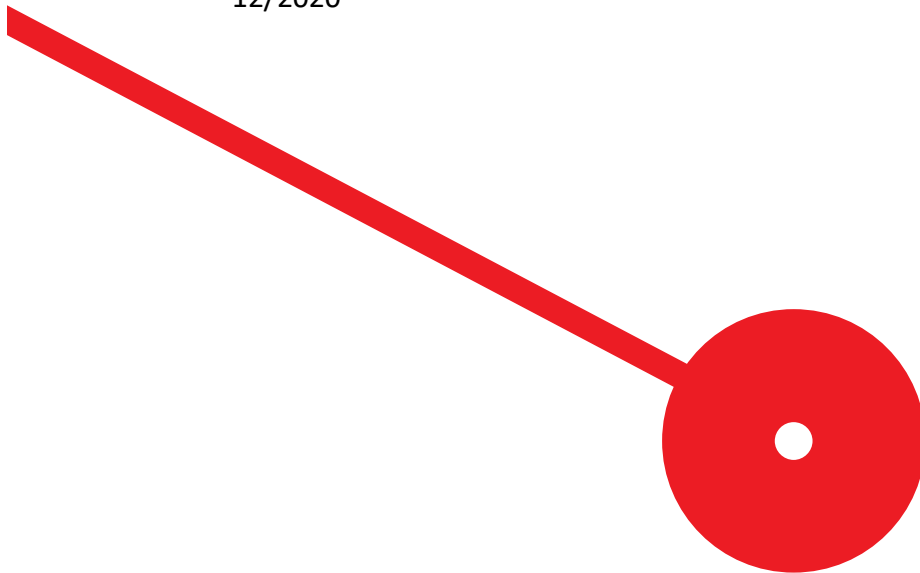




Sewing threads: Intercultural strategies in an international fashion company to transfer corporate culture and knowledge

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Evelyn MOLINA RODRIGUEZ

Internship Report

submitted to the Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto for the Master's degree in Intercultural Studies for Business, supervised by Dr. Alexandra Albuquerque

Disclosure and Legal Information

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Abstract

This internship report analyzes the intercultural activities carried out at a French fashion company from March to August 2020 in the scope of the internship of the Master's in Intercultural Studies for Business. The purpose of this internship report is to describe the specific intercultural needs of the Learning & Development Department of MNC France and propose the most suitable communication strategies for the team. The phenomenon studied is the communication challenges faced by the L&D Department in the French headquarters to keep appropriate knowledge transfer with subsidiary partners. The main internship activities focused on translation, including the design of a translation project. Secondary assignments also included remote interpretation at international meetings and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) support for the department. The analysis and data collection were based in participant observation, as we could access to information and daily activities of the company. The intercultural strategies proposed can be stated as plans to reach effective corporate communication and knowledge transfer.

Keywords: interculturality, project management, corporate culture, communication, language, translation, training, human resources, CAT tools, ESP, interpreting

Resumo

Este relatório de estágio analisa as actividades interculturais realizadas numa empresa de moda francesa de Março a Agosto de 2020 no âmbito do estágio do Mestrado em Estudos Interculturais para Negócios. O objectivo deste relatório de estágio é descrever as necessidades interculturais específicas do Departamento de Learning & Development do MNC France e propor as estratégias de comunicação mais adequadas para a equipa. O fenómeno estudado são os desafios de comunicação enfrentados pelo Departamento de L&D na sede francesa para manter uma adequada transferência de conhecimentos com parceiros subsidiários. As principais actividades de estágio centraram-se na tradução, incluindo a concepção de um projecto de tradução. As tarefas secundárias incluíram também a interpretação à distância em reuniões internacionais e o apoio ao departamento de Inglês para Fins Específicos (ESP). A análise e a recolha de dados basearam-se na observação dos participantes, uma vez que pudemos aceder à informação e às actividades diárias da empresa. As estratégias interculturais propostas podem ser declaradas como planos para alcançar uma comunicação empresarial eficaz e a transferência de conhecimentos.

Palavras-chave: interculturalidade, gestão de projetos, cultura corporativa, comunicação, língua, tradução, formação, recursos humanos, ferramentas de tradução, ESP, interpretação

Résumé

Ce rapport de stage analyse les activités interculturelles menées dans une entreprise de mode française de mars à août 2020 dans le cadre du stage inscrit au Master Intercultural Studies for Business. L'objectif de ce rapport de stage est de décrire les besoins interculturels spécifiques du département Learning & Development de MNC France et de proposer les stratégies de communication les plus adaptées à l'équipe. Le phénomène étudié est le défi de communication auquel est confronté le département L&D de la maison-mère française pour maintenir un transfert de connaissances approprié avec les partenaires des filiales. Les principales activités du stage se sont concentrées sur la traduction, y compris la conception d'un projet de traduction. Les missions secondaires comprenaient également l'interprétation à distance lors de réunions internationales et le soutien de l'anglais à des fins spécifiques (ESP) pour le département. L'analyse et la collecte de données ont été basées sur l'observation des participants, car nous avons pu accéder aux informations et aux activités quotidiennes de l'entreprise. Les stratégies interculturelles proposées peuvent être énoncées comme des plans pour parvenir à une communication d'entreprise et à un transfert de connaissances efficaces

Mots clés : interculturalité, gestion de projets, culture d'entreprise, communication, langue, traduction, formation, ressources humaines, outils de traduction, ESP, interprétation

« Il n'y a pas de mode si elle ne descend pas dans la rue. »

Coco Chanel

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List of Abbreviations

CAT: Computer-assisted translation

CCL: Common Corporate Language

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CPF: *Compte Personnel de Formation* (Professional Training Account)

EGP: English for General Purposes

ESL: English as a Second Language

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

IFM: *Institut Français de la Mode* (French Fashion Institute)

IT: Information Technology

L&D: Learning and Development

MNC: Multinational Company

MT: Machine Translation

ROI: Return on investment

SARS: Severe acute respiratory syndrome

TM: Translation memory (TM)

WHO: World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

It is now impossible to stay out of globalization, which reaches different aspects of our lives. As communication with virtually any person in the world gets easier, it is also easy to forget that not all individuals can be addressed in the same language and manners, especially in a professional environment, where ineffective communications can have wider repercussions. Communication is of paramount importance in the worldwide business activities in the twenty-first century (Belyaeva & Rubtsova, 2020). Literature shows that professional relationships which are not effectively developed can indeed impact the overall performance of a company. However, there is less information about the impact of wrongful communication and even less publications about strategies and solutions (Harzing & Pudelko, 2014).

This report aims to be part of that academic discussion and presents the case study of MNC France¹, a fashion company specialized in family clothing, with headquarters in France and subsidiaries all over the European continent. Since 2020, their latest organizational structure demanded higher interaction between departments from subsidiaries and headquarters. This same year, their Learning & Development Department (also known by the company as L&D) found itself in the need of translating several learning supports for the international subsidiaries. These supports went from several documents to online interactive material for training.

The members of this department had already other important missions mostly involving local or country needs (subsidiaries). Therefore, they decided to call for an internship position in translation. The total duration of the internship, without counting the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions in France (1.1.2.3), was of six months. This was then a personal opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge on the matter. The main task or mission during this internship was to respond to the new translation demand, but also to prepare the team for the future demands by creating a translation project that could answer to their expectations without recurring to a third party (such as external translation services).

However, during this period, other questions arrived related to the increased international interaction of the team. By this increasement of coordination with

¹ Upon request of the company, its real name has been kept anonymous.

subsidiaries, the L&D Department, formed by a majority of monolingual French native speakers, found itself in the conundrum of attending international meetings. It was imperative, therefore, to find a quick solution to this matter and, at the same time, propose a long-term solution. In line with Luo and Shenkar (2006), the use of language at work went from an operative issue to a strategic concern.

This is when we realized that the internationalization of the L&D Department was not exclusively a translation issue, but a strategic one, which needed to be put in place to create an effective communication. For this, we formulated three proposals set to achieve cultural openness² and further communication between the international members of the L&D Department. To achieve this cultural openness, this study regroups, under the name of “intercultural strategies,” all the proposals used to break the sudden language barriers and help the team “climb the Tower of Babel.”

Our professional experience in translation and different linguistic backgrounds influence the choice of this topic. We believe that the study of multilingual realities opens a neglected opportunity for reflection. Likewise, one of the motivations for writing this work is to reflect on methods to decrease language barriers, as people who work daily using a foreign language have potential (but undervalued) resources who are lost under inappropriate communication management. We consider that intercultural strategies are relevant for the proper development of a multinational company.

The aim of this internship report is to describe the specific intercultural needs of the Learning & Development Department of MNC France with the purpose of proposing the most suitable communication strategies for the team. We access to information of the L&D Department in French headquarters through participant observation and linguistic auditing (Belyaeva & Rubtsova, 2020). To gather information from subsidiary members, we conducted an exploratory survey. Once we defined the main needs of the L&D Department, we proposed three strategies to prepare them for international and intercultural interaction using the following strategies: an internal

² We understand cultural openness as a set of abilities and cultural knowledge required for a person to engage in meaningful interactions with people of different national and organizational cultures (Haghirian, 2011).

translation project, practice of English conversation workshops, and remote interpreting during international meetings.

The structure of this report tries to express the dynamics of the multilingual reality of this workplace, which is why we are based on a multidisciplinary approach (Angouri & Piekkari, 2018). The first chapter, Company Profiles and Policies, introduces us to an analysis of MNC France under several but collaborative areas. It starts with the economic context and the particularities of the COVID-19 crisis in the company, followed by the management style and its performance in an intercultural environment. This same chapter also analyses the corporate communication perspective of the company, where we found general considerations on language, knowledge transfer, and the importance of terminology.

After doing this theoretical analysis of the company, we include in Chapter Two a proposal of three intercultural strategies to be implemented in the L&D Department. To do this, we begin with a description of the needs communicated by this department. Then, the following sections of this second chapter detail every intercultural strategy proposed. The first strategy, the proposal of an Internal Translation Service, was the core of our propositions, as we began this internship focusing the translation missions of the company.

Along with this first strategy, there was a later discussion with the members of the L&D Department in headquarters where we found other related needs to intercultural communication. Therefore, two additional proposals were presented and included in the second chapter of this report. The second strategy, named Application of English for Specific Purposes Practices, presents the conversation workshops and resources used to improve the English skills of the L&D Department members in headquarters. The third strategy proposed deals with remote interpreting to ensure proper understanding of L&D members from headquarters and subsidiaries during international meetings. Finally, the last chapter of this report is focused on the assessments resulting from this internship experience.

CHAPTER I – COMPANY PROFILE AND POLICIES

1.1.Presentation of the Company

MNC France's main activity is fashion retail. Their main strategy over decades has been to offer affordable products to a wide range of customer profiles. This market segmentation includes clothing for all family, with a line including pregnancy, baby, children, juniors, and adults (with sizes from Slim to Plus).

In this section we will discuss the main aspects of MNC France to better understand its international context.

1.1.1. Economic Performance

As MNC France headquarters are also located in the French territory, this section will focus on the national economic situation, specifically on the fashion sector. We will chronologically address the economic performance of the last quarter of 2019, followed by the current world economic crisis, started at the second quarter of 2020, and its impact on the company.

1.1.1.1. Profile of the French Fashion and Luxury Sector

It is a common agreement to consider France as one of the World's leading players in fashion and luxury (Djelic & Ainamo, 1999; Pouillard, 2013). History tells us that, as a matter of fact, *la mode* emerged in the 1840s as a feminine noun, replacing the masculine article derived from Latin. In this respect, there is a correlation between emergence of the French word for fashion and the rise of the haute couture industry in France in the middle of the 19th century. Most of all, the term *la mode* is associated with the concept of modernity and urban life (Skov & Melchior, 2008, p. 4). Because of its position as a leading actor, the latest economic influences of the French fashion and luxury sector are constantly documented by the *Ministère de l'économie, des Finances et de la Relance* and the strategic contract for the sector is registered by several divisions in the Ministry.

According to the National Industry Council (Conseil National de l'Industrie, 2018), the luxury and fashion markets experienced strong growth rates in the last years, driven by the development of brands and international brands. In the fashion business, a fourth of global sales in the world are made by French companies. This means €154 billion direct sales and €37,5 billion in added value. Likewise, the sector contributes positively to the trade balance as it has presence in 180 countries. With more than 500 000 direct jobs

and 1 million indirect jobs in France, the sector provides a significant employment source.

The national consumer market remained considerable. As it is pointed in the French strategic plan for 2019-2022, fashion is the second largest consumer market worth €64 billion, including €41.2 billion for the clothing, textiles, footwear, and accessories sector. It is only behind the food industry (€159 billion) but ahead of vehicle purchases (€41 billion). The sector is also becoming digital, with more than 13% of purchases made online. Furthermore, the sector presented positive margins, with an average growth 4 to 5% per year. (Conseil National de l'Industrie, 2018)

As the fashion business is an important economic sector in France, the *Direction Générale des Entreprises* also presents an annual report about the market situation of the fashion and luxury business in the country and their impact. Their latest report (Direction générale des Entreprises, 2019) considered that the fashion sector was constantly growing in the world. In the French territory, there are more than 3,000 ready-to-wear (*prêt-à-porter*, PAP) and high fashion houses. Their know-how is mainly focused on creation even if the design remains strategic for the big houses. Although the purchase of materials is mainly controlled in the houses, most of the manufacturing is outsourced, totally or partially, abroad, while the major brands have kept small workshops for high fashion. These general cases are in line with MNC France's case, as the collection are designed in France, then sent to manufacture by their supplier partners, located in several countries of the Asian continent.

1.1.2. Economic Impact of COVID-19

Despite last year predictions, in 2020 the fashion industry is not going as expected. Naturally, nobody thought of the risk factors of a pandemic affecting the world as we know it today. As it is conventionally known nowadays, this virus from the SARS family causing respiratory conditions has been officially labelled as COVID-19 by the World Health Organization (WHO). The new information about this disease increases every day, whereas research gather more data on transmission and its route all around the world (Almousawi, 2020).

1.1.2.1. General considerations

It has been scientifically proved that social distancing is one of the most important preventive measures against the spread of COVID-19, as prolonged person-to-person

contact increases the risks of contamination through air or surfaces (Srivastav & Nath, 2020). In consequence, other recommended measures included massive sanitation and immediate country lockdowns (Directorate-General for Communication of the European Commission, 2020).

As several countries took restrictive measures to prevent the collapse of the health systems and, therefore, save lives, the COVID-19 pandemic also affected the functioning of globalized supply chains (Pache, 2020). Because of the quarantine enforcements, there has been an increased change towards online shopping. This rising trend might induce change in the delivery sector as well. Nevertheless, it also could provoke cuts of personnel in retail outlets (Ceylan, Ozkan, & Mulazimogullari, 2020). In the world, work environments have been adapted to follow the preventive measures, such as access restriction, contact tracking in case of suspicion cases, and remote working for support services (Proches, Taylor, & Chinniah, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has inflicted a crisis in several spheres of life, including economic and social. The predictions for the following months showed several scenarios; however, due to the complexity of this pandemic, several researches were still in process. It has been demonstrated, though, that even a contained outbreak could impact the global economy for the following years and the world is still far to find a definitive economic adjustment (McKibbin & Fernando, 2020).

1.1.2.2. COVID-19 and the French Fashion Sector

Specifically speaking of the French fashion sector, Gildas Minvielle, the director of the Economic Observatory of the *Institut Français de la Mode* (IFM) declared on the Fashion Network Magazine that even the scholars in fashion economics were not ready to analyze this current situation, by stating:

This scenario represents a real break in the market trend, [...] it is a perilous and very delicate exercise because we have never experienced this before. But in these uncertain times, it is important to set benchmarks. The whole sector is waiting for them. (Deslandes, 2020)

We can also find in Deslandes (2020) that the scholars of the IFM communicated that they were working to make an initial estimate of what the 2020 balance sheet of the textile and clothing industry in France could look like. In this vertiginous context, the IFM considers three scenarios:

- The most confident assumption is a 17% decline in overall sales for the current year. This implies that sales in the second half of the year will fully recover to the level reached in the same period in 2019. This would therefore be a rapid recovery.
- The second option considers a middle point, which would be the "most likely" scenario according to the IFM. This is the assumption of a "more gradual return to consumption", which assumes that the second half of 2020 would be 5% lower in value terms than the second half of 2019. This would lead to an overall decline of 20% for the year 2020.
- Finally, the pessimistic version implies a 25% drop in the annual sales of fashion players in France, in all distribution channels combined. "This scenario represents a real break in the market trend," warns the MFI. With consumption in the second half of 2020 down sharply, compared to the second half of 2019 (-10%).

In this same interview with Fashion Network, Gildas Minvielle also mentioned that the figures evoked in these three scenarios are made considering an average for the sector and inevitably hide "strong disparities between companies". The situations of the players are very different, and these differences are even more pronounced in times of crisis (Deslandes, 2020).

Concerning the results for March 2020, sales for textile and clothing had a 53% fall, affecting department stores and popular stores most strongly (-66.1%) but also affecting fashion e-merchants (-18.8%). The results of the following months, as of July 2020, has not yet been mentioned or published. Over the first quarter of 2020, despite an overall decline of 16.8%, web sales held up the COVID-19 restrictions better (-6%). For the months to come, the French Fashion Institute adds that "a change in consumer behavior cannot be excluded today" (Deslandes, 2020). The level of economic recovery from mid-May onwards will condition expectations or aggravate the difficulties of fashion distributors.

1.1.2.3. MNC France's management reactions to COVID-19

MNC France reacted quickly to this *sui generis* crisis. To protect the assets of the company, on March 2020, MNC France created a Crisis Board with the leaders of all different branches of the company. At the beginning they met daily, and the results of

every meeting were orally informed to the employees throughout their respective leaders. Legal decisions took about a week to be written and published. The same Crisis Board created a Continuity Plan to see the following measures to take in all countries with an existing store or logistics center. One of the biggest decisions of the Crisis Board was to put the company in gradual hibernation. Several international stores were closed in line to the lockdown measures of the respective country. The first country to be put in hibernation was Italy, followed by Spain, France, and Russia. To close the French headquarters, MNC France followed the Decree No. 2020-325 of 25 March 2020 on partial activity (Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de l'Insertion, 2020). The Decrees did not mention the case of interns; therefore, their contracts were suspended. At the same time, plans to the reactivation of the company were followed, with a great focus on the virtualization of office activities. It has been pointed out that this form of work will create benefits as to the reduction of cost for office space and meeting offices, which will contribute to economic benefits and maximize storage space for products. Other benefits include an increase of the frequency of meetings with different stakeholders in several parts of the world, as well as the reduction of travel and accommodation expenses (Proches, Taylor, & Chinniah, 2020).

1.2. Management Style

A management style considers the work environment, including managers and employees, values system, leadership tendency, and mutual trust (Yıldızhan & Yazıcı, 2019). Since 2010, the former General Director of MNC France applied a management style inspired in the “Liberation Management.” In this section, we will explore this type of management and its application in the company. The intercultural management of the headquarters diversity will also be addressed.

1.2.1. The Liberation Management

The Liberation Management is a global trend in business to radically transform organizations. Liberating leaders believe that a workplace based on respect and freedom is a more natural environment than one based on mistrust and control. This movement

has also influences from the *laissez-faire* leadership, which is considered an antagonist of the authoritarian model (Yıldızhan & Yazıcı, 2019).

1.2.1.1. General considerations of the Liberation Management

One of the first academic publications about the Liberation Management is made by Isaac Getz and Brian M. Carney in their book *Freedom, Inc.* (2009). This book includes case studies of several companies around the world who became “liberated.” According to the authors, a company is considered liberated when the majority of the employees have complete freedom and responsibility to take actions that they consider the best for the company’s vision, without asking their superiors or follow procedures in the range of their scopes. For example, an advertisement company followed the liberation path and integrated the creative team with the accountants to work in common projects, which emphasized the goals of the company and erased the opposite dynamics found at other agencies (Getz & Carney, 2009, p. 212). In another company, an external quality auditor was supposed to be picked up at the airport, but his flight was delayed. He called the company to get help and a janitor answered. She stopped doing her job and drove three hours in total with the company car to solve the problem and returned to finish her job (Getz, *Liberating Leadership*, 2009, p. 32). Liberated companies have plenty of examples with professionals working in punctual missions outside their areas of expertise, with positive results in terms of performance (Getz, 2017).

The Liberation movement appealed many companies because Liberated companies also help employees meet their psychological needs: respect, trust, self-realization, and self-direction (Getz, 2009). Since the publication of *Freedom, Inc.*, the book gained worldwide popularity. In France, it received business book awards like the Business Management bestseller on Amazon France. In this same country, it inspired hundreds of leaders to launch their own corporate liberation. This liberation wave has been documented in a comic book entitled *Les entreprises libérés*, which includes a preface from Isaac Getz as well (Jullien, 2016).

1.2.1.2. The Liberation Management at MNC France

MNC France is an example of how the liberation management has been gradually adapted into an organization. As mentioned early above, the transformation of the company into the liberation management wave began in the early 2010’s by the former

CEO. The company introduced rituals and behaviors among all collaborators that nowadays are part of the daily routines in the company, which are implemented as soon as employees join the company. In this section, we will mention the main visible rituals in the company. The possibility to be original and oneself is evoked as one of the main missions. The company values highlight an atmosphere of hospitality and trust. Other actions are used in order to ensure this atmosphere, such as:

- When employees arrive, they are well hosted and informed they can use all resources available in the company and contact all persons needed to fulfill their mission and projects. For example, a digital laboratory is available to help develop applications or systems that benefit a department and, therefore, the company.
- The schedule organization was also taken into consideration. Employees are free to distribute their schedule, including vacations. Furthermore, before the COVID-19 crisis, they already had the right to telecommute once a week.
- The decoration and/or reorganization of the offices is up to the employees' convenience. They are free to move their desk, install furniture, paint, or paste posters, and anything they wish to feel comfortable.
- The liberation wave of the company is also seen in its dress code. The dress code is always casual, and most of the employees wear sneakers and other flat shoes to work.
- Employees are also free to explore other paths and know other trades. For example, they can freely participate as runway models, work in the stores as fashion advisors during crowded seasons (Christmas, Back-to-School, or sales seasons), visit the Open Days made by each department, etc. They are invited to participate on specialized traineeships and career evolution lines regardless of their position.
- Concerning the language tone, all employees address their colleagues and superiors on a first-name basis. Team meetings also include the "weather forecast" which is to openly talk about personal experiences and general feelings of the week.

The overall results of the management style in the company were found just a year after its implementation. The company is until now obtaining high scores at Great Place to Work, an independent consulting agency which, in collaboration with *Le Figaro*, every

year awards a prize to the best French companies to work at (Figaro Recruteur, 2020). To select the candidates, the companies voluntarily enroll the examination, and two surveys are carried out in the company, one of which is aimed at employees (Fortune, 2016).

Following this trend, managers at MNC France are considered as peers who guide instead of superiors that give orders. Managers are also known as “leaders”. By doing this, the company emphasizes the application of the situational leadership throughout the Liberation Management. There is also a general attitude encouraged to promote easiness, initiative and comfort that has been designated as a “way of life.” Leaders often practice delegation and promote trust, which is also an important part of a participative leadership (Chevrier & Viegas-Pires, *Delegating effectively across cultures*, 2013).

The organizational chart of MNC France is aligned with its Management style as it tends to be flat or narrow-oriented (Qi, Tang, & Zhang, 2014). The number of managers is reduced whereas their control is widened and promotes autonomy and delegation of employees (Sashkin, 2007). Every area of MNC France’s organization presents 5 levels or hierarchy at the most. During 2019, with the aim of giving more and more autonomy and responsibility to employees, MNC France reviewed its organizational structures again to even leaner organizations, adapted to the company's new strategy. The new human resources organization does not only aim at narrowing the layers, but also at centralizing and coordinating work from the French headquarters.

1.2.2. Intercultural Management

As MNC France has an international presence, it is important to analyze their posture towards intercultural management. In this section, we also discuss the company’s general approach and contrasting it with the practice of a subsidiary of MNC France where, during a translation project, a different understanding of corporate values arose, compromising a common agreement of corporate values.

1.2.2.1. General considerations of Intercultural Management

As the company became international many decades ago, intercultural aspects are unavoidable. Cultural differences have an important role in multinational corporations, as most subsidiaries are geographically dispersed (Haghirian, 2011). For the purpose of

this study, we define “culture” in a general sense by following the posture of UNESCO, which states that culture is “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (UNESCO, 2009, p. 18). For this study, we consider interculturality as a pragmatic and immediate process where people from different cultures share a common context of interaction (Huelva Unternbäumen, 2016).

This approach converges with two perspectives of intercultural studies: comparative and interpretative (Chevrier & Viegas-Pires, *Delegating effectively across cultures*, 2013) and has been chosen for this report to justify the theoretical background needed to apply intercultural strategies (See 2.2). This is also in line with Livian (2011), who points out the awareness researchers should bring about the social reality being studied. As the definition of culture is diverse, the definition of the studied reality is necessary to avoid a “polyform concept” (Livian, 2011, p. 4) and create stability (Chevrier & Viegas-Pires, *Delegating effectively across cultures*, 2013, p. 9).

As culture could be found in regions, communities or even countries (Chevrier & Viegas-Pires, 2013), companies also possess an organizational culture, where the core of the company identity is found in their values (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994). Barmeyer & Davoine agree that these corporate values could influence the decision-making process of employees and they are declared, that is, explicit in writings such as charters, or operatives, as they are not published but extrinsically known (Barmeyer & Davoine, 2013, p. 28). A growing number of companies are trying to formulate and communicate their values through explicit value charters in order to develop coherence and promote a strong corporate identity (Barmeyer & Davoine, 2013).

Studies in intercultural management present limits in research and the current methodologies are put into reflection today. A significant amount of the intercultural research in management is built on the model of values recognition and measuring to the studied phenomenon (Livian, 2011). There are many studies that use Hofstede's dimensions of national culture (Hofstede, Pedersen, & Hofstede, *Exploring culture : exercises, stories, and synthetic cultures*, 2002) and apply it to different countries. Using these dimensions to apply a qualitative approach sometimes could not be enough to define clearly the perspectives and context of an organization (Feely & Harzing, 2008), especially in management studies where national culture is considered as a homogenous

and static variable, with values that disappear as soon as they reach geographical frontiers (Livian, 2011).

What some studies recognize as culture could quickly become into a superficial analysis and bias intercultural research. We must be careful in defining the cultural context correctly, as it is an important framework giving roots to management practices (Chevrier & Viegas-Pires, *Delegating effectively across cultures*, 2013). This is why it is also important to analyze the different cultural sources and articulate them with the attitudes and values of a company (Livian, 2011). We also agree with Livian in the statement that an interesting example of the latter is found in Iribarne's work. Throughout his research, Iribarne shows examples of how to qualitatively analyze cultural elements underlying management practices, particularly those related to authority relationships (d'Iribarne, 2012).

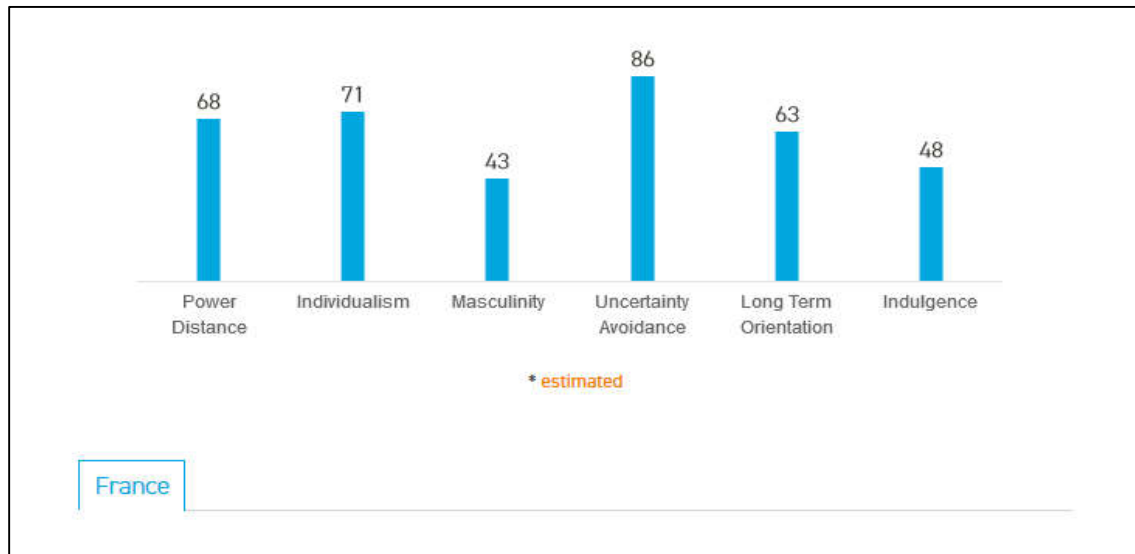
Considering the theoretical framework for interculturality and the critics about its limits, we will analyze the corporate culture at MNC France considering the two approaches, those of Hofstede and Iribarne. We believe it is important to articulate both aspects in order to have a better understanding of the corporate culture and reach a structured reflection. First, we analyze the information about France as a country provided by Hofstede Insight Institute (2020). We chose to analyze France as a country because most of the stores are based in France and most employees in the headquarters are French. Then, we will present the corporate culture in MNC France and the challenges they face nowadays.

1.2.2.2. The cultural profile of France under the scope of Hofstede's studies

Hofstede Insights is a global training and consulting organization, with over three decades of experience and application of Hofstede's research. This institute applies knowledge of national and organizational culture with the purpose of showing the importance of the role that culture has in organizations (Hofstede, 2020). Hofstede proposed dimensions in order to evaluate national cultures, which have been presented as six: power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and indulgence (Hofstede Insights, 2020). The following chart is an evaluation of the cultural dimensions found in France, continued with a brief description of each grade.

Figure 1:

Hofstede's dimension values on France



Reprinted from *Comparison: France*, Hofstede's Insights, 2020, from <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/france/>
Copyright 2020 by Hofstede's Insights.

- **Power Distance:** This dimension relates to the distribution of power and freedom. France has been given a score of 68. The French society in general is considered, according to the Hofstede Insights Institute (2020), as a country that is inclined to centralize power in general and more hierarchical levels in companies. The heads of big companies are called Mr. PDG, meaning President Director General, and they have frequently studied in the most prestigious universities of the country (Hofstede Insights, 2020).
- **Individualism:** It is considered as the degree of interdependence among the members of a society. France has a score of 71, meaning that the country in general is considered individualistic. This can be seen in the country's companies in documented cases where subordinates do the opposite of what has been told by their superiors. There is also a reflection of change by strikes, revolts, and revolution. Customer service is considered poor under an Anglo-Saxon point of view, as French traders expect respect in order to serve well (Hofstede Insights, 2020).
- **Masculinity:** This dimension is not seeing under a Genre Studies perspective, but it divides traits such as competition or reward (masculine) from cooperation

or modesty (feminine). France is considered a feminine culture, as it has a score of 43. Examples of this trait are found in their well-fare system, labor laws ruling working weeks with periods of 35 hours, highest number of holidays per year, and the focus of the quality of live. The institute has found that, compared to other countries with high score in power distance, top managers have lower salaries (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

- **Uncertainty Avoidance:** This dimension considers the perception of tolerance for ambiguity or unknown situations. French people score 86 in this dimension, with visible general traits as a tendency for structure and planification. There is a strong need for laws, rules and regulations to structure life. However, as power holders, they do not follow all public rules, and tend to find exceptions when needed (Hofstede Insights, 2020).
- **Long Term Orientation:** Here there is a special focus on the link to the past and the perspectives for the future. As France has a score of 63, it is considered as a pragmatic country, where people adapt what they know as true to the situations they apply it and show perseverance to achieve results (Hofstede Insights, 2020).
- **Indulgence:** This last dimension is considered as the capacity to control impulses and desires. France is practically in the middle of the scale with 48. Hofstede Insights interprets this result by combining it with the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension and concludes that French people are “less relaxed and enjoy life less often than is commonly assumed,” as well as “not all that high” scores in happiness examinations (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

1.2.2.3. Culture and Values at MNC France

To have the most accurate study of a corporate culture as possible, it is important to avoid making a choice between a national culture and a company, but instead try to find the links that connect both (Livian, 2011). Considering this, the next step in this study is to present the culture and values of MNC France.

Together with the application of the Liberation Management (See Section 1.2.1), MNC France presents values and a type of culture that tries to reach universal characteristics, which seem to counteract the traits of the French society, as described according to

Hofstede Insights. We could even argue that the current wave of Liberation Management inspiring French companies is a reaction at odds with the power distance dimension, as it was particularly important in France to respond to the behaviors applied under a traditional high managerial rank. The application of the Liberation Management was also reflected in the corporate culture of the company. The culture in MNC France is shared among its employees as a “Culture of Happiness,” with five main values: love, trust, commitment, simplicity, and courage³.

- **Love:** MNC France chose to answer the fast-fashion trends of its competitors, which were focused on prices, with a culture that has happiness and love at the core of its values. In this way, MNC France manages to move from a model based on price and product into a model based on customer and employee satisfaction. This is also an indirect way to contrast the high score of individualism of France found by Hofstede Insights. This aims to create a welcoming and positive atmosphere, by putting the employee and their well-being at the center, so they can react accordingly with the customers.
- **Trust:** This value comes next in the liberation management posture and could be interpreted as an answer to the high level of power distance found in Hofstede Insights. Trust in MNC France is seen as a way to reach and talk with employees. One visible way to create trust and break power distance barriers is by addressing leaders on a first-name basis.
- **Commitment:** In this case, the value is not antagonizing what has been found in the dimensions’ analysis of Hofstede Insights. This value enhances cooperation and teamwork, which are considered as feminine traits according to the dimensions of Hofstede (2002).
- **Courage:** MNC France encourages innovation and responsibility through this value. Courage is connected to the uncertainty avoidance of Hofstede Insights as an opposition, since the company gives means to employees so they can also put a lot of effort to create projects and achieve results. The company requests employees to dare and take initiatives when facing unknown situations. This posture then helps employees to tackle the cultural context in the country,

³ For the purpose of confidentiality (See Disclosure and Legal Information), detailed information about MNC France culture and values is found in the Confidential Appendixes.

deeply inclined to follow structures. This value has certainly helped the company reach a good communication level when facing the Covid-19 crisis (See 1.1.2.3).

- **Simplicity:** This value reinforces the pragmatic long-term orientation dimension. The company requests employees to focus on the essentials of their tasks with authenticity. It is a minimalist approach ("less is more"). This simplification approach is used in the company as it allows to gain in efficiency and serenity.

The following chart shows a summary of the analysis made when comparing Hofstede’s dimension on national values with MNC France’s values:

Table 1:

Comparison of French national values with MNC France's values.

France	MNC France	Relation
High Power Distance	Love and Trust	Opposite
Feminine Country	Commitment	Similar
Pragmatic Long-term Orientation	Simplicity	Similar
High Uncertainty Avoidance	Courage	Opposite

A common criticism to intercultural models is that they overestimate the stability of cultures and identities and neglect the movement of transformation associated with globalization (Livian, 2011). When a company installs in another country, the two cultures enter a competition of values, behaviors, etc., and the differences can be strongly visible depending on the cultural distance between them; an integration will be hard depending on the difference between the corporate culture and the local one (d’Iribarne, 2012). MNC France case is in line with the postulates mentioned by Livian and Iribarne. While becoming international, the company tended to maintain its origin culture and, even though some adaptations were installed to adapt to each country, the culture that “wins the competition” in all cases is the corporate one.

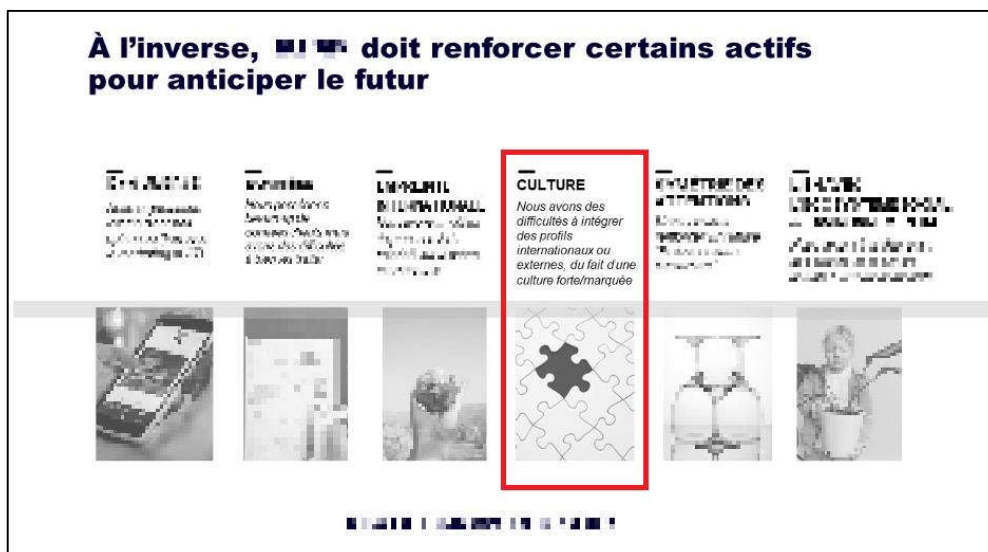
MNC France considers updating the vision and corporate values promoted for over a decade. There are several reasons for this decision. The first ones are well known by

management scholars, such as following the shift of globalization and reinvention for the new market tendencies (i.e., cross-channel). Meanwhile, this decision also carries an intercultural focus and analysis that was not taken into consideration before. We can clearly recognize that the current corporate values are presented to contrast Hofstede’s dimensions of France as a nation (Hofstede Insights, 2020). On the other hand, the company’s corporate values have created a strong corporate culture, which can attract Francophile cultures but, on the other hand, could indeed repel candidates from other nationalities who present a different cultural background and values.

MNC France is aware of this and before the COVID-19 economic crisis, a study to change the vision was sent to the entire population of employees. This study includes a survey asking the MNC France national and international employees for their own interpretation of the corporate values and what do they understand as main characteristics of working in the company. Employees were asked to fill out a “cultural barometer” to find the “extrinsic values” that exist in the organization (Barmeyer & Davoine, 2013). The corporate culture is also reaffirmed by the country leaders, as most of them are of French nationality or have previously worked in the MNC France headquarters. There has been working spheres where the corporate values have been adapted or interpreted differently.

Figure 2:

Section of the cultural barometer survey



Note. Obtained from MNC France internal communications. Copyright MNC France, 2020

In Figure 2 we can see an example added by MNC France's analysts to one of the internal surveys held inside the company.

This shows that the company is aware of its strong corporate culture, which is deeply embedded in the organization. MNC France corporate culture is strong, it also has the characteristic of being difficult to modify and to adapt to other national cultures. This has a negative effect in international recruitment, as this strong culture does not allow a proper integration of foreign candidates. The survey finished in the end of July 2020, but the results are still pending and will be published by the end of the year.

1.2.2.4. (Mis)Interpretation of corporate values: The Spanish Recruitment Case

An interesting case that we could encounter during the internship was when we had the opportunity to do a parallel task and help the French recruitment team with a multilingual translation. The new structural shift for the recruitment team includes a universal recruitment platform available for all countries in all languages used in the company. The recruitment team listed their needs for the webpage, together with the architecture and the communication campaign for the platform. The communication campaign, messages, publication dates, and teasing were written in French but needed to be communicated for all subsidiaries. As this communication campaign needed to be translated, we accepted the task of translating it into English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. During the translation process, the following message was found as a note in one of the campaign communications:

« Contenu à adapter. Est-ce que les pays ont un process de cooptation ? »

As a matter of fact, the recruitment team did not coordinate the candidate application procedures in other countries. The degree of delegation between offices is high, and this is a common managerial attitude among French international organizations (Chevrier & Viegas-Pires, 2013). The cooptation process is used in MNC France in parallel with the public publication of available vacancies. After we consulted with the French recruitment team, they pointed out that the cooptation is also a very welcomed procedure where an employee could identify people in their personal circle who could

fit in the values and quickly integrate the corporate culture. The recruitment team affirmed they were not aware of the use of this process in other countries.

We then decided to check with the Human Resources partners in the other countries and we got different responses. The cooptation procedures, currently used in the French recruitment team, were not clear to other countries. Italy had used the cooptation for very specific vacancies, only after exhausting the regular application options, and called it “*cooptazione*”. Portugal was not aware of this option, but the team was opened to apply it in their country perimeter. As the term “cooptation” seemed odd for the Portuguese recruitment team, we agreed to name the process as “*indicação*” (recommendation).

The most interesting case was with the Spanish recruitment team. After explaining the concept, it was clear that the team was completely against it. We spoke in written with one of the representatives (See Appendix 3) who claimed that the cooptation process creates privileges. The Spanish team emphasized that every single candidate must go through the same recruitment process and be treated equally.

We can clearly see that all human resources teams in the countries have been interacting as separate poles, following general guidelines but with an open interpretation of the corporate values and habits. Plus, it is not until this year that the process of unification of the content and procedures has started in the company. The translation of corporate values requires to consider the differences not only in local culture or language, but also in the contexts of actions and speeches (Barmeyer & Davoine, 2013). It has been shown as well that the relationship between subsidiaries and headquarters is best mediated by shared goals and vision, as they allow to properly exchange common knowledge (Reiche, Harzing, & Pudelko, 2015).

1.2.2.5. The orientation of MNC France towards subsidiaries

To conclude this section, using the information provided from the Liberation Management and Intercultural Management of MNC France before, we analyzed the orientation of the company’s headquarters towards its subsidiaries during the internship period. To do this, we used the table proposed by Perlmutter (1969, p. 12). For this author, the “state of mind” of a multinational company could be classified in the EPG model, the acronym stands for ethnocentric (home-country oriented), polycentric (host-country oriented), and geocentric (world-oriented). Companies could have several

approaches which differ in organizational designs. To identify MNC France’s position, we highlight in red the characteristics which are closer to MNC France’s state of mind according to Perlmutter’s table:

Table 2:

Headquarter orientations in an International Enterprise

Organization Design	Ethnocentric	Polycentric	Geocentric
Complexity of organization	Complex in home country, simple in subsidiaries	Varied and independent	Increasingly complex and interdependent
Authority; decision making	High in headquarters	Relatively low in headquarters	Aim for a collaborative approach between headquarters and subsidiaries
Rewards and punishments; incentives	High in headquarters and low in subsidiaries	Wide variation; can be high or low rewards for subsidiary performance	International and local executives rewarded for reaching local and worldwide objectives
Evaluation and control	Home standards applied for persons and performance	Determined Locally	Find standards which are universal and local
Communication; information flow	High volume to subsidiaries: orders, commands, advice.	Little to and from headquarters. Little between subsidiaries	Both ways and between subsidiaries. Heads of subsidiaries, part of management team.
Identification	Nationality of owner	Nationality of host country	Truly international company but identifying with national interests
Perpetuation (recruiting, staffing, development)	Recruit and develop people of home country for key positions everywhere in the world	Develop people of local nationality for key positions in their own country	Develop best men everywhere in the world for key positions everywhere in the world.

Note. The state of mind of MNC France is positioned in red.
Copyright: Perlmutter, 1969.

As we can see in the table, MNC France could be characterized as a highly ethnocentric company. One of the highest risks of this approach, according to Perlmutter (1969), is the ineffective planning due to the poor feedback. Different traits from ethnocentric can also be appreciated, as Perlmutter agrees that not all characteristics in a company would be necessarily aligned. Therefore, we can also see the efforts of sharing rewards and

opening bidirectional communication, which give the company polycentric and geocentric characteristics. When we talk about corporate culture and approach towards subsidiaries, communication, language, and knowledge transfer are important points that need to be considered, as cultural differences have an important role (Haghirian, 2011).

The business environment has been one of the places where effective intercultural communication plays an important role to connect with different societies (Blenkinsopp & Pajouh, 2010). Different modes of communicating, if not effectively addressed, can lead to misunderstandings and disrupt the process of communication (Haghirian, 2011). This is why the following section will focus on corporate communication.

1.3. Corporate Communication

Corporate communication is considered in this study as communication happening inside the company; that is, inside and between divisions, headquarter and subsidiaries, and between the company and its environment (Andersen & Rasmussen, 2002). Corporate communication has been an important part of interculturality, having contributed to the construction of modern societies (Blenkinsopp & Pajouh, 2010). Communication is an essential part of management (Feely & Harzing, 2008) and since internationalization models are followed in multinational organizations, the communication between all business units is important to reach sustainability and continuity (Albuquerque, Costa, & Esperança, 2014).

Contrary to the ethnocentric approach highly used in other situations, MNC France is geocentric in communication, as there is a fluid communication between subsidiaries and management (Perlmutter, 1969). In this section, we will analyze corporate communication in explicit ways (Barmeyer & Davoine, 2013) such as language and knowledge sharing (Haghirian, 2011). Both aspects of corporate communication, language and knowledge transfer in corporate environments, while important, present a current lack of studies (Brannen, Piekkari, & Tietze, 2014; Ciuk & James, 2015).

1.3.1. Corporate Language

Multinational corporations are by default multilingual organizations with related situations happening in several layers (Blenkinsopp & Pajouh, 2010). Despite the importance of language in multinational organizations, there is a limited number of

interdisciplinary studies where management and linguistics are analyzed together (Albuquerque A. , 2014). This section will discuss the general aspects of corporate language, its explicit manifestations at MNC France and the potential barriers for communication.

1.3.1.1. General considerations of Corporate Language

Different fields of knowledge have several definitions of language, according to their own distinctive ways (Brannen, Piekkari, & Tietze, 2014). In organization studies, language is defined as a multifaceted and multilevel communicative system of meanings, which are the basis for the construction of organizational, social, and global realities (Brannen, Piekkari, & Tietze, 2014). It could be said that language is nearly the quintessence of global business. It is an occasionally awkward, rigid and disturbing symbol of what is engaged when different cultures face each other in a multifaceted environment (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005). When we think of language in a business context, we can see its importance as a mediation tool and asset (Albuquerque A. , 2014). Corporate language is a tool for thoughts formulation, its communication and discussion, with even more value when corporate strategies are discussed (Brannen, Piekkari, & Tietze, 2014).

Business studies working on one language usually assume that such language is predetermined and static (exogenous model) and focus on the communicative actions and interpretation of discourse and metaphors to enable managerial processes; meanwhile, in an intercultural setting, we see the evolution of languages and how they become endogenous for companies operating under these circumstances (Luo & Shenkar, 2006). Likewise, single-language studies on management have also the influence of English-speaking researchers who may have a reductionist perception of the importance of language (Feely & Harzing, 2008).

The studies on language under a multinational context have also had several limitations. They have the tendency to be empirical studies concerned with the use of different national languages under a professional setting (Angouri & Piekkari, 2018). The studies about the impact of language diversity on management have been very few, with potential reasons such the difficulties of a cross-disciplinary approach between management researchers and linguists (Feely & Harzing, 2008). Research on the issue

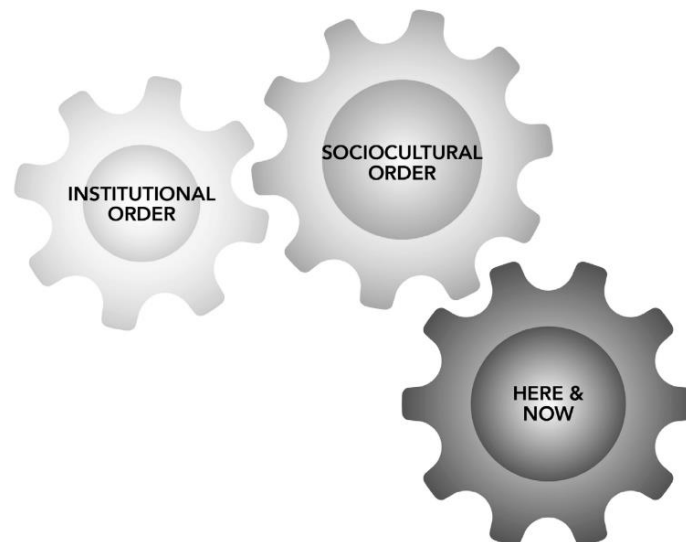
of language choice and its value in multinational strategies is an important but forgotten subject in management and linguistic research (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006).

The association of a language with a national language has a relation to the historical notion of state and the ideology of homogeneity (Blommaert and Rampton, 2011). The national language has been the basic unit in language studies, where multilingualism collects various national languages (Angouri & Piekkari, 2018). MNC France can be considered one of these cases: their multilingualism resides in the use of national languages in each country and in communicating in French or English, its common languages.

Multidisciplinary approaches are required to capture the dynamics of the multilingual reality of the modern workplace. Angouri & Piekkari also propose the distinction between two levels of analysis: micro, meso, and macro (2018, p. 20). All levels are intertwined in a web of relationship structures. The first level refers to the “here and now” (individual); the second, to negotiations between people; and the third to the wider event (norms and structures) already in place.

Figure 3:

Unpacking multilingualism in the modern workplace

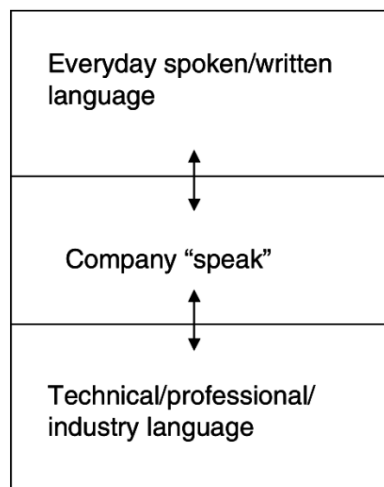


Reprinted from “Organizing multilingually: setting an agenda for studying language at work,” by Angouri, J., & Piekkari, R, 2018, *European Journal of International Management*. Copyright 2018 by Angouri, J., & Piekkari, R

The studies of Welch, Welch & Piekkari (2005) show that corporate language present three internal layers. The first one is social language, which is daily language used for interpersonal, interunit, and external communication. (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005). The second layer is “company speak,” which present acronyms, special terms, and management terminology specific to the company; and the third layer is technical/professional jargon.

Figure 4:

Layers of Language



Reprinted from “Speaking in tongues: The importance of language in international management processes,” by Welch, D., Welch, L., & Piekkari, R., 2005, *International Studies of Management & Organization*. Copyright 2005 by Welch, D., Welch, L., & Piekkari, R.

Even if we can easily identify all three layers, employees who have technical and language skills could indeed merge different levels in one message. The second and third layer are the most specific to the company, since the terminology process occurs in these levels (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005). These two layers must be managed carefully, as being able to speak in these levels could create inclusion (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005) but, on the other hand, without proper management they could create exclusion and language barriers. Different communication styles can lead to misunderstandings and interrupt communication processes, which limit the ability to interact directly and to react to misunderstandings (Haghirian, 2011).

1.3.1.2. Corporate Language at MNC France

Organizational languages influence the relationship between headquarters and subsidiaries, where the choice of a language affects the circulation, presentation, and interpreting of information, allowing control and coordination from the sender (Luo & Shenkar, 2006). A corporate language (or languages) is the choice of one or more languages by the company to serve as official means of communication. (Belyaeva & Rubtsova, 2020).

It is important to mention that the MNC France's main working languages are French, English, and national languages of subsidiaries. French is used within higher ranks and communication with expatriates, it is also the main language used in international presentations, and the preferred language whenever the subsidiary contact has some level of understanding in French. For example, there is a case of a Portuguese Human Resources Manager who is addressed in French by several departments in headquarters even though she has mentioned on several occasions that she had basic French education at school, and she feels more proficient in English.

Usually, English is mostly used to speak with external services or contacts with no previous approach of French whatsoever. For example, in Russia, the main language while speaking to the headquarters is English, but there is more communication and contact through expatriates in the country. National languages are mainly spoken between low-management levels, at stores, logistic departments, or between national colleagues. We can, therefore, consider English and French as functional languages (Luo & Shenkar, 2006).

Before submitting our proposition for intercultural strategies (see Chapter **Error! Reference source not found.**), it is important to analyze the language choices and uses at MNC France and consider the degree of the existing language barriers. The analysis of MNC France's corporate language and communication is the result of a six-month internship observation. The multilingualism is evident in MNC France, and this evidence could be crossed with the proposals from Feely and Harzing (2002) of language management used in multinational companies, and overcome the coordination of managing networks geographically, culturally, and linguistically. Feely and Harzing (2002) recognized three dimensions of barriers for language management. To analyze these language barriers and compare them to the situation of MNC France, we will describe them and synthesize in the following chart:

Table 3:*Dimensions for language barriers*

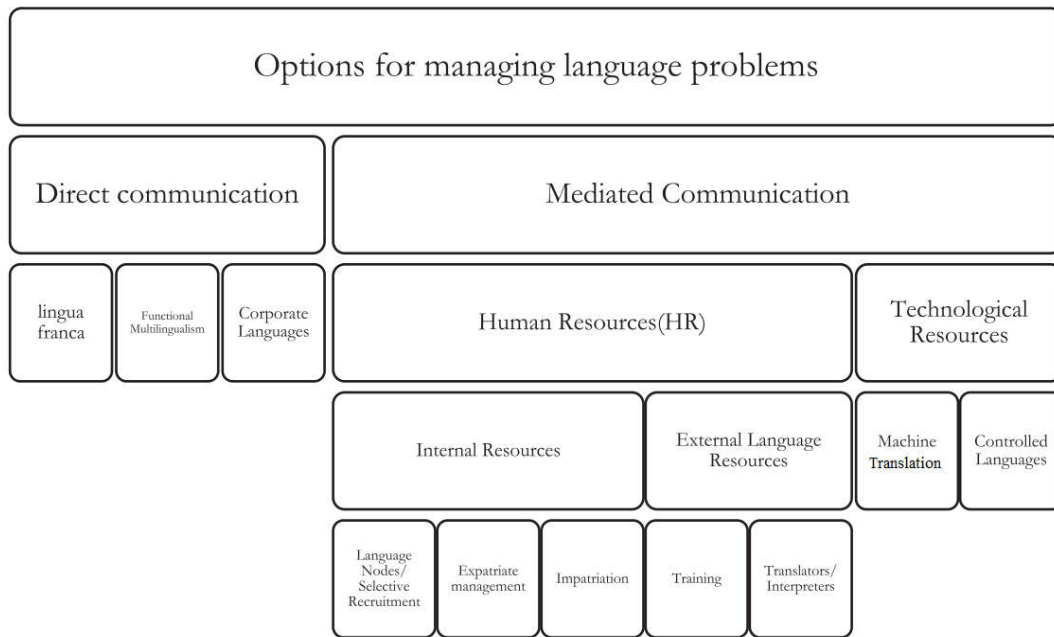
Dimension	General Characteristics	MNC France Characteristics
Language Diversity	<p>This dimension focus on the number of different languages the company must manage.</p> <p>The of diversity depends on the global network range of the company, as well as subsidiaries, customers, suppliers, and joint ventures.</p> <p>However, even companies with a higher degree of diversity consider only a fraction of around 5 000 living languages in the world.</p>	<p>The main working languages are French, English, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Mandarin Chinese, Arab, Dutch, Hindi, and Bengali.</p> <p>There are 73 nationalities present in headquarters and subsidiaries.</p>
Language Penetration	<p>Language penetration consists of the number of functions and levels engaged in cross-lingual communication.</p> <p>It also depends on the number of functional areas within a MNC that must operate across linguistic boundaries.</p> <p>The new integrated systems of global co-ordination now reach almost all functions of a business at multiple levels.</p>	<p>Global coordination is required from several areas at multiple levels.</p> <p>Every country has a certain degree of autonomy, but bigger decisions must be coordinated with the French headquarters.</p> <p>Concerning training activities in the company, learning support (material and resources) is given in French, English, Italian, Spanish, Russian, and Portuguese.</p>
Language Sophistication	<p>This dimension deals with the complexity and refinement of the language skills required.</p> <p>Clearly the complexity, refinement and type will vary from positions within an organization.</p> <p>Positions with higher language sophistication would need a capability level equivalent to a typical graduate in modern languages.</p>	<p>The manufacturers and seller positions require a basic knowledge in the country language.</p> <p>As the position is higher, a proficiency of English and/or French is needed.</p> <p>For fluent communication with headquarters, French is preferred to English.</p>

Adapted from “Language management in multinational companies,” by Feely, A., & Harzing, A., 2002, *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*. Copyright 2002 by Feely, A., & Harzing, A.

This multilingualism can indeed create language barriers. To connect the empirical observations with the language strategies already in use at MNC France, we use the following chart from Albuquerque et al. (2014) to summarize the strategies proposed by Feely and Harzing to deal with multilanguage environments in companies:

Figure 5:

Options for managing language problems



Adapted from “Language management in multinational companies,” by Feely, A., & Harzing, A., 2002, *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*. Copyright 2014 by Albuquerque, A., Costa, R., & Esperança, J.

MNC France communication strategies align with this model. All options proposed by Feely & Harzing (2002) have been used inside the company to overcome language difficulties. For direct communication strategies, French and English are mainly used as *lingua franca*, and depending on the speakers the language may vary (functional multilingualism). The corporate language, however, has not been defined in any chart, despite that most of the communication department has French as their mother tongue. All the three internal resources’ strategies are used, with examples of Human Resources Heads in subsidiaries being French or living a good part of their life in France, and colleagues from European subsidiaries moving to the French headquarters. Further analysis shows that companies in general tend to request expatriates as a bridge to improve communication when a shared language is lacking (Harzing & Pudelko, 2014). Language training is partially external as a resource in MNC France, as the traineeship is given by an external company and the enrollment is managed through the Learning & Development Department.

A similar scenario goes for translation and interpreting. Recurring to translators and interpreters is a common but effective strategy to meet language needs in a multinational company (Angouri & Piekkari, 2018). The language services in the company, especially technical translation, are held by internal employees, who have knowledge of the target language and field of work, but usually lacking knowledge of translation (Albuquerque A. , 2014). Regular communications are translated internally by employees with language proficiency in one language, particularly English, but when the message has a higher relevance, the documents are sent to external translation and interpreting companies.

The technological resources are also used to deal with a multilingual environment, especially automatic online translators for texts, and speech subtitles programs for meetings⁴. When language differences are important, these could create situations with profound consequences for successful international operations (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005). Their impact in multinational management could be not be directly seen on daily activities, but instead is presented under language barriers, which are opaque and create an important challenge to multinational companies (Brannen, Piekkari, & Tietze, 2014). Reaching a common corporate language, the *lingua franca*, could be an ideal not achieved by multinational companies (Forsbom, 2014).

In general, MNC France is in line with the use of English as a *lingua franca* for specific departments. Employees do an annual interview and mention their interest in learning subjects. If the use of English is in line with their career tasks (such as negotiations and participation in international meetings), the company could pay for their English trainings. In this case, language courses are dealt externally, through other companies in partnership.

If the employees are in France, they can also use their CPF or *Compte Personnel de Formation* (Personal Training Account) to finance their studies. This account given by the state cumulates training hours during a professional activity, which can be exchanged by any training of the employee's interest (Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie, 2016). When this option is selected, they can study with a company of their own choice. The L&D Department is also in charge of informing and helping

⁴ MNC France uses an internal social network with an automatic translator, allowing employees from different countries to communicate. See Appendix 4.

employees about their options to learn languages in general; and they have two members of the department in charge of these administrative procedures.

1.3.1.3. The vicious circle of language barriers

Multinational companies presenting a higher degree of internationalization have as well bigger language diversity (Angouri & Piekkari, 2018). If the diversity is not well addressed, there are exclusion feelings from the part of subsidiaries, which can affect the sense of corporate identity, thus the creation of corporate cohesion for different operations, as well as create exclusion in international meetings (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005). Therefore, language issues are connected to identity and power, as there are strong emotional connections between languages and nationalism (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006).

When languages create a barrier for the development of human relationships, there is in consequence a level of suspicion, mistrust and conflict between a parent company and its international subsidiaries, which at the same time hinders collaborative development processes (Feely & Harzing, 2002). There are also disintegrating effects involved, with stronger results such as polarization in two strong based subsidiaries (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006). In MNC France case, there is a marked polarization between the headquarters and the Spanish subsidiaries, which is being addressed in the 2021-2023 roadmap⁵.

The impact of these barriers cannot be simply measured by money spent on interpreters and documents translated, but it is indeed seen in the way relationships are affected by imposing pressure and constraints (Feely & Harzing, 2002). The lack of language skills causes the loss of rhetorical skills (humor, sensitivity, persuasion, motivation, and others) as well as code switching practices, as participants in a meeting could talk between themselves in their native language, creating feelings of exclusion and even hostility (Feely & Harzing, 2008).

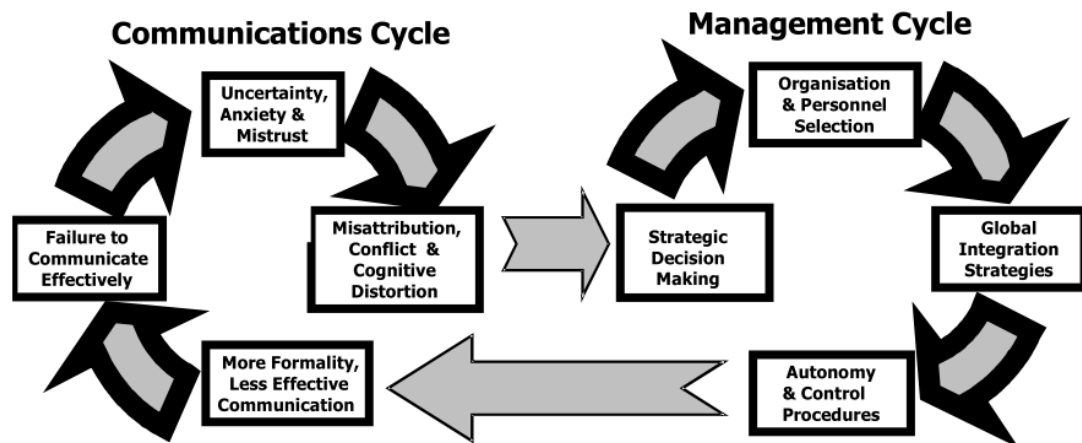
Feely and Harzing (2008) explain that, as the quality of communications decreases, headquarter and subsidiaries experience increased levels of anxiety and uncertainty,

⁵ MNC France creates a three-year roadmap that serves as a flexible planning to support strategic and long-range goals, by matching short-term and long-term goals with specific technology solutions. The 2021-2023 roadmap considers an international focus. This differs from previous years, as subsidiaries were informed about the headquarter roadmap, but did not participate directly on it.

which creates an increasing vicious circle for communication inside management activities. The following is synthesized in a figure created by the authors:

Figure 6:

The communications and management circle



Reprinted from “The Language Barrier and its Implications for HQ-Subsidiary Relationships,” by Feely, A. J., & Harzing, A.-W., 2008, *Cross-Cultural Management: An International Journal*. Copyright 2008 by Feely, A. J., & Harzing, A.-W.

This model, explaining the steps and behaviors causing the vicious circle of communication, intends to provide an integrative approach, where the mechanisms of language barriers shown influence the relationship between headquarters and subsidiaries. Likewise, Harzing & Pudelko (2004) demonstrated in a higher scale research that the communication between headquarters and subsidiaries is affected by the language differences, by increasing the levels of misunderstanding, conflict and parallel information networks and therefore tacit knowledge transfer. Voermans (2011) considers as the main consequences of language barriers under an altered power structure, the creation of language clusters and shadow structures, exclusion perceptions, cultural distance, market signaling, and loss of business opportunities.

Language barriers are deeply connected to culture as well. The same study carried out by Harzing & Pudelko (2014), showed that countries in Asia had higher levels of perceived language barriers when using English as a *lingua franca*. In Europe, the highest level of perceived language barrier, when using English, was found in France, with a similar level than Japan or Korea (Harzing & Pudelko, 2014, p. 14). When it

comes to communication, subsidiaries cannot deliberately ignore relevant information because of a lack of appropriate language skills (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005). To find a solution, companies have invested in modern tools, such as intranets, conferences, global integration of IT systems, and workflow technologies in general, which have contributed to increase and accelerate the flow of information; however, these tools are not enough to solve language barriers (Feely & Harzing, 2002). Many companies address the language barriers with automatic translation solutions, which are easier, economic, and sophisticated, yet still presenting flaws (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005). Language barriers, therefore, act as structural barriers to knowledge transfer (Forsbom, 2014), where language is a delicate and complex issue which needs to be managed carefully to maximize knowledge flows in multinational management (Voermans, 2011).

1.3.2. Corporate Knowledge

Language is central to information and knowledge transfer (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005). The interest in finding the relation between corporate communication and multilingualism aims to achieve effective communication, as keeping a good communication structure allows good performance and essential knowledge shared among the company (Forsbom, 2014). The role of language and particularly interlingual translation in the travel of ideas and practices across organizational contexts has not been deeply explored (Ciuk & James, 2015).

As globalization continues, the consumers' demand increases, therefore knowledge assumes a central role in multinational companies, by bringing new ideas and transferring them effectively through subsidiaries is crucial to preserve competitive positions and long-term advantages (Haghirian, 2011). This section will address the main considerations about corporate knowledge and its importance.

1.3.2.1. General considerations of Corporate Knowledge

Languages are viewed as an important source influencing the way knowledge flows internationally (Ciuk & James, 2015). Languages are now immersed in the process of globalization, and diverse knowledge must be handled by communities, organizations, and businesses while interacting with different sources of information in an international scale (Depecker, 2015). Minbaeva (2007) defines knowledge in a broader sense as "justified true beliefs," and it is created when someone shares new situations.

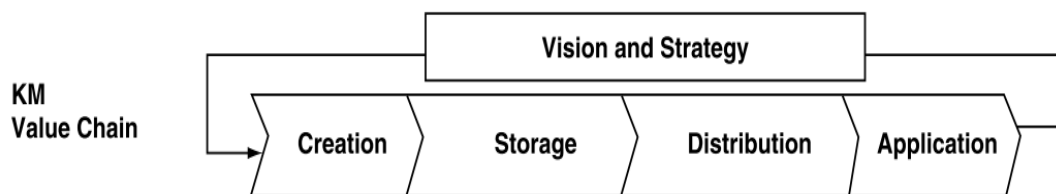
Knowledge transfer in a multinational context refers to the transfer of expertise or external market information within an organization (Haghirian, 2011). It can also refer to the internal transfers done between the different levels of a company (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006).

While information is considered as a static, descriptive, and explicit concept, knowledge is in constant change, with normative components which could be explicit or tacit (Minbaeva, 2007). Knowledge is important to a firm, even considered as an asset (Haghirian, 2011), because it runs through communication workflows, and information and activities need to be communicated internally and externally (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006).

In an organizational context, knowledge is active, as it is generated, codified, coordinated, and transferred from different corporate units to be used (Haghirian, 2011). According to Minvaeba (2007), Knowledge is an active asset with a value chain: creation (recognizing a source and adapt it), storage (maintenance in an individual or organizational memory), distribution (transfer of information), and application (changes, decisions, and creation of new ideas).

Figure 7:

The knowledge management value chain



Adapted from *Knowledge transfer in multinational corporations*, by Minbaeva, D., 2007. Copyright 2007 by Minbaeva.

Knowledge flows can be modified or blocked if language differences create distortions, generally emerged in an informal level of communication (Voermans, 2011). In a global context, it is impossible to avoid cross-cultural and interlinguistic communication (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006). This kind of communication may influence knowledge management (Haghirian, 2011) and creates complications for managers (Voermans, 2011).

During the process of internationalization, where intercultural knowledge transfer is produced, this complexity increases when a subsidiary is strongly dependent of the information given by headquarters to access and interpret the information (Haghirian,

2011). The outcome seems to be influenced by several factors, including relations of power, surrounding social, and cultural contexts, which are, at the same time, internalized in the organizational life (Ciuk & James, 2015). As a result, the company needs to consider that the accumulated knowledge from several areas of the organizations require inspection, since this could be used in another area in the company (Haghirian, 2011).

Studies suggest that the role of language in knowledge transfer is more complicated than usually assumed, and the processes through which language is linked to knowledge transfer need to be explored (Peltokorpi & Vaara, 2014). Indeed, information in multinational companies is communicated between two people with different cultural background and communication styles, even if these events occur in the same company area (Haghirian, 2011). The adoption of a corporate language is usually seen as a solution, but this option alone would not solve all communication problems and efficient knowledge transfer (Voermans, 2011; Peltokorpi & Vaara, 2014). To find the appropriate solutions, it is important to ensure corporate communication between those who require and those who have knowledge (Haghirian, 2011).

1.3.2.2. Terminology at MNC France

General Considerations

This section will discuss terminology, its importance in corporate environments, and its use in MNC France. Knowledge is one of the most important intangible assets of a company and needs to be delivered efficiently. Knowledge transfer is profoundly associated to corporate communication and terminology. It is even argued that there is no knowledge without terminology (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006; Albuquerque, Costa, & Esperança, 2014). In an organizational setting, knowledge is transferred to communicate with experts and specialists (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006). One of the most important ways to transfer knowledge is using terminology.

Terminology is a multidisciplinary discipline, as it gathers different elements from the studies in language, knowledge, and communication. Terminology is also related to the tasks of collecting, describing, and presenting terms in a systematic way (Marina, 2016). Terminology is needed in all activities involved in specialized knowledge. The smallest terminology units are terms. It is through their use in speech that specialized

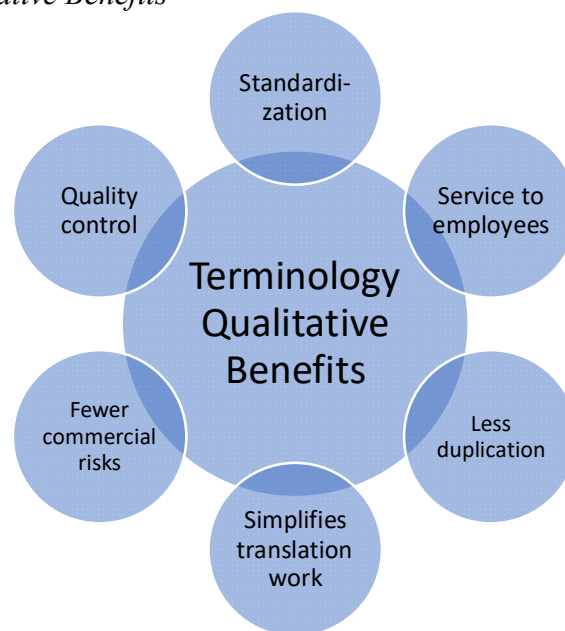
knowledge is represented and transferred in most situations where specialized communication reaches its highest level of efficiency (Cabr , 2010).

Importance and benefits

When dealing with communication challenges, multinational companies should be aware of the importance of proper terminology management. In a multinational environment, large companies produce a great number of documents and communications in several languages, which generates a linguistic problem (Depecker, 2015). Furthermore, if language diversity is not addressed successfully, it can decrease knowledge transfer and impede language management (Voermans, 2011).

Multinational companies investing in terminology will indeed receive multiple benefits such as increasement in efficiency of the tasks and generate revenue. Terminology has a multiplier effect, as its result can be used several times and applied to corporate material for communication and knowledge transfer (Champagne, 2004). If terminology is properly managed (included in a common database and liked to communicational tools), corporate and business communication could be more accurate, consistent, and cost-effective (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006).

Figure 8:
Terminology Qualitative Benefits



Adapted from *The Economic Value of Terminology: An Exploratory Study*, by Champagne, G., 2004, Public Works and Government Services Canada. Copyright 2004 by Champagne, G.

It can be argued that the benefits of a proper terminology management can be direct, indirect, and strategic (Warburton, 2014, p. 3). Direct benefits include measurable cost reductions and productivity improvements; indirect benefits include intangible assets that create benefits for the company (for example, facilitating an internal procedure); and strategic benefits support the objectives of a company but also strengthen external factors such as brand awareness and customer satisfaction.

Lack of terminology coordination at MNC France

As soon as our mission at MNC France started, we asked members of the L&D Department about the existence of terminology databases in the company. What we found is that MNC does not count with organized terminology. Most of the translation tasks in the company are done by *ad hoc* translators, who are employees with no professional translation background. In the internal organization, *ad hoc* translators in the company keep their own glossaries and do not coordinate with other offices either. As we know, this lack of coordination has a cost. The lack of terminology management complicated their activities since they must search for similar or identical requests for every translation. This search is estimated to consume an average of 20 to 30 minutes or their daily tasks (Champagne, 2004). From our observation of the terminology sources at MNC France, we found that there are only three official terminology-related documents in the internal files of the company:

MNC France Vocabulary: The L&D Department published a list of the vocabulary used in the company in 2016. This list is only published in French and has no equivalents in other languages.

Clothing Glossary: In 2017, the Web Department shared a Microsoft Excel file with a list of clothing sold online, in several languages but without definitions. This list is incomplete, and a campaign was launched internally for employees to collaborate with terminology information. The languages in the list are the main ones used in subsidiaries: French, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Russian. Other languages also used in the company, such as Arabic and Chinese, are not mentioned. When we compared this file to the company sales webpage, we found out as well that there was linguistic variation. In fact, an external translation service is in charge of the translation of the webpage, but the terminology was not agreed with MNC France or any linguistic resources shared.

Furniture Glossary: The Merchandising Team published a by-monthly book with the instructions for the organization and presentation of products in store. This publication is used in all MNC France stores. The last part of this merchandising book has a glossary of the furniture used in stores. The languages available are English, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, and Polish (See Appendix No. 5).

Based on our knowledge of the terminology practice at MNC France, we can say that the company is not aware of the benefits it could have in sharing communication and knowledge. However, there are many companies that share similar situations regarding terminology management. The lack of awareness and cost-benefit calculation for decisions generate a small percentage of organizations interested in terminology management (Drame, 2015). Everything a company does needs to be justified and defending the right reasons why companies should invest in terminology is the first step toward developing an effective knowledge management system (Warburton, 2014). On the other hand, even if the firms use terminology to make their work more productive, it is still difficult to measure, bill, and promote the benefits of terminology (Champagne, 2004; Drame, 2015). The reasons to invest in terminology seem to be complex and opaque under a managerial point of view, and only attract those who work in fields connected to the area (Drame, 2015). This is because measuring intangible assets creates a methodological problem that needs to be explored (Champagne, 2004). Thus, terminology management is harder in companies where the only translators are *ad hoc* translators, such as the case of MNC France. Having *ad hoc* translation practices in a company could be seen like a quick solution in a short term; but the employees involved have great disadvantages in terms of translations skills, terminology, and tools, creating gaps on a long term (Albuquerque, Costa, & Esperança, 2014).

Harmonization of terminology

Considering the lack of terminology management in MNC France, we intended to organize a terminology database and make its use available for the whole company. Therefore, our Internal Translation Project (See 2.2.1), would encourage terminology harmonization. The process of term assimilation and standardization in a single unified position is called harmonization (Gilreath, 1992). This process is strongly needed to tackle conflicting and contradictory terminologies, caused by their evolution, changes in documentation, and strategies. Several international standards on the topic provide

further guidance like, for instance, the ISO 860:2007, regarding the harmonization of concepts and terms.

The organization of terms used in the company need harmonization to avoid conceptual problems (Batista, 2011). A globally harmonized terminology system should facilitate corporate communication, knowledge transfer, and support globalization. Multinational companies should address terminology issues and consider them between their priorities in order to create adequate knowledge transfer.

In this section we have seen that terminology is one of the fundamental elements that would enable a company to tackle communication issues. A harmonized terminology base is not only beneficial for translation services in the company, but also to communicate effectively during meetings and exchanges. Therefore, the construction of a terminology database was considered as one of the essential requirements for the proper implementation of the intercultural strategies proposed. This base allowed during the internship to have consistency during translations, to enable members of an international to have less communication gaps during meetings, and to prepare the members who use English as a lingua franca to select the right terminology for any interaction with their peers.

The next chapter, Chapter Two, will present the following three strategies detailed: an internal translation project, and its application in the Learning and Development Department of MNC France.

CHAPTER II – INTRODUCING INTERCULTURAL STRATEGIES AT THE LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Since 2020, the new organization of MNC France required greater coordination between subsidiaries and headquarters divisions. The Learning & Development Department (L&D) of the company found itself in need of translating many overseas learning supports (from learning guides to online interactive material) this same year.

For this reason, the main task of this internship was the translation of the several learning materials from French into English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian for the Learning and Development Department. These documents contained the most important subjects to be taught in store training. The audience was therefore focused on the new employees all over the world starting their integration process at the company. The language level of the texts, especially in English (whose readers were non-native speakers), were translated in the simplest version of language register to transfer the main message and pedagogical instructions. The scope of the subjects translated was wide and covered the following topics:

- **Integration:** Company basic information, corporate culture, and welcome packs.
- **Commerce:** Sales techniques and customer services in stores and over the phone.
- **Merchandising and Fashion:** Products display in store, seasonalities.
- **Security:** Threat recognition and personal protection against any physical danger.
- **Management:** Basic management principles related to leadership and delegation.

During the internship period, while executing the main translation activity, it was found that the increased international interaction with subsidiaries needed to be addressed under other related areas. This chapter aims to propose a set of intercultural strategies fitting the needs of the Learning and Development Department of MNC France.

The goal of these strategies is to achieve cultural openness, which is a set of abilities and cultural knowledge enabling a person to engage in meaningful interactions with people of different national and organizational cultures (Haghirian, 2011). Therefore, this chapter includes a detailed presentation of the L&D Department, to understand their profile and needs, we will focus on the profile of the Learning and Development Department.

2.1. Presentation of the Learning & Development (L&D) Department

The Learning and Development Department is an internal organizational team inside MNC France dealing with education and skills development in all areas. It is located under the Human Resources Administration of the company. Following the new organization, the members of subsidiaries respond to the international guidelines given by the French headquarters. Therefore, the L&D Team has employees from different subsidiaries as part of their new team.

The international presence of the team relies as well on the presence the representatives located in each country, whose missions and workload will vary depending on the number of team members. For example, the Italian team is the biggest team, counting with 4 members, and they have more tasks than Portugal, which has only one employee dedicated on learning for part-time, as their main activity is accounting. The organization in the French headquarters is highly institutionalized and aligned to the home country, as it follows all national registrations for training institutions (*numéro d'agrément*). This national registration gives the L&D Department a status of professional institution, with the possibility of signing educational contracts and grant degrees approved by the French Ministry of Education.

The subsidiary members of the L&D Department have different missions and responsibilities. The Italian Learning Department has the greatest number of employees for training from all subsidiaries, followed by Spain, and Russia. Other countries do not have a learning or training department, but a Human Resources Manager whose missions include managing learning activities but are not solely focused on training. These countries are called internally “*petits pays*” (small countries) by the French team because of the number of members dedicated to international tasks, annual turnover, and their use of training material which is ready to use in stores without any modifications.

At the beginning of the year 2020, the Human Resources Directorate decided that its departments should be centralized, with important changes in the current organizations. The Learning and Development Department of the French headquarters would be therefore enlarged and become part of the L&D Department World, consisting of the current member plus representatives of each subsidiary, except for the “small countries.” This new organization is planned to start gradually still in the last quarter of

2020, with monthly meetings between the team members, until its official launching at the beginning of 2021.

The French L&D Department has several training sessions in all the country dedicated to different job positions in stores. The COVID-19 crisis forced the cancelation of these learning sessions, which were planned throughout the year as regular face-to-face meetings. This crisis accelerated the demands for the digitalization of resources (See 1.1.2). Due to this, the Learning and Development Department was encouraged to change its face-to-face sessions and learning paths into a learning platform online. In consequence, the main task of the new team Learning World is to implement a digital learning platform. The contents of these platform would be made in a joint international effort and include learning sessions for all work positions in the company. At the same time, these learning sessions would require adaptations to apply in all subsidiaries according to the context of the countries.

2.1.1. Linguistic auditing

To understand the strategies proposed, it is important to analyze the problems currently faces by the L&D Department. Belyaeva and Rubtsova (2020) define linguistic auditing as the process of identifying needs, strengths, and weaknesses in a company regarding communication in foreign language. In this case we will focus on the needs of the Learning & Development Department. The French team is formed by pedagogical designers, administrative staff, and training hosts (trainers). Their English level proficiency goes from lower-intermediate to advanced, although most of the French team has a lower-intermediate level. Members of the subsidiaries collaborating with the L&D team speak their national language and have intermediate proficiency of English. Additionally, some members of this international team have a French proficiency level going from elementary to lower-intermediate, except for Italy, whose team speaks French fluently.

This scenario has created multiple communication and intercultural issues for a harmonized development of the new Team Learning World: the communication with international teams has been punctual and slow. Important decisions have been taken

separately over decades in some countries. The most visible result of this is seen in the training catalog: every subsidiary presents its own training catalog and its own methods, which differ from country to country. Nowadays, the current main challenge is to find a common offer and resources that could fit the needs of the company regardless of their location.

During the internationalization process of the company, headquarter managers have had several ideas to improve oral and written communication while exchanging with subsidiaries. One of these ideas was to set a common corporate language. To prove its efficacy, international meetings dealing with human resources subjects were held in English during the beginning of 2020, but some members of the French headquarters had difficulties to follow. On the other hand, in the occasions where code switching was used by the French members, the international participants were unable to follow. The second idea was to let the common language according to the context, which did not solve general exchange either.

As far as written communication is concerned, the need of presenting a common learning path overlapped with the need of understanding learning resources in several languages. The general difficulties from reading documents in other languages were normally overcome with the use of an automatic online translator⁶. For example, when general communications arrived, such as emails or newsletters, employees resorted to automatic translators available online to understand. However, this quick and short-term solution could not be applied when technical documents need to be used in other countries, as they are not only sharing specialized knowledge but coordinated material. In the case of the L&D Department, the training content also needed to be unified and allow some adaptations to reach all countries.

2.1.2. Translation Approach

Before the new organization plan of 2020, the L&D department required translation services in very punctual situations. Different supports were written in French to train employees in French stores and warehouses. According to members of the French learning team, they were contacted on some occasions by members of the subsidiaries

⁶ Machine translation (MT), or automatic translation, refers to the fully automatic translation of a text from a source language into a target language (Laporte, 2014).

needing help with some training subject. Translations were dealt mostly by the same requesters in the other countries (acting as *ad hoc* translators) or given to external companies.

The demand for translation of learning material has been increasing during the last years. In 2020, the number of translations of this type of texts increased for three main reasons:

1. **The centralization of the L&D Department:** Human Resources Leaders in headquarters decided that the new organization of the company should be centralized in headquarters to coordinate communication and supply subsidiaries with updated content in several areas. For the L&D Department, this was an opportunity to harmonize communication with their partners in subsidiaries.
2. **The creation of an online learning platform:** The purpose of this online training platform is connected to the centralization, as its purpose is to gather learning support and create a learning path. This project was dormant for several year, but in 2020 MNC France enforced the activation of this learning platform, since one of the important characteristics of online training is their remote access and availability for all employees regardless of their physical location. The content in the learning platform is customized according to the work position, but also presented in the language of their choice.
3. **The harmonization of training content:** For the official publishing of the platform, it was decided that the languages to be used would be French, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and Russian. This meant that all training content needed to be translated, but also adapted according to the regulations and characteristics of each country. It is also estimated that the translation demand of this contents will keep the same relevance as well after the publishing of the learning online platform.

To propose intercultural strategies suited for the team, we started by analyzing the translation process at the department. In this internship report, the methodology we applied for the linguistic auditing was based on participant observation. We started observing the main mission of the internship: translation of pedagogical content in the department. The L&D Department stated that the main purpose of the translations

requested in the department was to reach company employees in different countries so they can get a proper training in their positions. *Ad hoc* translators in the department also focused on fast delivery rather than quality. The translation process in the L&D Department is built under the reflection of the pedagogical purpose rather than equivalence (Chidlow, Plakoyiannaki, & Welch, 2014). Further observation let us to find that the translation process held in the department was based on four main strategies:

- **External services:** the department uses external translation services. The documents received from the translation companies are considered of good quality and with a good technical mastery. Nevertheless, the culture of the company is lost in these results, as some words and phrases relevant to the company culture do not appear in the final document and must be reviewed by an internal employee⁷. The price and time for the service is the highest among the translation options, but hiring external contractors helps to free up a workload that would otherwise be delegated to internal employees.
- **Internal translation by non-translator employees (ad-hoc translators):** translations are also carried out by employees of the Learning and Development Department in the subsidiaries. The company culture is transmitted as well as the corresponding terminology; however, due to the lack of technical knowledge in translations, quality is affected. In terms of time management, the working time of the employees to carry out their main task is also strongly affected.
- **Translation trainees:** The Learning and Development Department hires, at intervals, trainees in charge of the translation of the learning bases into the subsidiary languages. The demand may change according to the demand of subsidiaries and content availability. The trainees are not necessarily translators, but their career paths include studies in Applied Foreign Languages. Having a specialized person in the team has the advantage of bringing together technical and corporate culture. It is also an economic advantage that has already been

⁷ The Appendix No. 6 has a sample of a translation made by an external company, with the review of internal employees.

measured, making savings of around €5,000 per month in translation costs⁸ (See Appendix 8).

- **Machine or automatic translation:** This is the fastest and most economic solution in terms of translation. However, even though machine translation is quickly accessible with its turnkey solutions, it gives the worst return in terms of quality and message delivery. The corporate culture is not present at all, as machine translation is not able to consider the corporate context. Furthermore, machine translation leads on many occasions to a lack of understanding between team members.

These four methodologies are used according to the current budgetary status and the urgency and quality required for the work. For example, e-mails and communication between departments are translated by *ad hoc* translators and/or automatic online translation. If the demand of translation is higher, such as learning material with sessions and training sheets, the decisions are taken differently. First, the team consults with the ad-hoc translator to check for availability. If unavailable, then according to the delivery time and the amount of the demand, the L&D Department will hire a translation trainee (when there is an important but anticipated demand for translation) or contact an external translation company.

Table 4:

Qualitative grading of the L&D translation choices.

	Quality	Culture	Speed	Economy	Total
External services	4	2	2	1	9
Machine Translation	1	0	5	5	11
Internal Employees	3	5	3	4	15
Translation Interns	4	5	4	5	18

Note. This table resumes in grades, being 0 very bad and 5 very good, the translation strategies used by the Learning and Development Department.

The grades of table 4 are the result of the analysis discussed with the L&D Department. This Department also found that the grading was accurate to their perspective. As we

⁸ As we had access to previous invoices in the company made by external translation services, we found that the general rate per word given by these translation companies was of 0.25 euros per word.

can observe from this table, hiring translation interns is the option that creates the biggest return on investment (ROI). While machine translation is the fastest and the most economic, the time dedicated to review and adapt the target documents is taken from the internal employees. If machine translation is not post-edited, the company learners would find documents that are difficult to read. As a result, subsidiary employees enrolled in training would feel as left apart from the company, creating integration difficulties.

2.1.3. Data collection and definition of needs

During the internship period as a translator in the L&D Department, we conducted an internal survey among team members in subsidiaries (See Appendix 9). For this survey, we asked closed questions to 6 members of the L&D Department working in subsidiaries about the access to learning material in their language, and their need for translation of these contents. The survey was conducted online during March 2020.

All 6 members answered and the results of their participation (included in Appendix 9) show that subsidiaries have usually access to the learning support they need. Unfortunately, the content is usually available in French, with very rare exceptions of English and Spanish versions. When the learning documents arrive in a different language than the national language, the L&D members in subsidiaries must deal with the translation by themselves or hire an external company to translate the documents. After the document is translated, the results of the survey also show that there is an adaptation process in all countries, where all the subsidiaries agree on the fact that they adapt specific details to suit the document to their country best. It is customary for subsidiaries with several L&D members to be autonomous and create their own learning supports instead of waiting for the answer from the headquarters.

Upon analysis of the answers to the survey, we checked the results with the L&D manager in France, in order to confirm and define the needs of the department regarding the international approach and translation, which we list as follows:

- The L&D department needs to offer training support to subsidiaries in the country language. If translation is needed, it is preferred that it is done through an internal and centralized service.

- The option for translation services needs to be in accordance with a reduced budget and the best ROI, as one of the main goals is to create the most economic combination facing the great flow of future documents to translate.
- Give quick access and information about the translation process status to the subsidiary employees.
- Accompany the L&D Department in the French headquarters to practice improve their English level.
- Support the L&D Department with interpreting during international meetings.

The result of the survey, our participant observation, and the definition of the main needs by the Learning and Development Department served as a basis to elaborate and plan the appropriate intercultural strategies. With all the information gathered, we confirmed the urgency of these strategies to solve the communication challenges faced by the department.

2.2. Intercultural Solutions proposed at the L&D Department

As seen on the previous section, the Learning and Development Department in MNC France headquarters had a series of needs to fulfill before being prepared to collaborative international work with their counterparts. After doing a theoretical analysis of the company (1.1) and describing the linguistic needs of the team, we could design the most suitable solutions for the L&D Department. The total duration of the internship, without counting the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions in France (1.1.2.3), was of six months. During this time, as mentioned, we were mainly involved in translation work.

Once we defined the main needs, we proposed three strategies to prepare the L&D Team for an international and intercultural interaction. The role of translators is crucial for international projects (Blenkinsopp & Pajouh, 2010). For this reason, we started with one proposal of an internal translation service. Along with this, there was a later discussion with the members of the L&D Department in headquarters where the expressed more related needs to intercultural communication. Considering those needs, two additional proposals were presented. These three strategies were the ones we proposed and were unanimously agreed by the L&D Department.

Table 5:

Crossing needs and strategies for the L&D Department

Needs	Strategies
To offer training support to international countries in the country language.	To present functional specifications for an internal translation pole managed by the L&D Department.
To create the most economic combination facing the great flow of future documents to translate.	
To give quick access and information about the translation status to the international employees.	
To support the L&D Department in the French headquarters with the practice of English conversation.	To create adapted ESP material.
To provide interpreting for the L&D Department during international meetings with subsidiaries.	To practice remote simultaneous and consecutive interpreting.

At the same time, we had to keep the translation of the latest documents required urgently by the subsidiaries. Translation, together with interpreting, were considered as “runner-up” activities, as they responded to a current demand and had to be done as quickly as possible.

The following sections have been divided according to the three intercultural strategies proposed to the L&D Department. The first strategy, related to our main mission, was the proposal of an internal translation pole. This proposal also had the highest priority for the team and required further planification. Considering the internship period, the other two strategies, ESP practices and remote interpreting, were considered as secondary activities and, therefore, were addressed pragmatically.

While the main internship goal was to translate learning content, it was later seen that the issues faced by that the L&D Department, because of the sudden

internationalization process, were beyond translation. The use of language at work went from an operative issue to a strategic concern (Luo and Shenkar, 2006). During the six months of the internship period, two additional intercultural strategies were proposed: English workshops for members of the team, and remote interpreting for international meetings.

2.2.1. Strategy 1: Internal Translation Project

The coordination of managing diverse networks in several aspects such as geographics, culture, and language is indeed a great challenge (Feely & Harzing, 2002). As mentioned, in 2020, the L&D Department found a growth of translation requests for learning material that could not be longer addressed by *ad hoc* translators and surpassed the budget of the department to hire an external translation company. During our translation internship, we proposed an Internal Translation Project to address the current translation requests. This project was proposed aiming to be applied for the next fiscal year (2021).

The translation project proposed to the L&D Department needed to have three important characteristics to tackle the faced challenges:

- **Multilingual:** The learning supports required translation in all the main languages used at MNC France.
- **Centralized:** To answer the new centralization scenario, the translation flow needs to be adapted to the new context. Therefore, it is important to organize the new flow from the beginning and coordinate the translation requests. This must be done considering an appropriate IT environment, as it is essential for MNC France to follow best computer practices and keep confidentiality.
- **Harmonized:** to promote proper knowledge transfer, all translation work should be supported by harmonized terminology, available to all MNC France community.

As we considered the main characteristics, we were able to predict and define the results or deliverables to provide at the end of the internship. Managing corporate language in a department is also an issue of resource management: to improve communication and avoid intercultural issues, it is important to have the right team with the most skilled employees without forgetting the right informatic tools and training (Fredriksson, Barner-Rasmussen, & Piekkari, 2006).

For this project, therefore, the importance of human capital and technology is considered, which would help to obtain the needed translations with the quality and usage required for the L&D department. The deliverables of the project would be the following:

- **Translation Team:** Select a team of translators, with optimal language combinations for main projects. Depending on the needs of the L&D Department, these translators could be interns from or part-time translators working in stores. They must be properly identified in a database to select the right language combinations for every specific project. The subject of translations will be pedagogical and informative with a very clear and informal register. As this team would work on several documents, it is also important to prepare an internal schedule with the translation and the specified processes and make this available for consultation to ensure proper coordination.
- **Translation Management Tools:** We consider important to create a portal to receive translation orders. We also need computer-assisted translation tools (CAT) to improve the speed and quality of translations. We will use Microsoft tools to create a back-office system (for translators) and manage the translation projects. As every project follows specific steps, we consider essential to give internal access to requesters. In this way they can check the document status and the translator in charge of it.
- **Content Management Resources:** Our final product and purpose is to deliver translations of the pedagogical resources in several languages. These translations need harmonization in terminology and memory content. This project must include the creation of a terminology database, with access to employees and possibility of edition for translators. A terminological database also enables translators to access knowledge in a relatively short time (Magris, 2012). It is important to consider the appropriate resources to check and reuse previous translations. If company translators specialize in translation software (Computer Assisted Translation Tools) with internal memories (Translation Memories, TM), cost savings can be achieved together with the consistency of terminology (Warburton, 2014).

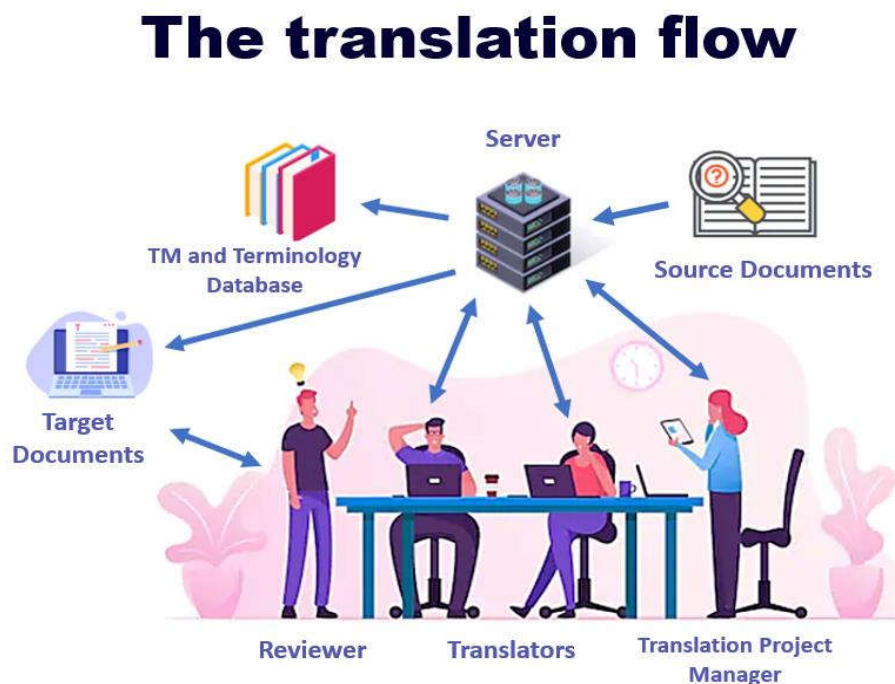
2.2.1.1. Translation team

As mentioned above, the growing demand for translation could be answered by recruiting a specialized team.

Considering the best interest of the Learning & Development Department, the proposal for the team is as follows:

Figure 9:

Diagram of the Translation team and workflow



Translation Project Manager: The translation project manager is the employee who will be responsible for the coordination and management of all translation projects. Ideally located in France to coordinate with the headquarters, their main activities will be the system management (front and back office, CAT tools), as well as the management of translation and revision of training contents. To communicate with all teams, probably working remotely with a company computer, the basic languages required to work under this position will be English and French. As head of translation, this position requires to deal with an heterogenous activity. This is manifested when the execution of tasks (translation) is combined with the decision making on that execution (management of translation projects) (Kuznik, 2011). For these reasons, the project manager must be dedicated to this mission in a full-time activity, as all the management

required cannot be executed by an *ad hoc* translator. An integral part of the work of a translation project manager is also linked to terminology (Champagne, 2004). Additionally, for the specific case of this company, the other two intercultural strategies proposed could be monitored by this manager as secondary activities.

Translation Interns: Hiring interns for the translation team brings several ROI opportunities, as mentioned before. One of the most important benefits for the company is the increase of the number of translations. For the interns, there are benefits as well since they can apply their academic knowledge in a real work environment. Depending on the target language needed, their location does not necessarily have to be in headquarters, and they could work from several countries where MNC France has subsidiary offices. Their role would be as well to supervise the terminology database while working with CAT tools. For this to work, it is advisable to establish agreements and create relations with European schools in Translation and Foreign Languages for internships. As this internship opportunity would be based in the French headquarters, regardless of their remote participation, the internship period cannot last longer than 6 months. The project manager will also act as their tutor. In case the intern is based in a subsidiary office, a representative of the L&D Department can act as a secondary tutor as well.

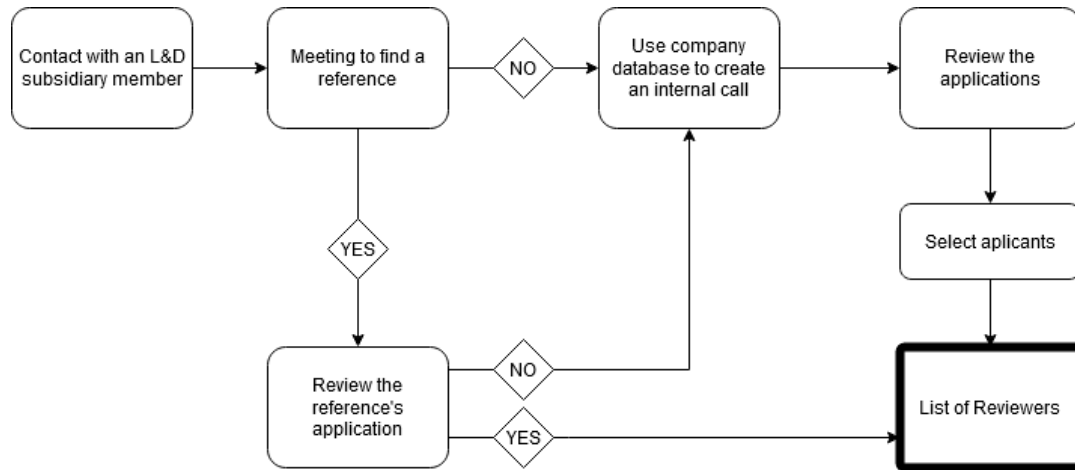
Internal Translators: MNC France also requested an alternative solution to answer to the demands outside the academic periods. There is a need of Arabic-speaking translators in the L&D Department since no one in this team (headquarters and subsidiaries) who can speak this language. In consequence, an internship would not be possible either as there is not a suitable tutor available to guide an intern. Therefore, we considered the creation of an *ad hoc* translation pool made by a selection of store sellers. The company counts with a database of the languages managed by all company employees. The employees can be therefore selected from this database and answer to the need of translation requested by the company. The employees must be in France to respond for the billable hours of their services. We also pointed out that this is a high-risk option as employees in the stores have no translation background. Moreover, it is also complicated for technological reasons. To keep company information secure, the employees can only access to company documents through corporate computers. This is sometimes difficult to achieve as employees in stores do not have a company

computer. This possibility has not yet been tested but it is included in this study as it was requested by the headquarters.

Reviewers: As the final readers are in the subsidiaries, we believe it is important to have their point of view before the publication of the materials. This is the reason why the next step was to create a team of reviewers who will also adapt the translation according to the needs of the local subsidiary. This team would not dedicate exclusively to these tasks, but it would be an additional activity outside the main tasks they currently hold. The following flow chart explains the procedure to recruit the community of reviewers:

Figure 10:

Recruitment process for the community of reviewers



Once the process was finished, we would be able to identify reviewers for the main languages needed. Internal translators would possibly act as reviewers when the amount of learning material increases. The criteria to recruit reviewers is based on their language proficiency, with an emphasis in the languages who are not spoken by the members of the L&D Department. The following table summarizes the proposal for the roles and responsibilities of the new translation team:

Table 6:

Role and responsibilities of the translation team

Role	Responsibilities and selection criteria
Translation Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front and back-office systems management.

Location: French Headquarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAT Tools management • Management and approval of glossaries • Translation and revision of documents • Languages: EN, FR (at least)
Translation Interns Location: several countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document translation with CAT Tools • Terminology work • Languages: EN, FR, ES, RU, IT, PT
Internal Translators Location: French Stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific translation of urgent documents • Translation of urgent documents (simple documents which could not be addressed by the Translation project manager or interns. • Access to glossaries in read mode • Rebilled hours in store <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 250 words = 1 hour of translation • Languages: RU, AR (priority and according to their language skills)
Reviewers Location: Subsidiary Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of translated documents by interns and internal translators • Part-time activity (according to the demand) • Languages: EN, FR, ES, RU, IT, PT

As exposed, this section presents the most-suitable team to work in the internal translation project of the Learning & Development Department. In this first part of the translation project strategy, we referred to the human resources needed and the specific requirements for each function. It is also important to put each of the presented positions in context and align them with the technical resources, which is why the following section explain the technical tools needed to deliver an effective work inside this new department.

2.2.1.2. Technical resources

After the presentation of the human resources needed for the execution of this internal translation project, we consider the importance of presenting the technical details

involved. To begin with, we introduce the functional perimeter of a translation request handled by the team. Before explaining every technical resource, we seek to synthesize the process by presenting the following flowchart:

Figure 11:

Functional perimeter of the translation team

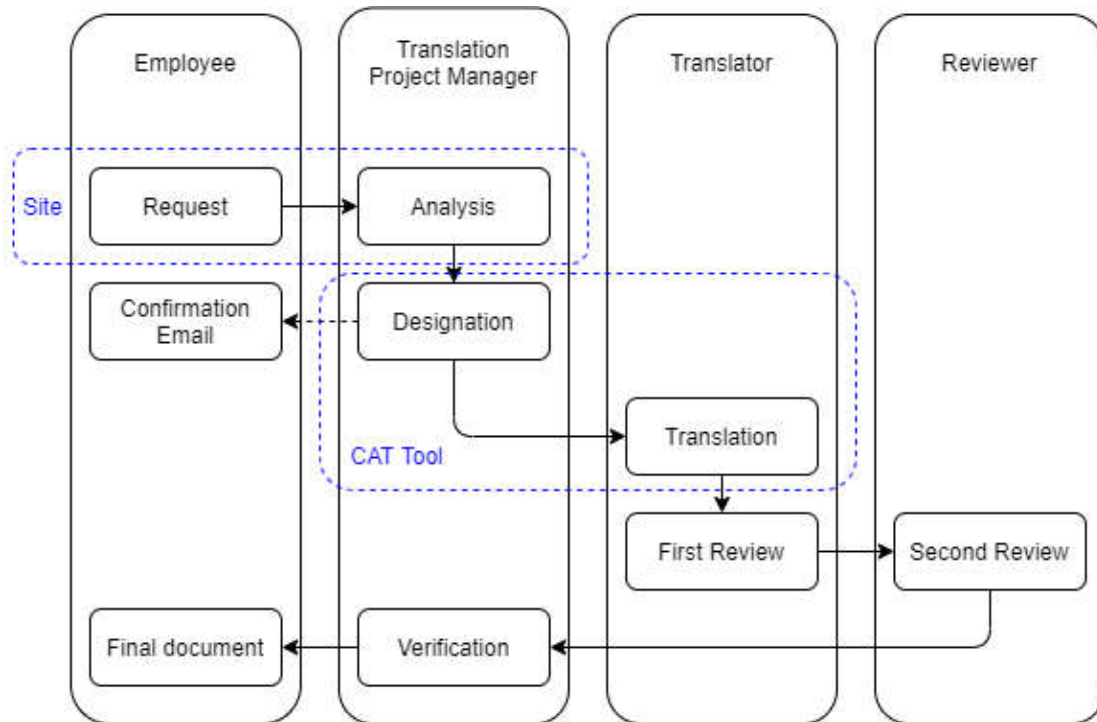


Figure 8 explains the functional perimeter of a translation request and aligns it with the team members and tools (Microsoft Office, translation portal, and CAT) needed to deliver a final translation or document. The flow begins with a request send by an employee through the translation site. This order arrives to a shared e-mail, where the Translation Project Manager receives it. This manager then confirms the request by communicating with the employee and uploading the project status in the translation site. The Project Manager designates the translation to the translator with the appropriate language pair. After the translation is done, the translator sends the document to a reviewer, which will confirm the accuracy and readiness to deliver the complete translation. These dynamics provides real-time information of the translators in charge of a document through a centralized translation workflow, using the tools made available in coordination with the IT Department, which helps employees to be constantly updated of the status of their request.

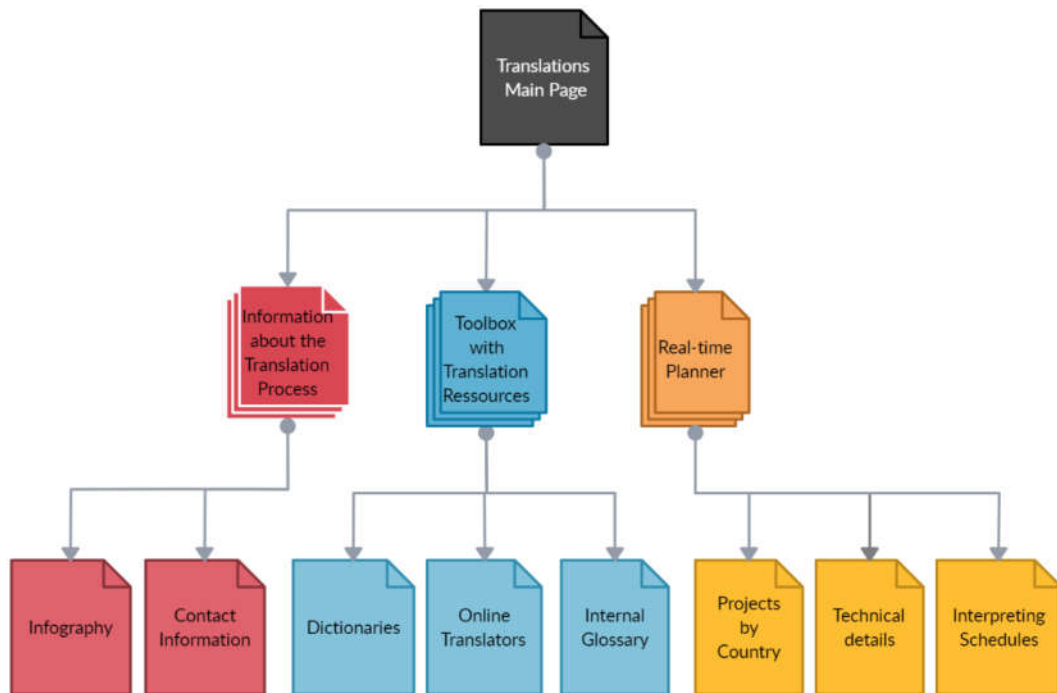
As said before, this model was developed as the most-economic solution to avoid external translations rates. This economic solution is focused on cost reduction, and external translation services are extremely expensive for their yearly budget. In general, external translation services are only considered when *ad hoc* translators and interns are not available.

Translation site details: The main information concerning the translation team would be presented on an internal site, with access to a glossary and automatic translation resources if the employee considers that their order is simple enough to be dealt with an automatic translator. Employees can recur to automatic translation sites when their demand is simple, such as quick email responses. A list of free automatic translation available will be listed on the site.

It will be important as well that this site shows a precise process for translation requests. At the beginning, the Team Learning and & Development considered a translation request service to register and consult orders for future translators. However, with new priorities taken into consideration by the company to tackle the sanitary crisis, including the shift of budget priorities, we decided to take advantage of the information tools we had already available at the company. It was decided then to create a SharePoint webpage (site) with the following structure:

Figure 12:

Tree Diagram of the Translation Site



As employees were not familiar with translation processes, it was decided that the translation site would be divided into 3 parts:

1. The first part of the site would be used to inform about the process to submit a translation request to the L&D Department, including contact information to solve any further doubts.
2. The second part would include a set of external translation and language resources that could help employees to solve quick translation demands, such as e-mail translations. This part will also contain an internal French-English glossary with 500 entries with terminology used in stores and headquarters, developed by us during the internship.
3. The third part includes a Planner tool. We selected Microsoft Planner as it was included in the available company tools and responded to our need of planification. This tool allows, by the creation of a "to do" list, to plan efficiently, collaborate, and keep track of current tasks and timelines. It is also possible to designate the members of the project on a particular subject, and share this list with employees requesting a translation, so they can be constantly informed of a translation status.

The interface of the translation site tried also to answer the needs of the L&D Department in terms of design with intuitive and user-friendly characteristics, such as clear divisions, visible icons, explanatory infographic, etc.

CAT Tool details: To implement the project, the team also needs to choose an appropriate CAT Tool⁹. Translation professionals learn this software to improve and uniformize the content of the translation material. The L&D Department requested to list the most suitable CAT Tools, to choose one. For this selection, the following factors were considered: budget, terminology management, memory (TM) management under a private server, export quality (layout presentation), and intuitiveness. Considering these elements, we chose CafeTran Espresso as our CAT tool. This software written in Java runs on Microsoft Windows, MacOSX, and Linux environments.

Project Management Phases: To manage this project, we considered the phases of a project management cycle: initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and control, and closure (Villanova University, 2019). The following chart presents the phases with the actions to be applied in this project:

Table 7:

Project Management Lifecycle of the Translation Service

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Main Tasks</i>	<i>Actors</i>
<i>Initiation</i>	Business Case Document	- Translation Project Manager
	Feasibility Study	- Translation Project Manager - L&D Department
<i>Planning</i>	Report with technical specifications	- Translation Project Manager - IT Department
	Budget definition	- Translation Project Manager - L&D Department
<i>Execution</i>	Design of the Translation Service Portal	- Translation Project Manager
	CAT tools installation	- Translation Project Manager - IT Department
	Glossary publication	- Translation Project Manager
	Personnel recruitment	- Translation Project Manager - L&D Department
<i>Monitoring</i>	Test flow on all informatic tools	- Translation Project Manager - IT Department
	Training and performance interview with translators	- Translation Project Manager - L&D Department
<i>Closure</i>	Official launching of the translation service	- Translation Project Manager - L&D Department

⁹ A Computer-Assisted Translation is a software that creates an internal translation memory and helps to standardize the text, where a human translator is involved in the process (Laporte, 2014).

The budget for this project will be defined considering factors such as CAT Tool license, internal invoice from the IT Department (including specific hardware), recruitment costs, webpage maintenance, and others. The start date is to be approved by the Human Resources Directorate. Thus, when dealing with large volumes of translation, Warburton (2014) recommends showing the value of terminological work and mention the guidelines for its design, selection, and appropriate workflow with a present a feasibility study, which could take from several months to a year.

2.2.2. Strategy 2: Offer of English for Specific Purposes Practices

As mentioned in Corporate Language at MNC France, the company is in line with the use of English as a *lingua franca* for specific departments. English classes are paid if the employees' tasks require English proficiency; and if the employees are based on France, they can also use their CPF (Personal Training Accounts). As mentioned in the section Corporate Language at MNC France (1.3.1.2), the CPF is an account given by the state that cumulates training hours during a professional activity, to exchange for any training of the employee's interest. When this option is selected, they can study with a company of their own choice. The L&D Department is also in charge of informing and helping employees about their options to learn languages in general; and they have two members of the department in charge of these administrative procedures. All this is administratively managed by the L&D Department. Therefore, we can state that the English courses are already organized in a broad spectrum. When consulted, the L&D Department in France agreed unanimously about their need to practice English in addition to the concerted classes.

Considering the requirement of the L&D Department, we thought that the best idea to practice of English was to prepare sessions based on English for Specific Purposes (ESP); which is centered on the methodologies of designing and running a language course to serve learners communication needs in a certain domain (Taillefer, 2018; Kenny & Işık-Taş, 2020). The main difference between ESP and English for General Purposes (EGP) is the setting of specific goals to use English in distinguished areas (Hyland, 2002).

English for Specific Purposes under a business environment helps employees to effectively use the skills they already master in their native language such as presentations, negotiations, meetings, small talk, correspondence, report writing, and so on (Rao, 2019). To create efficient language sessions, it is important to consider the

motivations of learners to have a positive effect and improve their attitude towards learning (Taillefer, 2018). In addition to the main internship tasks of proposing an internal translation department, we considered it was important to propose two main ESP activities to the L&D Department in France: English Conversation workshops and a portal with online English resources.

2.2.2.1. English Conversation Workshops

The L&D Department in France agreed that their main interest for the workshops was to practice their conversational skills (listening and speaking) under an informal environment. To do this, it was important to consider the main goals of applying listening and speaking activities. According to Rao (2019), listening involves several processes such as recognizing speech, understanding the meaning of individual words and the syntax of sentences; whereas speaking shows the results of analyzing questions, facts, and seek for clarification. For the workshops, we proposed two different conversation activities:

English Lunch: This workshop was the one with a more informal setting. The main purpose of this activity was to improve daily conversation skills, or everyday spoken language (Welch, Welch, & Piekkari, 2005). These types of conversations were also part of the international meetings in the L&D Department. One part of these L&D meetings consisted in “warm-up” activities, where they had to talk about personal experiences or preferences according to the subjects asked.

To do this activity, the French L&D Department agreed to meet once a week during lunch time. In general, the casual setting of lunch in the company helps to discuss all kinds of informal topics. In line with the company, the French team does not have a typical lunch table, but a living room decoration with sofas and a coffee table, encouraging informal conversations. These face-to-face activities were replaced by virtual meetings during the COVID-19 lockdown in France. Despite of the modalities, the preparation and execution of the English Lunch activity was the same.

At the time of the meeting, participants received a copy shaped as a restaurant menu with the subject of the week (See Appendix No. 11). The material was divided into four pages. The first two pages were held identical for every week, with a table of contents and the basic rules to follow, all encouraging participation and mutual aid. The third page presented a list of questions around a unique subject to enable conversations.

Lastly, the fourth page had basic grammar rules and vocabulary related to the weekly subject to help the team continue the conversation.

English Games: These were a series of pedagogical games to practice English as part of a “warm up” activity of any meeting. We proposed a series of games lasting from 10 to 30 minutes with instructions. We considered important to give a page with instructions in French to enable the L&D Department to practice these activities with autonomy. In this way, a voluntary team member could act as a guide. The pedagogical page contained the objectives, methodology, proposed sequence, and necessary tips for the activity.

Figure 13:

Sample of an ESP instruction page

Draw with Me

Objectifs :

- Créer un moment de convivialité et d'interaction entre les apprenants
- Mettre les participants en énergie

Méthode / technique pédagogique :

- Jeu et échange entre les apprenants

Déroulement :

- Réunissez les apprenants par deux et asseyez-les dos à dos.
- et donnez à chacun une carte/image, en la plaçant face vers le bas pour empêcher de voir les cartes de l'autre.
- Les apprenant doivent décrire l'image EN ANGLAIS pour que leur partenaire puisse la dessiner, sans donner le nom de la profession.
- Chaque binôme doit montrer ses dessins à la fin de l'exercice.

Outils pédagogiques

- Présentiel : Feuilles, stylos et feutres. Set des cartes/images
- Distanciel : Feuilles, stylos et feutres. Chaque carte/image s'envoie en message privé

Astuces :

- Essaie de donner des cartes par rapport au niveau des langue de chaque binôme.

Nombre	Durée	Niveau de langue
Tous (en paires)	15 min (en fonction de la taille du groupe)	Élémental (A1-A2) ★☆☆
		Intermédiaire (B1-B2) ★★☆☆
		Avancée (C1-C2) ★★★

Bonne séance de formation !

Avant le contenu de cette synthèse, gardez toujours, merci de tenir en compte les dernières mises à jour des documents utilisés pour le développement de la synthèse.

Note. In this sample we can see the different instructions given to practice an activity with autonomy.

Both conversation workshops were practiced in the L&D Department in France with good feedback from all members of the team. As these activities were unanimously welcomed, it was later decided by the team that these activities could be included in a

webpage from the L&D France site to make them available for other areas, including headquarters and stores in the French territory.

2.2.2.2. English Resources Website

The L&D Department has an internal website in the company, where employees, after login in, can access to different types of resources. Before the COVID-19 crisis, this website used to contain exclusively administrative information (inscription procedures and enrolling requirements for face-to-face activities). During the first lockdown, L&D Department expanded their offer to include learning resources that were available online to help employees access to virtual trainings. In addition to the different subjects that were directly related to the company, the L&D Department decided to include the most popular online resources to practice English at home. This was therefore included as an additional task during the internship. This website consisted of three parts:

1. **Levels and placement test:** The L&D Department shared that many employees were not aware of their English level and were not able to describe it efficiently, creating doubts of how to address their needs. Then, the first part of the webpage explained the different levels of language learning according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2020). In this part, the CEFR was detailed as an infography followed by a placement test to help employees solve their doubts about their own proficiency.
2. **Online English Resources:** The second part of the website included several online resources to practice English, classified in different levels according to the CEFR. The information of each page came with practical information, such as enrollment and payment options to help employees access to the most-suitable resources for their needs. We also created and included video tutorial following feedback and several questions from employees who were having difficulties enrolling to some online courses.
3. **English Conversation Workshops:** The last part of the website included all the conversation workshops mentioned before, which were practiced in the L&D Department France. This part also included a list of most common phrases to use during an international meeting (See Appendix No. 11).

Overall, the main idea of these resources was to help employees understand and interpret various business documents including correspondence, records, charts, and specifications (Rao, 2019).

2.2.3. Strategy 3: Interpreting service during international meetings

As ESP education and English training were part of a long-term strategy, it was important to give short-term solutions to meetings that were already in course. Before the internship, meetings in the international L&D Department were held in English. During the meetings, as not all members of the French team were proficient in English, the strategy of code-switching was used. This strategy consists in addressing other employees quickly in their mother tongue to clarify information (Belyaeva & Rubtsova, 2020). However, on several occasions, members of the French team kept speaking in their mother tongue. This made impossible to all members to understand themselves fully. From our observation and the discussions made with the L&D Department in France, we synthesized the different proficiency skills of all the members of L&D Department in the following chart:

Table 8:

Yes/No chart of the language proficiency at the L&D Department

	Speaking EN	Listening EN	Speaking FR	Listening FR
Participants FR	NO	YES	YES	YES
Participants EN	YES	YES	NO	NO

Note. Here we can see that the members from headquarters and subsidiaries are able to understand English, even if not all of them have speaking fluency.

Considering this, it was important in the internship mission as well to aid both parties to understand better during international meetings through interpreting. After exchanging information with the French L&D Department, it was agreed that interpreting was the best solution to tackle these challenges during international meetings¹⁰. For the meetings held online, simultaneous, and consecutive interpreting

¹⁰ According to Stachowiak-Szymczak (2019), interpreting can be understood as an act of cognitive, inter-lingual mediation.

would be applied during international meetings. The following section explains both interpreting modes and the technical details applied to overcome the mission.

2.2.3.1. Simultaneous and consecutive interpreting during meetings

The two modes selected, consecutive and simultaneous interpreting are part of interpretation studies; however, despite sharing similarities, their execution and cognitive approach are not the same. Simultaneous interpreting, as its name indicates, consists of producing a target speech, alongside the source speech, on a very short limit of time called ear-voice span (Stachowiak-Szymczak, 2019). The interpreter keeps a similar pace with the speaker, and it must consider the cognitively exhausting task behind it (Laver & Mason, 2018).

Consecutive interpreting also processes the target speech, but the delivery time differs. The interpreter's speech during consecutive interpreting is given after the speech of a speaker in a foreign language, with lengths within one to twenty minutes and relying on a combination of notes, memory, and general knowledge to recreate a target version of the original (Gillies, 2019). These processes were analyzed and studied throughout the years from different perspectives to develop and improve these techniques over time (Stachowiak-Szymczak, 2019). For consecutive interpreting, we followed the descriptions and techniques elaborated by Jean-François Rozan (Rozan, 1956). In this book, *La prise de notes en interprétation consecutive*, the first abbreviation methods and descriptions, despite being proposed several decades before, contain classic techniques which have little changed since (Gillies, 2019).

Because of the sanitary measures taken in place during 2020, and according to the needs of the L&D Department, these both techniques needed to be delivered under remote interpreting. Remote interpreting is done when the interpreter is not physically present at the location of the primary interlocutors, usually by telephone or videoconference, where sound and image are transmitted by digital network lines, affording a view of the speaker (Laver & Mason, 2018).

2.2.3.2. Technical details and settings

During the internship period, MNC France used Microsoft Teams as their official tool for communication and collaboration (including videoconferences). To preserve informatic security, employees were explicitly prohibited to use any other existing conferencing tools. However, until the publication of this internship report, Microsoft

Teams did not have specific options for interpreters, such as an isolated channel (Microsoft, 2020). After several suggestions in forums, an add-on solution is on course of elaboration, but no official date is yet published (Microsoft Teams Engineering, 2020).

Concurrently, a solution needed to be found to apply remote interpreting during the international meetings held by the L&D Department. As all participants understood English, it was necessary to ensure that the subsidiary members of the L&D Department had access to interpreting from French into English from one additional software. We contacted the IT support of the company to find information for any approved and existing application to call the participants who needed interpreting. We agreed with the IT Department on the usage of a telephone application. We presented the following diagram to explain the process of remote interpreting using a main channel (call on Microsoft Teams) and a second channel (application).

Figure 14:

Diagram of the remote interpretation process



This figure represents all the participants of an international meeting and the communication characteristics to provide interpreting. The participants either speak French or English, and the primary language for the meeting is French. Therefore,

another audio channel is proposed through a conference site. This way, we can offer simultaneous remote interpreting to the English-speaking participants. As mentioned before, this solution has been approved by the IT Department while we wait for an official Microsoft Teams add-on.

CHAPTER III – CONCLUSIONS

This internship report addressed the activities performed in the headquarters of the Learning & Development Department of MNC France, a multinational fashion company. Under this scope, it presents the different intercultural issues concerning MNC France and a project proposal to address the challenges faced by their L&D Department under a multidisciplinary approach. The main source for the preparation of this report is based on the various lessons learned from the daily practice at the company. The many interviews with colleagues of the Learning & Development Department and access to company documents enabled us to give this report consistency.

Our main activity was the translation of pedagogical material. During our activity, we translated and reviewed content in five working languages: English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. While working with a Computer-Assisted Translation software, we could estimate the economic value of our translations for the company.

Table 9:

Estimated cost of the translation activities

Language	Words Translated	Estimated amount
English	14181	3550.25 €
French	2745	686.25 €
Spanish	8370	2092.50 €
Italian	15944	3987.25 €
Portuguese	4392	1098.00 €
	Revenue	11 538,00 €

Note. This information was collected from the automatic project statistics option using the CAT Tool named CafeTran Espresso. Detailed information of every language is included in Appendix 8.

During this assessment, we realized that the L&D Department difficulties in headquarters to communicate with subsidiaries exceeded this main activity. As we have mentioned, many multinational corporations, especially those with an ethnocentric approach, do not consider the lack of language management as an important issue for proper intercultural management. Forgetting the importance of language in corporate strategies creates barriers in several levels, and block knowledge transfer. Language is,

indeed, an important mediation tool and, together with knowledge transfer, needs proper attention. The strategies proposed to the L&D Department of MNC France aimed to enable communication and transfer corporate culture and knowledge. This transfer is key because it allows coordination and facilitates the alignment of the subsidiaries with the corporate culture. When companies consider the importance of intercultural strategies, they can evolve as a whole hyperconnected entity and not as a group of isolated offices working on their own, without sharing expertise with their partner countries.

On account of this, we started by proposing an internal translation project, which we considered our best solution for the Department. Further cooperation with this team let us see that other strategies should be proposed. These group of propositions were named intercultural strategies, since they addressed issues such as communication, corporate culture, and knowledge transfer. After observation, discussion, and agreement with the L&D Department (See 2.1), we defined three actions to apply in total: an internal translation project, an offer of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) practices, and interpreting services during international meetings.

The proposition of an internal translation project was a very challenging task in a personal and professional level, particularly under the COVID-19 crisis, where MNC France took economic measures to avoid a negative impact in their revenues (See 1.1.2.3). One of these preventive measures was the suspension all new projects until a stable context is declared by the financial department. Until the writing of this report, this preventive measure was not yet retired. Therefore, the execution of this first strategy is still pending.

The other two strategies, as they had a more practical approach, were successfully applied in the L&D Department. We conducted English for Specific Purposes (ESP) workshops, which were attended by members of the Department. The activities proposed during the workshops helped the members of the French headquarters to practice their communicational skills in English. At the end of the internship, all international meetings started with “warm up” sessions completely held on English. Likewise, cooperation and exchanges with subsidiary members is increasing. The members of the L&D Department stated that the publication of the “Most important

phrases to use at meetings” (See Appendix 11) helped them prepare in advance to present their weekly activities to subsidiary members of the Department.

The third strategy, remote interpreting, was used for every international meeting. This strategy was also a heuristic experience in a personal level since it gave us an introduction to the informatic architecture behind remote interpreting. It allowed us to coordinate with the IT Department of the company and explore the current technologies available for this service. The interpreting services during international meetings were highly appreciated by all the members of the L&D Department, both in headquarters and subsidiaries. This was as well indicated by the fact that, since the launching of the remote interpreting services, all international meetings held by the department considered and booked this service.

We believe that corporate communication is a subject in which we have only found the surface of an intercultural topic. We recommend further analysis about the intangible assets of intercultural strategies, especially in multinational companies. To that end, we encourage a deeper analysis of the influence and value of intercultural strategies. Finally, for all intercultural strategies, we recommend addressing terminology issues properly to create adequate knowledge transfer.

This internship experience was an opportunity to learn about the business world of fashion in France, and the strategies for establishing a corporate culture in countries located in different continents. Beyond enriching our personal knowledge of international business models, through the observation of the Learning & Development Department, this internship allowed us to understand the importance of internal educational materials used by and for employees of an international company. This was therefore a favorable circumstance to see how a company in the retail sector develops in an international context, challenges itself and evolves over time.

The academic context of this internship was conducted under our enrollment in the Master in Intercultural Studies for Business. This opportunity was given as part of a Double Diploma agreement with the University of Artois, where we pursue the Master in Languages and Intercultural Management. This Portuguese-French academic experience in international business, communication and cultures, combined with our Peruvian origins, is an opportunity we felt honored to participate. All the lessons learned during our internship inspired and motivated us to create a consulting company

specialized in intercultural strategies. We are pleased to say that we will continue our work with MNC France, as our first client, for the proper implementation of the three intercultural strategies proposed at the L&D department.

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Appendix No. 1: Glossary

code switching: Code switching is the action of talking in a native language between members of a meeting, different than the one officially used (Feely & Harzing, 2008)

corporate communication: Communication happening inside the company; that is, inside and between divisions, headquarter and subsidiaries, and between the company and its environment (Andersen & Rasmussen, 2002).

Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT): It is a software that creates an internal Translation Memory (TM) and helps to standardize the text, where a human translator is involved in the process (Laporte, 2014).

culture: The set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs (UNESCO, 2009, p. 18).

functional language: The language formally designated for verbal and written use by an MNC and its network. This is the language appearing in major organizational documents, used in major events, and required from managerial personnel as a prerequisite for hire (Luo & Shenkar, 2006)

interculturality: A pragmatic and immediate process where people from different cultures share a common context of interaction (Huelva Unternbäumen, 2016).


liberation management: a management style where employees have complete freedom and responsibility to take actions that they consider the best for the company's vision, without asking their superiors or follow procedures in the range of their scopes (Getz & Carney, 2009).

machine translation (MT): It refers to the fully automatic translation of a text from a source language into a target language (Laporte, 2014).

remote interpreting: Interpreting of one or more distant speakers, where the interpreter has a video-mediated view of the other participants at a given event (Gillies, 2019).

return on investment (ROI): A financial ratio that compares the benefit or profit obtained in relation to the investment made and represents a tool to analyze the performance that the company has from a financial point of view.

Appendix No. 2: Page cover of the Cultural Barometer sent to study the corporate values at MNC France.



Cultural Barometer

Welcome to the Values Assessment

Please select your language.

[English](#) [Français](#) [Italiano](#)
[Português](#) [Русский](#) [Español](#)

INSTRUCTIONS

What is this cultural barometer ?

A barometer sent to all the 🇺🇸 worldwide, with the purpose of :

- Putting words on what is 🇺🇸 current culture
- Measuring the alignment or differences with the 🇺🇸's aspirations



Practically, how does it work ?

Take 15-20 min before June 15th to answer 3 questions anonymously, by choosing successively among a list of words :

- 10 words that describe your personal values
- 10 words that describe the ways to be & act at 🇺🇸 today
- 10 words that describe the ways to be & act at 🇺🇸 tomorrow to reach our full potential

We would like you to choose your words thoughtfully and to step back from the current context (COVID-19...) to obtain a picture as close as possible to 🇺🇸 reality

0% complete

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Appendix No. 3: Discussions about cooptation with the Spanish Team



Appendix No. 4: Automatic translator in MNC's internal social network

 **XXXXXXXXXXXX** 2h ago Seen by 53

Bonjour, est-ce que quelqu'un saurait s'il s'agit bien d'un article de chez nous, et si oui, auriez-vous la référence ?
Merci et bonne journée 😊

Show translation



Like Comment Share

Be the first to like this

 **XXXXXXXXXXXX** 1h ago 1

Hola! La referencia es |||| 😊

Show translation

Like Comment Share

 **XXXXXXXXXXXX** in reply to **XXXXXXXXXXXX** 1h ago 1

Super merci de ta réponse !

Show translation

Like Comment Share

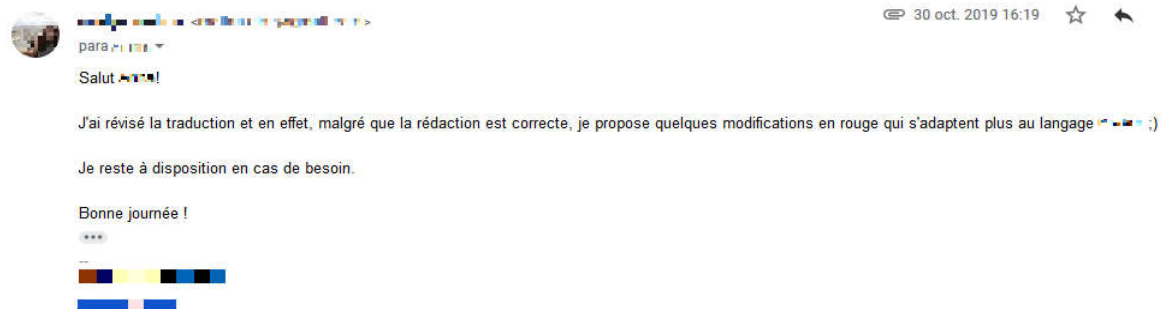
Appendix No. 5: Sample of glossary in a Merchandising Book

GLOSSARY LEXIQUE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ SINGLE-LEVEL HANGING RAIL ■ PENDERIE SIMPLE HAUTEUR ■ MODULINO SEMPLICE ALTEZZA ■ MUEBLE SIMPLE ALTURA ■ MÓVEL ALTURA SIMPLE ■ НИЗКОЕ ПАНДРИ ■ WIESZAK PODŁOGOWY O POJEDYNCZEJ WYSOKOŚCI 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ DOUBLE-LEVEL HANGING RAIL ■ PENDERIE DOUBLE HAUTEUR ■ MODULINO DOPPIA ALTEZZA ■ MUEBLE DOBLE ALTURA ■ MÓVEL ALTURA DUPLA ■ ВЫСОКОЕ ПАНДРИ ■ WIESZAK PODŁOGOWY O PODWÓJNEJ WYSOKOŚCI 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 67 INCHES HANGING RAIL ■ PENDERIE DE 1.70M ■ MODULINO DI 1.70M ■ MUEBLE DE 1.70M ■ MÓVEL ALTURA DE 1.70M ■ ПАНДРИ 1,70M ВЫСОТА ■ SZAFKA Z 1.70M 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TABLE ■ TABLE ■ TAVOLO ■ MESA MODA ■ MESA MODA ■ СТОЛ МОД ■ STÓL 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TABLE 3 LEVELS ■ TABLE (3 NIVEAUX) ■ TAVOLO 3 LIVELLI ■ MESA 3 NIVELES ■ MESA 3 NIVEIS ■ СТОЛ ППХ ■ STÓL 3 POZIOMY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ OVAL TABLE ■ TABLE OVALE ■ TAVOLO OVALE ■ MESA OVALADA ■ MESA OVAL ■ СТОЛ ППХ KIDS ■ OWALNY STÓL 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ PYRAMID TABLE, 6 LEVELS ■ TABLE PYRAMIDE, 6 NIVEAUX ■ TAVOLO PIRAMIDE, 6 LIVELLI ■ MESA PIRÁMIDE, 6 NIVELES ■ MESA PIRÁMIDE, 6 NIVEIS ■ СТОЛ ДЖИНС ■ STÓL PIRAMIDA, 6 POZIOMÓW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TABLE 3 LEVELS WITH CLOSET ■ TABLE 3 NIVEAUX AVEC PENDERIE ■ TAVOLO 3 LIVELLI CON ARMADIO ■ MESA DE 3 NIVELES CON CLOSET ■ MESA 3 NIVEIS COM ARMÁRIO ■ СТОЛ МОД БЕЙБИ ■ STÓL 3 POZIOMY Z SZAFY 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ PRODUCT PRESENTATION TOTEM ■ TOTEM DE PRESENTATION PRODUIT ■ PRESENTAZIONE DEL PRODOTTO TOTEM ■ PRESENTACIÓN DEL PRODUCTO TOTEM ■ APRESENTAÇÃO DO PRODUTO TOTEM ■ ПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ ПРОДУКТА TOTEM ■ PREZENTACJA PRODUKTU TOTEM
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TOP BEARING ■ PORTANT HAUT ■ CUSCINETTO SUPERIORE ■ RODAMIENTO SUPERIOR ■ ROLAMENTO SUPERIOR ■ ПОРТАНТ ■ GÓRNY PIERŚCIEŃ ŁOŻYSKOWY 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ T-STAND WITH MODEL ■ T STAND MANNEQUIN ■ T STAND MODELLO ■ T-STAND MANIQUÍ ■ T-STAND MANEQUIM ■ T-STAND MAHEKEN ■ T-STAND MODELU
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ REMOVABLE T-STAND ■ T-STAND AMOVIBLE ■ T STAND RIMOVIBILE ■ T-STAND EXTRAÍBLE ■ T-STAND REMOVÍVEL ■ T-STAND ■ T-STAND WYMIENNE 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ T-STAND FOR LINGERIE ■ T STAND LINGERIE ■ T STAND LINGERIE ■ T-STAND LENCERIA ■ T-STAND LINGERIE ■ T-СТАНД НИЖНЕЕ БЕЛЬЕ ■ T-STAND BIELIZNA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ HALF MOON (S-SHAPED) ■ DEMI-LUNE EN S ■ DEMI-LUNE (A FORMA DI S) ■ DEMI-LUNE (EN S) ■ MEIA-LUA (EM S) ■ ПОЛОВИНА ДЕМИЛУНЫ ■ PÓŁKSIĘŻYC (S-SHAPED) 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ HALF MOON (CIRCLE SHAPE) ■ DEMI-LUNE EN CERCLE ■ DEMI-LUNE (CERCHIO) ■ DEMI-LUNE (EN CÍRCULO) ■ MEIA-LUA (EM CÍRCULO) ■ ДЕМИЛУНЫ ■ HALF MOON (W KÓŁKO)

Appendix No. 6: Sample of an external translation requested by the L&D Department

This is a sample of an external company translation and the corrections made by employees, where the modifications made by them are done in red.



Rituels managériaux	Managerial routines Management routines
Accueillir & intégrer de manière Waouh !	Welcome & induct integrate in Wow style!
À chaque intégration	At each induction integration
ENTRETIEN D'INTÉGRATION	INDUCTION APPRAISAL Integration review
Féliciter, encourager, faire grandir	Congratulate, encourage, nurture make [REDACTED] grow
Au quotidien	Every day
COACHING FLASH	FLASH COACHING
Écouter, débriefer, prioriser, décider et accompagner	Listen, debrief, prioritise, decide and support
1x par mois (ou 3x par an minimum)	Once a month (or at least three times a year)
RENCONTRE INDIVIDUELLE (XXXX)	INDIVIDUAL MEETING (ONGOING-DA) ([REDACTED])
Co-construire et échanger sur mes talents, compétences et objectifs	Co-construct and talk about my talents, skills and objectives
1x par an	Once a year
ENTRETIEN DE DÉVELOPPEMENT (XXXX)	DEVELOPMENT APPRAISAL (DA) REVIEW ([REDACTED])
Débriefer, développer et accompagner	Debrief, develop and support
1x par an	Once a year
TALENT REVIEW	TALENT REVIEW
Informier et donner du sens sur ma rémunération	Inform and give meaning to my remuneration
1x par an	Once a year
DÉBRIEF RÉMUNÉRATION	REMUNERATION DEBRIEF
Donner le sens, créer de la valeur humaine et financière	Give meaning, create human and financial value
Tout au long de l'année	All year long
ANIMATION DE L'ACTIONNARIAT	SHAREHOLDER COORDINATION ANIMATION
Se découvrir, co-construire et mobiliser autour d'un projet d'équipe	Discover oneself, co-construct and create gather momentum around a team project
À chaque changement de leader	At each change of leader
REPRISE D'ÉQUIPE	TAKING OVER A TEAM
Prioriser les actions, fédérer autour d'objectifs communs	Prioritise actions, bring people on board around common objectives

Au lancement d'activité	When launching the activity
BRIEFING / DEBRIEFING	BRIEFING / DEBRIEFING
Échanger, écouter, prioriser, décider et fédérer	Discuss, listen, prioritise, decide and bring people on board
1x par mois	Once a month
RÉUNION D'ÉQUIPE	TEAM MEETING
Mobiliser & mettre en énergie les équipes autour des victoires & enjeux	Mobilise & inject energy into teams Gather & energize teams around victories & issues
1x par an	Once a year
LANCEMENT D'ANNÉE & FEUILLE DE ROUTE	YEAR LAUNCH & ROADMAP
Rituels individuels	Individual routines
Rituels collectifs	Collective routines
Je suis XXXX	I am a XXXX
J'incarne le profil XXXX : sens client passionné, entrepreneur, bienveillant et exigeant et généreux.	I embody the XXXX profile: passionate about customer service, entrepreneurial, kind welcoming and demanding and generous
Je suis Leader	I am a Leader
J'incarne le profil XXXX et les missions du Leader : inspirant et porteur de sens, facilitateur d'équipe, révélateur de talents, bienveillant et exigeant.	I embody the XXXX profile and Leader's missions: inspiring and conveying meaning, team facilitator, talent scout developer , welcoming kind and demanding.

Appendix No. 7: Statistics of the translation activities

These calculations were made using CafeTran Espresso and consider all documents that were translated through this software for the 6 months of the internship.

Matchboard Memoire IFD - FRPT TM-Town.com DeepL Glossaire IFD FR-EN Statistics					
STOP	PROJECT STATISTICS				
	Segments	Words	Characters		Percent
Translated segments	1974	14181	71405	84001	99.9%
Untranslated segments	5	20	85	100	0.1%
All segments	1979	14201	71490	84101	100%
Repeated segments	642	2909	14287	16675	19.8%
Target segments		13877	66760	78855	

Rate	Source segments	Target segments	Register
1 word = 0.25 EUR	3550.25 EUR	3469.25 EUR	

**CAT Tool
Statistics
English**

Total: 3550,25 euros

STOP	PROJECT STATISTICS				
	Segments	Words	Characters		Percent
Translated segments	411	2745	14503	16893	100%
Untranslated segments	0	0	0	0	0%
All segments	411	2745	14503	16893	100%
Repeated segments	1	6	26	32	0.2%
Target segments		2716	15243	17584	

Rate	Source segments	Target segments	Register
1 word = 0.25 EUR	686.25 EUR	679.0 EUR	

**CAT Tool
Statistics
French**

Total: 686,25 euros

STOP	PROJECT STATISTICS				
	Segments	Words	Characters		Percent
Translated segments	982	8370	43259	50809	100%
Untranslated segments	0	0	0	0	0%
All segments	982	8370	43259	50809	100%
Repeated segments	6	19	82	98	0.2%
Target segments		8080	42462	50152	

Rate	Source segments	Target segments	Register
1 word = 0.25 EUR	2092.5 EUR	2020.0 EUR	

**CAT Tool
Statistics
Spanish**

Total: 2092,5 euros

STOP	PROJECT STATISTICS				
	Segments	Words	Characters		Percent
Translated segments	629	4392	24279	28136	100%
Untranslated segments	0	0	0	0	0%
All segments	629	4392	24279	28136	100%
Repeated segments	1	6	26	32	0.1%
Target segments		4357	24045	27859	

Rate	Source segments	Target segments	Register
1 word = 0.25 EUR	1098.0 EUR	1089.25 EUR	

**CAT Tool
Statistics
Portuguese**

Total: 1098 euros

PROJECT STATISTICS					
	Segments	Words	Characters		Percent
Translated segments	1054	15944	94252	109507	100%
Untranslated segments	2	5	30	33	0%
Checked segments	1	15	95	109	0.1%
Unchecked segments	1055	15934	94187	109431	99.9%
All segments	1056	15949	94282	109540	100%
Repeated segments	162	654	3855	4362	4%
Target segments		15564	95880	110521	

Rate	Source segments	Target segments	Register
1 word = 0.25 EUR	3987.25 EUR	3891.0 EUR	

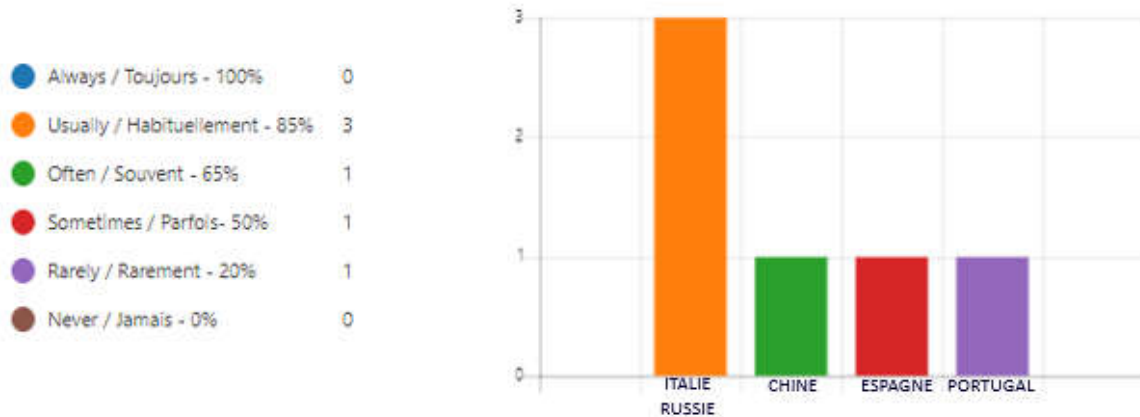
**CAT Tool
Statistics
Italian**

Total: 3987.25 euros

Appendix No. 8: Answers of the International Survey for the Subsidiaries of the Learning and Development Department

How often do you have access to the training material (kits) you need in the language of your country? À quelle fréquence as-tu accès au matériel de formation (kits) dont tu as besoin dans la langue de ton pays ?

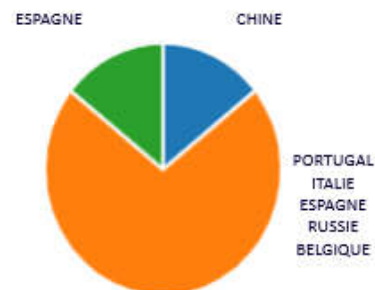
[Más detalles](#)



When you ask for training documents outside your country, in which language do you receive them? Lorsque tu demandes des documents de formation en dehors de votre pays, dans quelle langue les reçois-tu ?

[Más detalles](#)

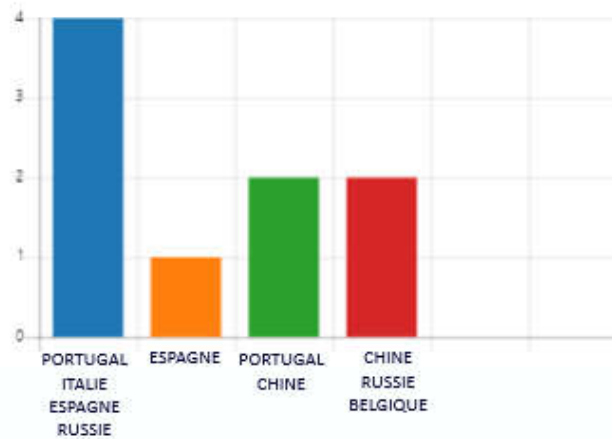
Language	Count
English - Anglais	1
French - Français	5
Country language - Langue d...	1
Otras	0



If the training material you asked arrives in a different language, how do you translate it? Si le matériel de formation que tu as demandé arrive dans une autre langue, de quelle manière le traduis-tu ?

[Más detalles](#)

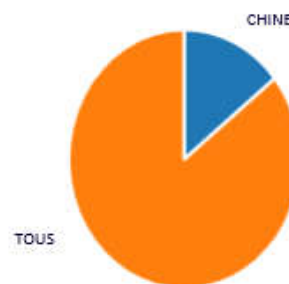
- I translate the offer / Je traduis... 4
- People in my office translate t... 1
- I use an online automatic tran... 2
- I pay an external company to t... 2



Once you have access to the needed material, do you need to adapt it? Une fois que tu as accès au matériel nécessaire, dois-tu l'adapter ?

[Más detalles](#)

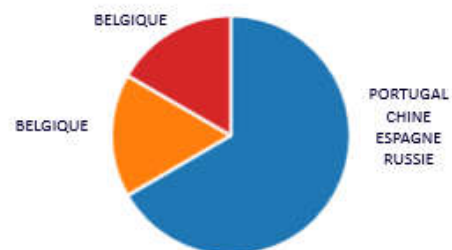
- I always have to adapt the wh... 1
- I do small adaptations but the... 6
- I don't need any adaptations, t... 0
- Otras 0



When you need a training subject that is not available, do you create your own training material? Quand tu as besoin d'un sujet de formation qui n'est pas disponible, est-ce que tu élabores ton propre matériel de formation ?

[Más detalles](#)

- Yes, we create our own materi... 4
- No, I wait for the material to a... 1
- No, because we already have ... 1



Appendix No. 9: Online Status of a Translation Project

Here is an example of the tool with a translation for the Recruitment Department

The screenshot displays the KIABI Planner interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Panel', 'Gráficos', and 'Programación'. The main content area shows a list of tasks under the heading 'Statut des Traductions'. A task titled 'Traduction Italien' is highlighted with a red box. This task is assigned to 'Evelyn MOLINA RODRIGUEZ' and has a progress of 1/6. The task details panel on the right shows the task name, the user's profile, and various settings such as 'Depósito', 'Progreso', 'Fecha de inicio', 'Fecha de vencimiento', 'Notas', and 'Lista de comprobación'. The task is marked as 'Importante' and has a 'Mostrar en la tarjeta' checkbox.

Panel Gráficos Programación ...

Statut des Traductions ☆
... > Traductions - Team Talent

TE 1

Kimoo Powerpoint
+ Agregar tarea

Traduction Espagnol
31/07 0/6
Evelyn MOLINA RODRIGUEZ

Traduction Portugais
31/07 0/6
Evelyn MOLINA RODRIGUEZ

Traduction Italien
34/07 0/6
Evelyn MOLINA RODRIGUEZ

Mostrar completadas 1

Modificado por usted por última vez el hace uno momento

Traduction Italien

Evelyn MOLINA RODRIGUEZ

Depósito
Kimoo Powerpoint

Progreso
En curso

Fecha de inicio
20/07/2020

Fecha de vencimiento
24/07/2020

Notas
Escriba una descripción o agregue notas aquí

Lista de comprobación 1 / 6

Agregar la traducción sur Cafetería Espresso

Traduction 25%

Traduction 50%

Traduction 75%

Exporter le document

Envoyer par mail la traduction + revision EN-FR

Agregar un elemento

Datos adjuntos

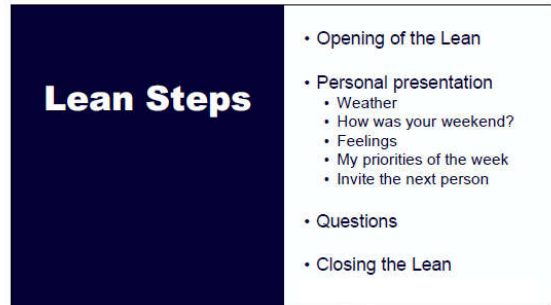
Agregar datos adjuntos

Mostrar en la tarjeta

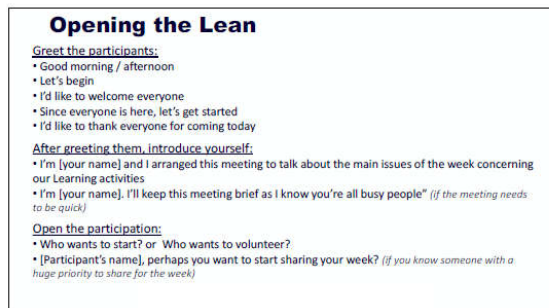
Appendix No. 10: Most important phrases to hold an international weekly meeting



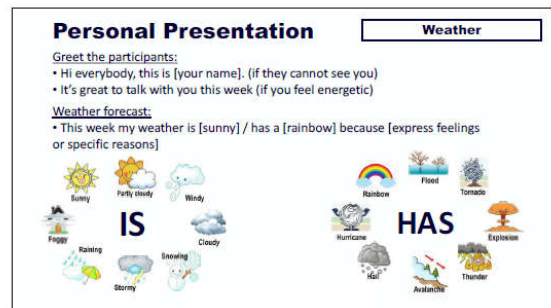
1



2



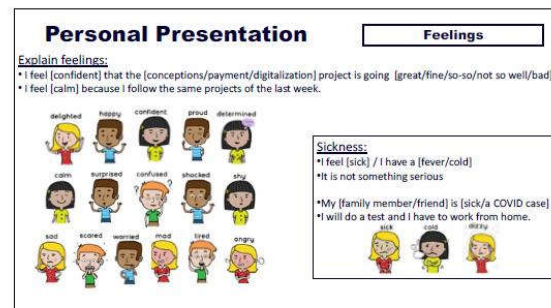
3



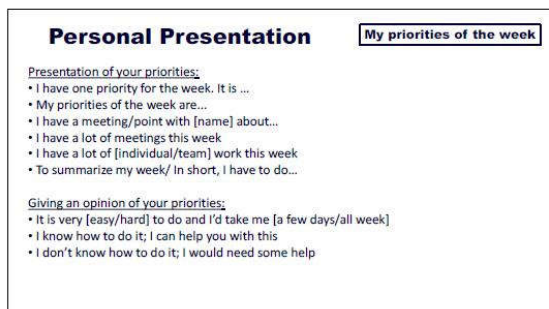
4



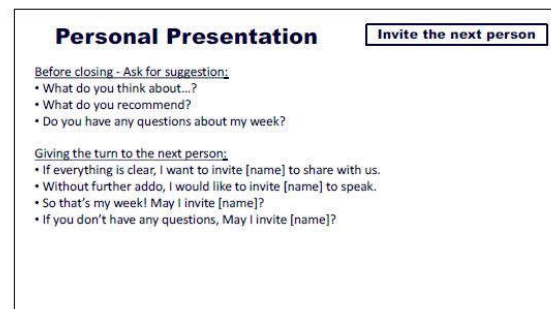
5



6



7



8

Questions

Asking for clarification:

- I did not get all that you said, could you repeat please?
- Could you give us more details about...?

Accept or reject:

- I think you are absolutely right
- I think this is the right track.

- I see your point, but I think that...
- I'm sorry but I disagree, I think that...

Summarizing:

- In general, we have to...
- In my opinion, the most important subjects of the week are...

Excuses:

- **Arrive late:** Excuse me for being late, I was...
- **Leave early:** Excuse me, unfortunately I have to leave early. I need to be...
- **Technical problem:**
 - I am sorry, I couldn't hear you. My headset is not working.
 - Can you hear me? I think my microphone is not working.

9

Closing the Lean

Concluding:

- It looks like we've covered all the team.
- Any final thoughts before we close the meeting?
- If there's nothing more to discuss, let's stop here.
- That brings us to the end of the meeting, thank you for listening.
- I wish you all a good day.
- Have a good week!
- See you next Monday on Teams. / Next Monday, same time, same place.

Reminder:

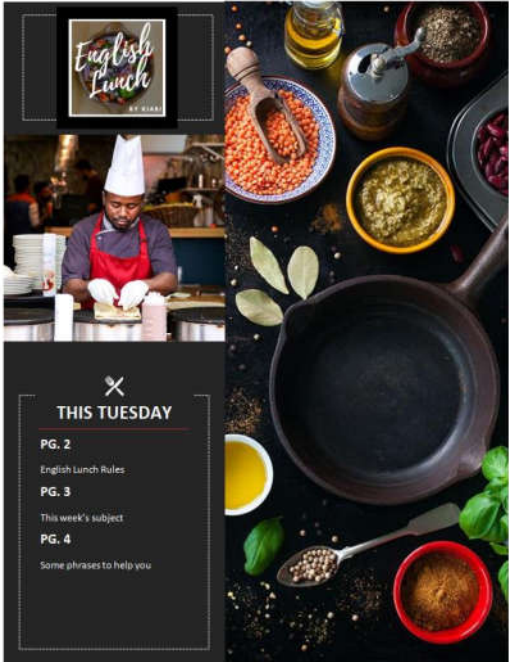
- Please, don't forget that [this Thursday is our international meeting].

Postponing:

- Because not so many of us will be available next week, the next meeting has been postponed.
- I'd like to remind you that our next meeting is cancelled. We will see us on [date].

10

Appendix No. 11: Sample of an “English Lunch” activity material

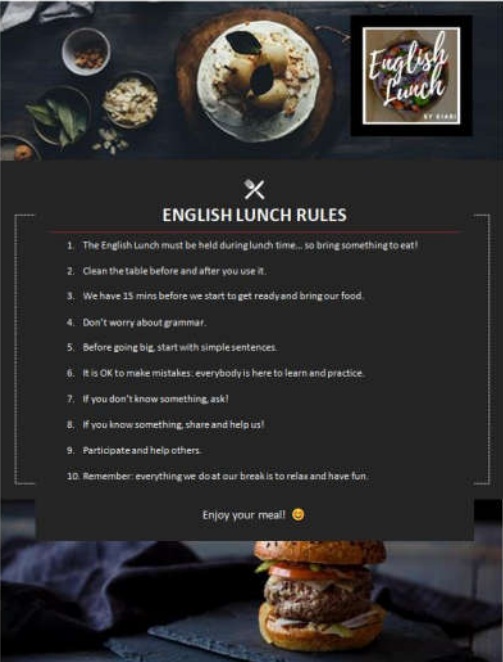


THIS TUESDAY

PG. 2
English Lunch Rules

PG. 3
This week's subject

PG. 4
Some phrases to help you



ENGLISH LUNCH RULES

1. The English Lunch must be held during lunch time... so bring something to eat!
2. Clean the table before and after you use it.
3. We have 15 mins before we start to get ready and bring our food.
4. Don't worry about grammar.
5. Before going big, start with simple sentences.
6. It is OK to make mistakes: everybody is here to learn and practice.
7. If you don't know something, ask!
8. If you know something, share and help us!
9. Participate and help others.
10. Remember: everything we do at our break is to relax and have fun.

Enjoy your meal! 🍴

THIS WEEK'S SUBJECT

Let's talk about television!

- How often do you watch TV?
- Do you prefer regular TV channels or streaming?
- Should everyone have a television in their home?
- What is the best way to watch series: on a television set, computer, tablet, or phone?
- What television programs are you watching right now?
- What is the last movie you have seen? What was it about?
- What do you think is the future of television?
- If you had a TV show or movie, what would it be?
- What is your favorite genre for a show or movie?

"ALL SHOWS ARE LIKE CIGARETTES. YOU WATCH TWO, YOU HAVE A HIGHER CHANCE OF WATCHING THREE. THEY'RE ALL ADDICTIVE!"

SOME PHRASES TO HELP YOU

- I watch tv (once a day)
- I prefer streaming than regular TV because...
- I don't think everybody should have a television in their home because...
- I think the best way to watch TV is on a [tablet] because...
- I am watching a serie called... it is a serie about...
- The last movie I've seen was [Name]. It's a [comedy] movie about...
- I think that in the future we won't need... but we will use instead...
- If I were the main character of a TV show, it would be a comedy...
- My favorite genre is Sci-Fi. I like...

HOW OFTEN?

ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY

How often? = I want to know the frequency

Example: How often do you brush your teeth?

Number	Times	A	Time Period
Once*	a	day	daily
Twice*	a	week	weekly
Three times	a	month	monthly
Four times	a	year	annually

EVERY + Number + Time Period

Every two days	Every day
Every three weeks	Every week
Every four months	Every month

EVERY + Time Period

Every day	once a time
Every week	once a week
Every month	once a month
Every year	once a year

Examples:

- She visits the dentist twice a year.
- He goes to the gym three times a week.
- I call her daily to make sure she is fine.
- There is a leap day every four years.
- We pay our mortgage every month.

Opinion Transitions

Sentence starters for **OPINION** and **REASON**

- In my opinion...
- I think...
- I feel...
- In my view...
- In my eyes...
- In my mind...
- In my judgment...
- In my estimation...
- In my belief...
- In my view...
- In my opinion...
- In my eyes...
- In my mind...
- In my judgment...
- In my estimation...
- In my belief...

Transitions when **OPINION** comes first

- First...
- To start...
- To begin with...
- Second...
- Next...
- Finally...
- Lastly...
- Most importantly...
- One last reason...


Transitions when **REASON** comes first

- For example...
- For instance...
- For example...
- For instance...
- For example...
- For instance...
- For example...
- For instance...

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Appendix No. 12: Comments from L&D subsidiary members about international meeting tools

We selected four subsidiary members of the L&D Department who do not had proficiency in French open questions to consider their point of view about the tools needed during international meetings and noted their **comments**.



*"I would like it to be spoken in a **common language**.
If not, at least **slowly** so that I can **understand** the conversation well"*

*"I remember that one time there was a **real-time translation subtitle system** during an international meeting. The English subtitle provided **was not accurate and not professional.**"*

*"I think the best solution is to make **Simultaneous Interpreting** on our meetings.
We should **organize** each meeting with a clear structure: **who speaks and when**. Also, use the tool **"rise a hand"** or **present the next speaker**.
For example: for meetings on Mondays, know **who will lead** each meeting. This understanding will give us **clearness** of what we hear in translation - because **we'll see this agenda** before the meeting and **prepare**"*

*"Simultaneous Interpreting is the best decision, but it has weaknesses too: **it is difficult to find a good translator.**"*