supposed to circle the translation, which they considered to be correct. Questions pertaining to the terms “Brand”, “Trade mark”, “Public relations” were open questions, i.e. students were asked either to translate them or to leave in them in their original form.

2.3. Organization and flow of research

The survey was conducted in April and May 2016. The research was conducted at the Faculty of Management (FAM) and the Faculty of Legal and Business Studies in Novi Sad, the students of the 3rd 4th years were tested, as well as graduate students. The sample consisted of 102 students, of which 39 students from the Faculty of Law and Business and 63 students from the Faculty of Management (FAM). The instrument with which students were tested contained 36 questions, of which 21 questions pertained to the basic information about the respondent and his views on the use of foreign terms in everyday life, business communication, etc., while the 15 questions were related to the actual knowledge of foreign terms with the surveyed students.

2.4. Results of research

Since the subject of this research relates to the use of foreign terms in management, and the term “foreign” refers exclusively to English, within the basic data we have also questioned their success in the subject English in secondary education. The data we received show that more than half (60.8%) of respondents had excellent grades in the English language, 32.4% very good and only 6.9% good.

The importance of English language skills for a career in management is unquestionable. A large number of foreign terms are used in the original sense therefore future managers need a sound knowledge of English. Respondents were asked to assess their knowledge of English. The vast majority of respondents (82.4%) estimates that they can read English, while the number of students that can use texts written in other languages is much smaller.

In order to examine the attitude of management students towards the use of foreign terms, we asked them “to what extent the terminology learned during their studies is comprehensible to them.” The vast majority of students surveyed (68.6%) finds the terminology learned in college while studying completely understandable while the number of students who find the terminology incomprehensible is negligible (2%).

To determine the openness and the closure of the surveyed students we asked them how long it takes to start using a foreign term. We got the answer that the majority of students (56.9%) start using foreign term immediately or possibly within a month after their adoption. Such answers suggest a relatively high receptivity of respondents to foreign terms, or lack of resistance to them. Also, most of the surveyed students considered that the foreign terms in business communication are used in medium (48%) or a lot (37.3%), while only 15% think that they are used only little or not at all.

In the part of the test where we wanted to establish the accurate current state of knowledge of the meanings of foreign terms used in management by the students of management, we came to the following results.

The term “Absenteeism” was adequately translated by 80% of the surveyed students, and almost 12% of students did not answer this question.

The term “Collective bargain” is less known to our respondents, therefore only a little less than 30% of them adequately translated this term while 46% of students surveyed thought that this was collective bargaining, which is an attempt at literal translation of English terms that often may be the cause of misunderstandings.

Regarding the concept of “Blackleg” the situation is as follows: 60% of respondents ad-

adequately translates the term “Blackleg”, a quarter of students surveyed (25%) translates it as “worker” or “supervisor”. No less than 17.6% of respondents did not even try to translate this term. This outcome leads to the conclusion that more than half of the students are familiar with this term.

The term “Brain-drain” was adequately translated by 43% of the surveyed students. It is interesting to note that up to a quarter of respondents (25.5%) the term translates as “brain-washing”, which is again an attempt at literal translation that could lead to major misunderstandings in business communication.

The term “Chief executive officer” (CEO) is very often encountered both in technical books in management and textbooks for business English which is an essential course in each faculty which deals with management. However, less than half of the students (43%) had translated this term adequately. Probably this result is a consequence of inadequate translation of the term “Chief executive officer” in individual business vocabularies, where one can meet translations such as chairman of the board, president of the organization, the owner of the organization, etc. Such inconsistency and inaccuracy in translation can lead to major misunderstandings in communication.

Slightly less than half of respondents (48%) properly translates the term “Labour market” as “market of labour”, while 40.2% of students surveyed translates as “stock market”, “employment service” and “green market”. Of 40.2% of students who mistranslated the term only 4.95% literally translated it as “green market”.

Even poorer knowledge the students showed in relation to the term “incentive system”. This is evidenced by the fact that just over 40% of respondents adequately translated this term as a “plan to stimulate employees,” 39.3% of respondents inadequately translated it as a plan to motivate, reward, or to pay employees, and no less than 19.6% of the surveyed students did not even attempt to translate it. Such a poor result is probably due to the fact that in our literature this term is rarely to be found in its original form, i.e. in most cases the authors translate it. Accordingly, on the basis of this result, we can conclude that the vast majority of students is not in the habit of using foreign literature.

Slightly more than half of the students surveyed (56.9%) adequately translates the term “Performance appraisal”, while 27.5% of respondents inadequately translates as “employee performance” or “control of work.”

The vast majority of respondents (73.5%) is well acquainted with the term “Job specification” as a “job description”. Such a good result can be attributed to the fact that in our literature they are used interchangeably, both the term “job specification” and “job description” in the same sense.

Surveyed students properly translated the term “Recruitment”, so that more than half of respondents (63.7%) adequately translated the term “Recruitment” as recruitment of human resources.

However, the surveyed students are obviously not familiar with the term “Trade union”. Just over a quarter of respondents (26.5%) translates the term “trade union” as “the union of workers”, while 42.2% of students surveyed tried to literally translate it as “trade association”. This is another proof that the tested students do not use foreign literature in the English language.

Almost 64% of students surveyed adequately translated the term “Burn-out”. However, a small number of respondents (37.3%) correctly translates the term “Labour turnover”, but

even 45.1% tried to translate it literally. This result is also an indicator of insufficient use of foreign literature, foreign professional journals, etc.

We encountered a similar result when we analyzed how the participants translated the term “Brand”. Specifically, 32.4% of students surveyed adequately translated the term “Brand”, but on the other hand a very large percentage of students (35.3%) transcribed (brend) this term, i.e. did not translate it. This result is hardly surprising if one takes into account that in everyday speech and through the media, this term is used in transcribed form as we often hear expressions such as the best brand, branding Serbia, etc.

Unlike the previous two terms, more than half of respondents (66.7%) correctly translated the term “Trade mark”, while only 2% of respondents left the term in its original form.

Although in the last decade there is a widespread use of the term PR (public relations) instead of the translation of this term that means “relations with public”, the vast majority of respondents (78.4%) had properly translated it. We must however mention that not one student left this phrase in the English form.

Table 1: Terms ranked in relation to the percentage of respondents who properly translated them

Terms	% of correct translation
Absenteeism	80.39%
Public relations	78.43%
Job specification	73.53%
Trade mark	66.67%
Recruitment	63.73%
Burn-out	63.73%
Blackleg	56.86%
Performance appraisal	56.86%
Labour market	48.04%
Brain drain	43.14%
Chief executive officer (CEO)	43.14%
Redundancy	42.16%
Incentive system	41.18%
Labour turnover	37.25%
Brand	32.35%
Collective bargaining	29.41%
Trade union	26.47%

Table 2: Terms ranked in relation to the percentage of respondents who did not even try to translate them¹

Termin	% ispitanika koji nisu odgovorili
Incentive system	19.61%
Blackleg	17.65%
Performance appraisal	15.69%
Recruitment	15.69%
Trade union	14.71%
Collective bargaining	13.73%
Redundancy	13.73%
Burn-out	13.73%
Labour turnover	12.75%
Absenteeism	11.76%
Brain drain	11.76%
Labour market	11.76%
Chief executive officer (CEO)	10.78%
Job specification	10.78%

Since the goal of our study was to determine knowledge of foreign professional terms with the management students we asked them for their opinion on whether foreign terms should be translated into Serbian. In their answers to this question respondents were polarized. Slightly more than half of the students interviewed consider that expert terms should be used in their original form, while slightly less than half believe that they should be translated.

We wanted to determine through statistical analysis whether there is a connection between the attitude towards the student's possible translation of foreign terms in Serbian language and their knowledge of the same. The data showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the understanding of the meaning of foreign terms among students who believe that professional foreign words should be translated and those who believe that they should be used in their original form. From a total of 17 terms whose translation we asked for the average number of correct translation for students who believe that foreign

¹ The table does not include the terms "brand, trade mark, public relations," since the participants had to write a translation of these words, so the percentage of those who did not respond is higher

technical terms should be translated is 8.76, while for students who believe that terminology should be used in its original form is 9.09.

Although between these two groups of students regarding any of the surveyed term there are no differences large enough to meet the criteria for statistical significance, it is interesting to note that students who felt that foreign technical terms should be translated to a greater extent adequately translated the terms "Labour market", "Redundacy", "Brain-drain" and "Trade union". This is a very interesting fact considering that a large number of students did not know exactly the meaning of the term "Labour market", "Brain-drain" and "Trade union" so therefore they translated them literally.

Students who believe that by foreign expert terms should be translated a little better (52.38%) translated the concept of "Brain-drain" in relation to students who claim that foreign technical terms should not be translated (40%).

Regarding the translation of the term "Labour market" situation is in many ways similar to the translation of the concept of "Brain-drain". Namely, in this case there is little difference in the knowledge of translation between a group of students who considered that foreign expert terms should be translated (59.52%) and the group that feels that they should not be translated (40%).

As we could see in previous analyzes the students are not familiar with the meaning of the term "Trade union". We got similar results in this analysis too because less than half of students who think that foreign technical terms should be translated (30.95%) and only 23, 64% of those who believe that foreign technical terms should be left in their original form properly translated this term.

Given that the analysis of the real knowledge of foreign expressions in students of management gave us the result that a significant number of respondents (32.4%) thought that the expression "Redundacy" means firing workers, which is a wrong interpretation, we are not surprised by the fact that more than half of the students who argue that foreign technical terms should be translated (52.38%) and those who believe that they should be left in its original form (61.82%) incorrectly translated the term "Redundacy".

Although we found no statistically significant differences in the understanding of the meaning of foreign terms among students who believe that professional foreign words should be translated and those who believe that they should be used in its original form, we came to the result that the average number of correct translations was a little higher in students who believe that the terminology should be used in its original form. From this result we can conclude that students who believe that foreign technical terms should be left in their original form have a relatively good command of the English language and are aware of the fact that in our literature technical terms still, to a large extent, are not translated properly. On the other hand, it is interesting that the students who think that the foreign expert terms should be translated to a greater extent adequately translated terms ("Labour market", "Brain-drain" and "Trade union"), which a large number of students literally translated, or did not know the translation.

In order to test knowledge of foreign terms and the ratio of students towards foreign terms we asked them for their opinion to what extent the foreign are adequately translated in the national literature. It was found that there were statistically significant differences (at the level of $p = 0.00$) between the group of students who are convinced that foreign terms in scientific literature are translated adequately and in a group that is not sure in relation to

the total number of correct translations. From a total of 17 terms which were translated the average number of correct translation for a group of students who considers that the terms are adequately translated pages is 9.90, while the average number of correct translation for a group of students that are not sure of it is just 7.67.

Statistically significant differences between the two groups exist only in the number of students who correctly translated the terms "Chief executive officer (CEO)," "Incentive system", "Recruitment" and "Trade mark".

More than half of students who feel that foreign terms are adequately translated in the professional literature (60.38%) correctly translated the term "Chief executive officer (CEO)", while only 24.49% of students who are not sure that foreign terms are appropriately translated in professional literature properly translated this term.

As with the previous concept, also in the case of the term "Incentive system" more than half of the students who are sure that foreign terms are adequately translated in domestic literature (50.94%) showed that they know the meaning of this term. In contrast to this group of students, with the group of students that is not sure that the translations of foreign terms in our literature are adequate only 30.61% of them are familiar with the meaning of the term "Incentive system".

Regarding the translation of the term "Recruitment" more than half of the students, both the group that believes that foreign technical terms are translated adequately in the national literature and the group that is not sure of it, are familiar with the meaning of this term.

A similar situation as with the concept of "Recruitment" is with the term "Trade mark", where 75.47% of students who think that foreign terms are translated adequately in the national literature, and 57.14% of those who are not sure of it properly translated this term.

Although statistically significant differences between the two groups exist only in the number of students who properly translated the terms "Chief executive officer (CEO)," "Incentive system", "Recruitment" and "Trade mark", it can be noted that students who feel that foreign terms are correctly translated in professional literature as a whole better know the meaning of foreign terms. Probably this result indicates that students who consider that foreign words are adequately translated in domestic literature use more both domestic and foreign literature and are thus better acquainted with foreign professional terms.

Since in this study we selected young people who are in the process of socialization for the profession manager, we asked them for their opinion on whether a business man must know a foreign language. We got the following answers: 41.2% of students believe that it is important that business people nowadays speak English, 34.3% think it is important for business people to know more foreign languages, 23.5% of respondents believe that for business people it is important to know at least one of world languages.

We found that there were statistically significant differences (at the level of $p = 0.05$) in the total number of correct translation between these three groups of students.

The average number of correct translations for the group of students who considered it sufficient for business people today to know at least one foreign language (6.79) is significantly lower than the average of the groups who believe that business people need to know the English language (9.57) or several foreign languages (9.60).

From this result we can conclude that students who have become aware of the fact that today's successful manager must know at least English and preferably also several languages,

already started to improve themselves in this direction and have largely mastered the English language .

The degree of socialization of managerial profession is shown also by the knowledge of the efficiency of management. Since valid communication is one of the basic prerequisites for increasing management efficiency, we decided to examine the students about whether the proper use of foreign terms affects the efficiency of management. The answers we received show that the vast majority of students (84.3%) believe that the proper use of foreign terms affects the efficiency of the operation. Only 3.9% of tested students believe that the proper use of foreign terms does not affect the efficiency, 8.8% of students are not sure of the answer, and 2.9% of students did not answer this question.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that both the first and second hypothesis have been confirmed.

The research results point to the fact that, as soon as possible, terminology in management to at least some extent should be standardized. In order to improve the standardization of the foreign scientific and technical terminology it is necessary first of all to establish a working body which would be tasked to draw up the rules by which to standardize the existing terms and introduce new terms. This body would primarily have the task of deciding whether it is better to keep a new term in its original form, or it is better to find a Serbian equivalent. If it is decided that technical terms should remain in their original form it is necessary first of all to draw up the rules by which the English term will be implemented in the Serbian language.

Further, in order to standardize the scientific and expert terminology in management it is necessary to create a valid glossary in this field. The reasons that lead us to the conclusion about the necessity of creating a glossary which would include adequate translation of foreign technical terms in the field of management in the Serbian language are three-fold:

- First, the existence of a valid glossary with precisely translated foreign expert management terms, would reduce mutual misunderstanding, and even certain conflict situations of the participants in the working processes and, consequently, lead to better management of human resources, and directing human capital and more efficient use of relational capital in order to achieve competitive advantages of both the companies and the Serbian society as a whole and our competent inclusion in modern European and world trends - practical-functional aspect.
- Second, in order to build and develop a scientific discipline Management in the Serbian language, it is important, in addition to defining the object of study and determination of the development of scientific methods, to establish a categorization, and scientific terminology for this scientific field in the Serbian language - scientific aspect.
- Third, the need for preservation and development of our language is important from the standpoint of fostering cultural heritage (a language is one of the most important elements of culture), which significantly reduces the risk of loss of cultural identity of our people - the cultural aspect.

REFERENCES

- [1] Andrews D., Andrewes W. (2004), *Management communication*, New York
- [2] Begović, B., (1996), Prevođenje novih termina ekonomske nauke: slučaj konte-stabilnosti, u: Vinaver, N. *et al.* (ur.): *Standardizacija terminologije*, str.207-210, Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti
- [3] Benton, D. (1998), *Applied Human Relations: An Organizational and Skill Deve-lopment Approach*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New Jersey
- [4] Brown, R. (1975), *Language*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston
- [5] Drajdén G., Vos J. (2004), *Revolucija u učenju: kako promeniti način na koji svet uči*, Timgraf, Beograd
- [6] Kreč D., Kračfild R., (1976), *Elementi psihologije*, Naučna knjiga, Beograd
- [7] Mandić T. (2003), *Komunikologija*, Clio, Beograd
- [8] Petković M., Janićijević N., Bogićević-Milkić B., (2006), *Organizacija*, Centar za izdavačku delatnost, Ekonomski fakultet, Beograd
- [9] Prčić, T., (2005), *Engleski u srpskom*, Zmaj, Novi Sad
- [10] Ristić D. i saradnici, (2005), *Osnovi menadžmenta*, Cekom books, Novi Sad,
- [11] Ristić I. (2007), *Provera znanja pomoću sistema za obrazovanje na daljinu*, magi-starski rad, Fakultet za menadžment, Univezitet Privredna akademija
- [12] Rot, N. (2004), *Znakovi i značenja: Verbalna i neverbalna komunikacija*, Plato, Beograd
- [13] Runić M.(2007), *Korišćenje stranih izraza u menadžmentu ljudskih resursa kao element intelektualnog kapitala organizacije*, magistarski rad, Fakultet za menadžment, Univezitet Privredna akademija
- [14] Silaški, N., (2009), *Ka standardizaciji terminologije u oblasti marketinga i menadžmenta*, *Ekonomске teme*, XLVII, br.3, str.111-125
- [15] Stevanović, B.(1978), *Pedagoška psihologija*, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sred-stva, Beograd
- [16] Tomić Z., (2003), *Komunikologija*, Čigoja, Beograd
- [17] Torrington D., Hall L., Taylor S., (2004), *Menadžment ljudskih resursa*, Data sta-tus, Beograd
- [18] Zaključak br. 10 Odbora za standardizaciju srpskog jezika (O prevođenju marke-tinške terminologije),(1999), *Jezik danas*, godina III, broj 10, Novi Sad