Cross-Cultural Communication and Negotiation – A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract
Research paper indicates that effective cross-cultural management, communication, and negotiations should be emphasized by removing barriers of all determinates. Failures and engage in cross-cultural exchange, inability to communicate effectively in the global marketplace. The globalised environment of business has become much complex as more and more corporations and private entrepreneur’s competition to enlarge their market participation and product differentiation in their brands in the multinational’s market. This research paper provides an analytical framework and recommendations for adaptation of multinational management strategies for sustainable business competitiveness in the current wake of global economy.

INTRODUCTION
In the international Human Resource Management Cross-cultural, communication and negotiation are of particular importance. As they are both significant areas of organizational functioning but are particularly susceptible to cultural influence and, hence, misunderstanding. Communication is the process of share verbal and non-verbal language. The fundamental dimensions of human communication described in to five segments. Under the multinationals business operation its must be necessary to exploration of the major difficulties and barriers for effectiveness of cross-cultural communication and negotiation. Negotiations are a major aspect of international management and that are fundamentally influence by communication as well. Many models that are try to explain cultural difference between people. Hofstede (1980) is one of the most frequently created roadmap. He considered that there were four main factors, which are, individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity that explained the differences found in national culture.

There is a cross-cultural failures communication example as under-
An American to a Korean store clerk say with the typical U.S. “come here” waving to hand. The Korean store clerk is avoid the American. The American waits, understand that he is avoiding, and quickly walks out from store. The Korean store clerk was offended that the American would use a gesture to call him in such a way that is use in Korea to call only dogs. The American was incensed that the clerk would ignore and refuse to help him.

VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL MESSAGES
Verbal: Learn a foreign language improperly, even if just a few words are involved, can create immediate difficulties. Just like, a Japanese businessperson who was transferring to the United States explained his frustration and asking about renting “mansion”, the word he has learned instead of “apartment”. Literal translations from one language to another can also create misunderstandings because they do not conclude for culture-based linguistic styles.

Non-Verbal: Non-verbal communication systems vary from culture to culture just as verbal systems do, but often we overlook the symbolic nature of non-verbal communication. The two-fingered gesture used to mean, “give me two” it’s assigned a different, obscene meaning in many countries. So many people have also been mistaken when they assumed that a nod always means “yes”. In few countries, a nod means “no”. Confusion in non-verbal indicators may be more complex.

DIMENSIONS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION
There having five dimensions of human communication:
1. To assume that our communication relationships with the same people will always remain the same, misunderstandings are bound to happen because people change, the circumstances around the relationship change, and topics of communication change.
2. Communication involves purposive and expressive messages. When people communicate they exchange verbal and non-verbal messages with each other. Purposive message is direct intention of the
sender of the message. In the expressive, messages are those unintentionally sent along with a spoken messages.

3. Communication assembles with multi-unit signals. Human communication transfer through a variety of signals, not just words. Kinesic, proxemic, olfactory, and other signals picked up by the live senses are methods or “units” of human communication.

4. Communication depends on the context. “Context” means the degree to which the communicator and the listener share a common background of knowledge and experience. Japan is an example of high-context culture. Canada and the U.S. are considered to be low-context cultures, because there are many sub-cultures in these countries; and people do not widely share the exact same norms regarding communication.

5. Communication is dependent on the competence of the communicators. If a person is able to send and express messages clearly and receive and interpret messages correctly, communication is enhanced. The degree to which a message is poorly expressing and incorrectly interpreting is the degree to which misunderstandings occur. For example, if an expatriate cannot speak the local language very well, misunderstanding may occur due to the expatriates’ inability to express clearly basic sentences. If the expatriate is fluent in the language, misunderstandings may still occur because the host nationals may interpret the purposive message correctly but also pick up an unintended expressive message negative in nature.

Whenever, each dimension is manifest and carried out in each culture is unique to each culture. That is why living and working with people with diverse cultures can be both irritating and interesting.

BARRIERS TO CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

To communicate effectively with someone from a different culture and languages, there are certain barriers that understood and surmounting. These are ignorance of cultural rules of communication, perpetual biases, faulty attributions, and stereotypes:

Ignorance of cultural rules of communication: It has been estimated that approximately 65 per cent of our communication is non-verbal in nature. Each culture has different rules regarding non-verbal communication. The types of nonverbal communication may be at list five: kinesics, proxemics, fixed features of space, semi-fixed features of space, and personal space.

Kinesics: Kinesics refers to gestures, facial expressions, body positions, body movements, and their relation to communication. Consider the following cross-cultural differences in kinesics

  -(Dodd 1977, pp. 53-4).

Proxemics: Proxemics is the study of the spatial relationships in human communication. The field includes the study of fixed features of space (such as, architecture and buildings) and how they influence human relationships; semi-fixed features of space (such as, seating arrangements, office layouts) and how they influence communication; and dynamic space, or human’s use of personal space when communicating


Fixed features of space: One example of a fixed feature of space that influences Organisational behaviour is room size. Different cultures design offices and workroom layouts differently to reflect cultural preferences. For instance, “a large office in the United States communicates status and perhaps power. The smaller the office, lesser the status appears to be connected with the occupant of the office. In contrast, in India, high government officials may share a room with six other lesser employees in a room, perhaps “15 feet by 20 feet”

  -(Dodd 1977, p. 56).

Semi-fixed features of space: How companies layout office furniture and work space, directly influences how people communicate with each other. High-context cultures tend to have more open and less private work spaces. Japanese norms reinforce working groups and being part of a group. There are no partitions separating desks, so everyone can overhear what everyone else is saying on the telephone or in work-related conversations. Compare this with the strong perceived need for privacy in North American companies. Large work spaces are partitioned and subdivided with movable “walls” in such a way that cubicles are formed.
Personal space: Researchers have found that human beings unconsciously structure and measure the space around their bodies. The normal conversational distance between strangers illustrates the importance of dynamics of space interaction. Different cultures have different measurements of personal space. For North Americans, there is a radius of 18 inches around them that they view as “intimate space”. People who are physically allowed to enter that space are people whom the North American knows and trusts and is comfortable with. Conversely, Latin Americans and people from the cultures of the Middle East have relatively small intimate space. In some of these countries, “being close enough to breathe on another person during a conversation is deemed appropriate. In fact, the breath is like one’s spirit and life itself, so sharing your breath in close conversation is like sharing your spirit”

-(Dodd 1977, p. 58).

INFORMATION CATEGORIZATION:
1. To reduce the complexity of the environment. There is no way humans could remember 7,500,000 different words for different colours — we would undergo information overload.
2. To identify objects and behaviours in the environment. English speakers have chosen over time to rely on the primary colours or variants of them (for example, “light” and “dark” green) to identify the colour of objects.
3. To reduce the necessity of constant learning and reclassifying. Simplifying colours to the primary colours and their general variants enables English speakers to classify the colour of something quickly without having to undergo long mental-processing episodes.
4. To construct a ready knowledge of appropriate and inappropriate action to take in any situations. For example, a yellow light on a traffic signal means “slow down to stop”; the driver doesn’t have to think about the shade of the colour before taking the appropriate action.

The mental categories by which a person sorts out and responds to the world reflect the culture into which that individual was born

-(Bruner 1957, p. 10).

STEPS INVOLVED IN ATTRIBUTIONS
1. Perception: The first step in attributing motive or reason behind a behaviour is to observe that behaviour.
2. Category retrieval: Once behaviour is observed, in milliseconds our brain goes through a kind of “library index card” retrieval until it finds the category in our mind that makes sense out of the behaviour we observe.
3. Estimation of motives: Once evaluations about, and emotions toward the observed behaviour have been triggered, the next phase is to estimate why that behaviour occurred. Human beings seem to have a strong need to understand why things happen.
4. Behavioural response: Based upon the attribution made, the observer selects a behavioural response. Based upon one’s personality traits, one chooses a response. If that response is inappropriate in a cross-cultural business setting, such as during a negotiation, devastating results can occur.
5. Final analysis: Once attributions have been made, that information is fed back to the category, and the category is updated. If the category is fed with faulty information, the category will not be accurate. Then, when a similar incident occurs, the category will cause inaccurate evaluations and trigger inappropriate emotions in the individual. Conversely, the more accurate the information fed back into the category, the more effectively the individual will be able to deal with his/her environment.

CROSS-CULTURAL NEGOTIATION
Negotiation is the process of bargaining with one or more person/s/parties to find out at a solution that is acceptable to all. Business negotiations often involve one party attempting to influence another to make a particular decision or sign a contract. A negotiation becomes cross-cultural when the parties involved belong to different cultures and, do not share the same ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving. All global negotiations are cross-cultural.
Negotiating cross-culturally is one of the single most important global business skills. Global negotiations contain all of the complexity of domestic negotiations, with the added dimension of cultural diversity.

Negotiation is not always the best approach to doing business. Many times such strategies as ‘take-it-or-leave-it’ or bargaining become more effective. Negotiating, compared to bargaining or the take-it-or-leave-it approach, is time-consuming and patience testing.

Managers should negotiate when any one of the following conditions exist:

• Their power position is low relative to their counterpart.
• The trust level is high.
• Sufficient time is available to explore each party’s multiple needs, resources, and options.
• Commitment, not mere compliance, is important to ensure that all parties carry out the agreement.
• Business will not occur unless negotiations are successful.
• Differences occur in the way a conflict is viewed, managed and resolved.
• Some cultures view the negotiating process as a ‘win-win’ situation. Other cultures adopt a zero sum mentality where someone’s gain must always equal someone’s loss.

However, cultures differ in the degree to which value is placed on each stage of the negotiation relationship.

**Relationship building**: The first stage of negotiations involves building interpersonal relationships between the negotiating parties. For Japanese this is a very important part of the negotiation process, and they spend considerable time in building relationships with the other party. Conversely, Americans rate building relationships as less important and spend much less time on this phase than do the Japanese.

**Exchanging task-related information**: The second phase of cross-cultural negotiations involves information exchange and understanding each other’s situation and needs. It is difficult enough to understand other party’s situation, interests, and needs in a negotiation situation in one’s own culture.

**Persuasion**: Persuasion involves influencing the other party to adopt one’s viewpoint, position, or beliefs. For example, Americans quickly persuade the other party to agree with their offer bid, contract, and so forth. Americans view this phase as the most important part of the negotiation process and spend quite a bit of time in the use of persuasive tactics. The Japanese also rate this phase as important and spend a fair amount of time on it as well.

**Concession and agreement**: The Japanese value this phase less than Americans do, though they spend about the same amount of time in this phase as Americans. Adler notes that, “Americans negotiate sequentially; they discuss and attempt to agree on one issue at a time. Throughout the bargaining process, Americans make many small concessions, which they expect their opponents to reciprocate; then they finalise the list of concessions into an overall agreement.”

(Adler notes 1991, pp. 199-200)

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Collectively cultures tend to avoid open conflict while individualist cultures meet confrontation head-on, often believing that confrontation is the quickest route to problem solving. In cross-cultural negotiations, conflict may be evident even before the two parties sit down to talk. When locked in negotiations, it is important to take into consideration the differences in the decision-making process between cultures. In some cultures where power is decentralized (United States, Australia), decisions can be made quickly — and often by a single individual. However, in cultures with collectivist values (Japan, China), decisions are made by consensus and can take longer.

**Conclusion**

• Cross-cultural communication is the communication between people not only based on different national cultures but also based on race, religion, educational and economic backgrounds.
• Three stages of communication are perception, interpretation, and evaluation of events. Various factors that influence cross-cultural communication are roles and status, decision-making style symbols, chromatics, and proxemics.
• Various methods for effective cross-cultural communication are: (a) communication through multiple channels; (b) paraphrasing to ensure correct understanding of meanings; and (c) double checking to verify that the receiver has understood correctly.
• Different stages in the negotiation process are: (a) relationship building, (b) exchanging task-related information, (c) persuasion, and (d) making concessions and agreements.
• Different barriers to cross-cultural communication are: (a) ignorance; (b) biases; (c) faulty attributions; and (d) stereotypes.
• Negotiating across cultures is the single most business skill.
• Successful international negotiation requires effective cross-cultural communication

References: