Cross-cultural professional communication in the context of globalization

N L Shamne, M V Milovanova, E Yu Malushko
Volgograd State University, 100 Universitetskij Ave, Volgograd, 400062, Russia
E-mail: nikolay.shamne@volsu.ru

Abstract. The article provides evidence that business communication and especially at the industrial enterprise depends on a lot of factors. One of such factors, cross-cultural communication, is focused on as a central notion. The author attracts examples and considers exogenous and endogenous factors for effective industrial business communication. One of the widely covered aspects of communication is the role of the individual, his personality and personal traits of behavior in establishing and maintaining mutual understanding. The concept of culture in corporate or business ethics is proven to be an inseparable factor of communication which should guide the communicators in treating contracts and employees.

1. Introduction
Cooperation between institutional actors and different cultural backgrounds, which lasts longer than usual, can be called cross-cultural business relation. It occurs as industrial enterprises are in contact with cultures. A special cross-cultural context is formed by business contacts between countries that exist in different industries and serve different purposes. Finding partners for sales or suppliers abroad, low-cost production in low-wage countries or international cooperation in research are examples of cross-cultural contacts as a part of activities at industrial enterprises.

The end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century witness formation of a new picture of the world, which reflected major changes in all spheres of human life. Two paradoxically linked processes – globalization and national identification have taken an important place [1].

Globalization is associated with unification of life in different countries and creation of a new elite, detached from the national ground, being cosmopolitan in a lifestyle, English-speaking, associated with transnational structures and standard “models of life”.

The issue of national identity is connected with the growing desire of peoples to preserve national identity, to strengthen the traditional national identity.

In the future, we can expect that the number of business contacts between industrial enterprises from different countries will only grow. This is due to a sharp rise in the national economy of countries, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, formation of economic unions and, to a large extent, the processes of globalization. This enhances the attractiveness of regional and national markets. But due to the fact that partnership requires communication, coordination and planning, the requirements to the participants are increased, as they often realize the cultural complexity of the situation and tend to misinterpret the facts and make mistakes in their work.

What values affect the long-term relationship between industrial enterprises with different cultural backgrounds? It is not easy to answer this question because cross-cultural business relations are a multifaceted subject of research [2].

(1) The first range of issues concerns the conceptualization of culture. There is still no universally accepted definition, and the notion remains unclear even in anthropology due to the diversity of research interests. Before exploring cross-cultural business relationships, it is necessary to define the essence of culture.

(2) The situation which cultures face is “cross-cultural”. The notion of “business relations”. Business relations cover a variety of inter-organizational contacts, the latter being of great importance in practice. Creating and maintaining relations with foreign partners become the main problem in management. If we consider culture as an essential determinant of human behavior, it becomes obvious that culture also affects economically motivated relations. To make them fair, it is not enough to have just foreign language skills and mobility, they need to be complemented with cross-cultural awareness and knowledge.
2. Methodology and research

2.1 Definition of the concept: cross-cultural business relations

Business relations are generally understood to be mutual relations between buyers and sellers at the enterprise level.

Business relations are also inter-organizational relations where the object is the industrial enterprises themselves. There may occur a situation that only relations between certain persons make it possible to establish business relations. There is a cross-cultural situation that links social organizations together at different levels, primarily at the level of enterprises and the country [3]. The main importance is given to various national and cultural ideas which are developed in country-specific cultural systems of actors and organizations. They work not only at the enterprise level but also in all business units. Thus, partners are trying to learn above-situational factors of behavior and to build their own behavior based on this. As a result, there is an agreement that is fair to all participants. In the case of international business relations, there appears an understanding of the meaning of national and cultural ideas. Interculture dominating cultural ideas in society. Therefore, business relations should be considered taking into account that there are cultures of different countries.

2.2 Factors affecting cross-cultural communication in the sphere of business relations

In any communicative situation, business relations are affected by a number of factors starting from the current macroeconomic conditions up to the expectations of the communication participants of the specific business cooperation activity. A cross-cultural analysis takes into account, first and foremost, the factors that are both a starting point and a result of cross-cultural interaction, both are most closely related to business relations and also subject to constant changes. However, it is almost impossible to characterize the process and the result of forming business relations solely due to the so-called endogenous factors. There also exist many exogenous characteristics that are not so closely related to specific business relations, but affect the process of communication from the outside and are hardly changeable in the course of cross-cultural interaction [4].

Exogenous factors include:
- macroeconomic factor
- characteristics of the communication participants
- characteristics of organizations involved in the process of business communication
- own culture and the culture of a business partner (as a central component).

Endogenous factors include:
- economic and sociopolitical factors of influence
- history of developing business relations
- desires and intentions of business partners
- cross-cultural factor (as a central component)

The peculiarity of the presented concept includes consideration of culture as an endogenous or exogenous parameter in the sphere of business relations. Own culture or the culture of a business partner is a cultural background of the participants of cross-cultural interaction. A cross-cultural factor is a factor occurring in specific business situations that can undergo certain alteration only in the part of a key group of individuals participating in this communication. Thus, taking into account certain business relationships, the cross-cultural factor is endogenous while individual cultures of business partners are considered exogenous.

2.3 Consideration of external factors

Any organization is exposed to external factors, so it should take them into account. But industrial enterprises do not often have enough resources to fully analyze all the relationships in the external environment. The external environment is understood as a complex structure consisting of several categories, the priority among which is given to political, legal, economic, social, cultural, physical, technological ones and the category of competitiveness.

For example, the analysis of external environmental factors is an essential task in the framework of strategic management and an important prerequisite for strategic planning. In this regard, international corporations should analyze all geographical areas within which they operate or plan to start work.

2.4 Personality and other individual factors

In business processes of cross-cultural interaction the result of communication is achieved by its participants. Even the decision-making, at first sight having absolutely objective character, is conditioned by personal
positions, feelings and principles of communicators. In research on cross-cultural communication, personal qualities of individuals are of great importance. Their absence makes it impossible to obtain reliable and objective knowledge in this field.

2.5 Personality and similarity

Human personality is understood as a psychological structure, expressed in the form of a stable reaction of the individual to the surrounding reality. This is linked to the assumption that all individuals have certain intrinsic qualities on the basis of which they differ from each other. The situational factor of behavior, as a rule, is not taken into account. Supporters of the opposite opinion consider the situational factor decisive in the analysis of human behavior. The results of the research show that even knowing personal qualities of a person, it is impossible to fully predict his/her behavior.

Kale and Barnes offer a typology of individuals including four scales:
- extrovert - introvert
- sensual perception (awareness of details, facts) – intuition (ingenuity, rich imagination)
- thinking (logic and objective decision-making) - subjective perception (subjective reasoning of decision-making)
- perception (growing interest in obtaining information, observation and understanding of what is happening around) - assessment (completion of information retrieval, organizational skills) [5].

In the process of cross-cultural communication (in negotiations) the relationship between extrovert behavior and general attractiveness of the participants of communication was established, which in turn had a positive impact on business relations. Thus, personal traits are considered as potentially basic parameters of communicative behavior, especially the style and content of communication between participants.

The influence of personality on the negotiation process has been the subject of numerous studies. However, there is no single unambiguous opinion on this problem in science. For example, talented communicators can change their external characteristics depending on the situation itself, thereby masking the actual character traits. Therefore, it would be appropriate to talk about the influence of the individual and to take into account the ability of participants to respond to a particular situation in cross-cultural interaction.

Like any form of social organization, industrial enterprises are characterized by specific structures, processes and cultural ideas.

The culture of the organization is understood as the standard of shared values and beliefs that help individuals to understand the principle of enterprise functioning and to set standards of internal behavior [6].

It is often assumed that corporate culture is concentrated on management. Culture is a tool of influence and guidance for a manager. For strategic reasons, culture is a competitive advantage. Culture forms an individual's sense of self-awareness and commitment to others, thus being a relevant factor. The influence of culture on industrial enterprise functioning is often compared with the influence of the personality on the individual behavior.

3. Culture parameters

In the study, Reznolds sets the parameters of a culture [7]. For Kale and Barnes, some of these parameters are most relevant because they structure the content and the style of communication.

- Orientation of the industrial enterprise to an external activity is aimed at satisfying the needs of clients and business partners. Internal orientation involves production and activities within the industrial enterprise.
- Within the framework of one type of culture, the priority is given to fulfilling the tasks of the industrial enterprise – the effective achievement of economic growth and profit. Other cultures, on the other hand, involve the personal and social welfare of their employees. Orientation of the enterprise to one or another value system is expressed in the style of cross-cultural communication aimed at the most effective transaction. Interpersonal relations and the interests of all participants are important for socially oriented industrial enterprises in business negotiations.
- The company's culture, which is focused on maintaining its own stability and security in a dynamically developing market, is conservative and cautious. The enterprises that are ready to take risks calmly perceive any changes and even see certain positive chances. The enterprises, focused on stability and safety of own activity, try to record all agreements in writing, take into account a reputation of the business partner and aspire to establish personal relations. Enterprises, ready to take risks, do not hesitate to search for new partners and try some new creative solutions. They accept imperfect terms of contracts.
A tolerant attitude within the framework of the corporate culture to the behavior of employees, deviating from the generally established norms, emphasizes the recognition of the individual nature of each employee. Such enterprises represent themselves in the business community, observing all the formalities. They offer their partners already proven ready-made solutions. These enterprises are ready to make concessions, adhere to the terms of the contract and are oriented to the ritual character of intercultural interaction. Enterprises that recognize an individual approach to their employees usually offer a wider range of freedom to their representatives when establishing contacts. At the same time, the process of interaction is not carried out in line with the usual unilateral approaches but involves the creative basis of business relations.

3.1 How "superficial" is the business culture?
The scientific opinion in this regard is very contradictory. Some scholars believe that business values are as important as national ones. Others strongly refute this view. According to Schein (1984), the importance of business culture cannot be determined by external behaviour and hidden values. To understand the culture, in his opinion, it is necessary to take into account the basic generally accepted rules and norms that are unconsciously perceived by employees but, nevertheless, affect their perception, thinking and attitude.

The evidence supporting this view is found in the Hofstede business culture study (1990) [8]. Six factors were identified to describe cultural differences between organizations:

- Process priority vs. result of activity
- Priority of social guarantees vs. tasks performed by the enterprise
- Organization itself vs. type of tasks performed
- Open system vs. closed system
- Soft control vs. strict control
- Normative vs. pragmatic orientation

These empirical data are similar to the results of the Reynolds logical analysis (1986) and indirectly confirm his point of view. The most important thing is that the activity of the enterprise as a “superficial cultural phenomenon” in comparison with “hidden values” is the most acceptable for the analysis of business culture. The analysis of the results of the sociological survey held by Hofstede shows that these six factors reflect social relations rather than the structure of business culture [9]. On the basis of available research on business culture, it is impossible to obtain unambiguous conclusions about its essence. The data obtained is a subjective interpretation made by the observers. Culture is a product of thought and thus cannot be characterized by external factors.

3.2 The difference between business culture and business climate
The results of the research are not a cultural phenomenon, but an aspect of the social system, being components of the business climate. In this case, we are talking about a relatively stable property of the internal environment of the organization, in which its members reside and which affects their behavior. Business climate (atmosphere) and business culture are not the same, they are just related. Climate is a pattern by which the daily life of the organization is built. Culture is the basis of the organization, its originality and individuality.

3.3 The Impact of culture on the individual character
It can be assumed that certain personality traits in some countries appear much more often and in more contrast than in others. Even if the concept of personality presupposes the absence of cultural-specific conditioning of human behavior, studies of national stereotypes indicate that each country has its own national character.

The concept of national character is not based on the psychological identity of society. The main task is to characterize the population of a country through relevant socio-cultural concepts. It is necessary to find out which characteristics are inherent in this very society, and which ones are quite universal.

Campbell (1988) points out that cultural-specific characteristics are found in the negotiations on purchase and sale.

In the United States, for example, the course of negotiations depends on decisions taken right at the negotiating table. Therefore, their result will be positive if all participants adhere to the same principle of solving the problem.

In France, on the contrary, the most important factor of commercial success is personal qualities of negotiators and their similarity.
In Germany, the relationship between the commercial interest of the supplier and satisfaction of the customer with the transaction is important in the negotiations.

In the UK, an important role is given to the context of negotiations which guides sellers.

The process of cross-cultural communication can be depicted in the form of a triangle, which consists of cultural differences in terms of different value systems, individual differences concerning the character and personal experience of the individual, as well as intercultural knowledge and experience. This reflects the complexity of the combination of cultural and individual factors in intercultural communication.

Studies of the national character of individuals result in singling out certain traits of their behavior. The differences are interpreted as a product of national cultural specificity without taking into account the ideas that differ countries or cultures from each other.

Some studies are devoted to the content of culture. In one empirical study on the negative attitude of society to innovation, the relationship was identified between the value orientations of the consumer (e.g., fatalism as an expression of the attitude to the relationship between man and nature) and his attitude to human innovation. Supporters of fatalistic cultures showed the least interest in approbation of new production, nevertheless, taking it as a small risk.

Other studies are mainly aimed at one goal which is to identify cross-cultural differences based on certain cultural concepts. For example, through a special method of assessment, significant differences were established in relation to the values of students from different continents, including students from Germany and the United States.

In enterprise management, different cultural values and postulates affect management functions and manifest themselves in different approaches and ways of management. Leadership values always reflect the values of a culture.

Numerous cross-cultural studies of personal values of leaders and the shared professional values in a number of states have revealed both similarities and differences. Differences in cultural values were found in Germany and Switzerland, despite the fact that they border on each other and are characterized by partial kinship of languages. International studies have found that political and role systems, as well as the principles of subordination and leadership, are determined by the country of origin of the leader. The fourth point was assessed through the fact whether it is important for the leader to know exact answers to all professional questions of subordinates. Only ten per cent of Swedish and eighteen per cent of American leaders surveyed responded affirmatively. In Germany, the figure was almost fifty per cent and in Japan eighty per cent. As a result, leaders from different cultures have different values, which affects their management functions. Despite this, traditional cultural values can be conditioned by socio-economic conditions, as it turned out in a comparative analysis of the value system of leaders from the United States, Hong Kong and China.

4. Endogenous factors in business relationships

Endogenous factors differ from exogenous ones with their own specific features in certain human business relationships. Some personal characteristics are preserved regardless of their affiliation to an organization (demographic factor, personal values, personality, etc.) while such parameters as position, role or status are very relative and subject to change. When considering business relations between industrial enterprises, we are talking about “absolutely typical” social organizations, which can be characterized by common universal parameters. Cross-cultural ideas, which express social relations between partners, are of interest in cross-cultural communication. It is important to consider the history of business relations as a whole, as well as to analyze the desires and intentions of the participants of business communication in relation to each other.

Communication is an important factor in business communication. In business relations marketing is always a communicative process and includes all aspects of interaction.

5. Versatility of the communication structure.

When establishing external communication links, the issues of "who communicates with whom", “what”, “how”, “which way”, “when”, "with what consequences" are not significantly different from other important decisions within the framework of the communication policy of an industrial enterprise. Unlike traditional marketing the boundaries of communication between industrial enterprises are established jointly by its participants. This is carried out explicitly through treaties or implicitly when the negotiators are kept silent.

As a result of creating and using communication channels, organizations can communicate with each other. Structures and processes of communication reflect structures and processes of social relations between the partners [10]. This concept is supplemented by the observation that the description of the climate of an organization contains aspects of communication and vice versa. The communication climate is largely similar to
the business climate of the organization [11], [12]. At the same time, the set of communicative aspects in business relations affects other parameters of the organization. In relations between organizations it is assumed that communication:

- can be used to persuade a partner by reporting information
- facilitates the process of making decisions by its participants
- coordinates the programs of the enterprises
- finds application in realizing the functions of government
- increases the sense of responsibility and loyalty
- interrelated with the atmosphere of trust and mutual support
- related to conflict situations in business relationships

It is necessary to add that a communicative behavior of business partners extends influence of sociopolitical factors on business relations and vice versa it is caused by these factors.

6. Conclusion

Compared with the consideration of communication as a mechanical phenomenon, the psychological factor does not reflect the impact on the communicative structures and processes. Its influence extends just to the internal state of communication participants. The impact of psychological factors on the process of communication consists in correct choosing incentives relevant in the course of cross-cultural interaction by communicators themselves. They also need to select the correct signal processing mode to recognize the value of the sender’s information. At the same time, mutual understanding can be improved in case of similarity of cultural perception by business partners. Learning the language and nonverbal communicative behavior of the partner significantly increases the accuracy and speed of communication when establishing business relationships. From a psychological point of view, there is the following relationship between communication and other sociopolitical factors: the executor strives hard to learn the psychological characteristics of his client and focuses on them in the process of business communication.

An important addition to the above-said is an interpretive and symbolic point of view, as it highlights the important functions of communication – formation of culture and business relations. In contrast to the psychological point of view, the main focus is not given to the internal state of the participants but to the process of interaction. Through interrelated actions partners are able to directly influence processes and structures in business relationships. It is not about creating physical channels of information transmission, but about generating congruent meanings that facilitate understanding in communication. The synthesis of the culture of business relations on the way to cross-cultural understanding is an appropriate basis through which the visual support of the communication attributes, as well as other socio-political factors. Common cultural ideas or standards are created with the help of interpretative and symbolic communication. Their lack or absence would make communication structures and processes, and as a result, relations between organizations quite impossible.

References

[1] S V Serebryakova, A I Milostivaya 2017 Semantic emergence as a translation problem Vestnik Volgogradskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta-seriya 2-yazykoznaniye 16 (3) 48-57
[2] Shamne N L 2012 Development of short-term forecasts of the development of the Russian literary language in the Lower Volga region. Vlast’ 7
[3] Milovanova M V, Terent’eva E V 2011 The language space of a multi-ethnic region: environmental problems (Volgograd: Izdatel’stvo VolGU) 292
[4] Omel’chenko E A From the experience of teaching Russian and socio-cultural adaptation of migrant workers: problems and prospects.: Available at: http://refugee.ru/Events/2013/omelchenko_ehtnosfera.pdf.
[5] Kalenkova O N 2013 Lessons of Russian language. CMD for children of preschool and primary school age. CMD for children of preschool and primary school age. Moscow: Russkij yazyk, Kursy
[6] Sztompka P 1991 Society in Action: The Theory of Social Becoming (Cambridge: Polity Press and University of Chicago Press)
[7] Sztompka P 1993 The Sociology of Social Change (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell)
[8] Shamne N, Milovanova M V, Terentyeva E V, Velibekova I M 2016 The polyethnolect phenomenon in the current state of language in Germany and Russia XLinguae. T. 9. 4
[9] Veber M 2016 Economy and society: essays understanding sociology. Sociology. Moscow: dom Vysshej shkoly ehkonomiki
[10] Murugova E V 2017 Theoretical and applied aspects of corpus based researches, Vestnik Volgogradskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta-seriya 2-yazykoznanie 16 (2) 197-200
[11] Parsons T 2018 Social system (Moscow: Akademicheskij proekt)
[12] M A Suzdalova, V G Lizunkov, E Yu Malushko, N A Sytina, V E 2017 Medvedev Innovative Forms of Partnership in Development and Implementation of University-Business Cooperation The European Proceedings of Social & Behavioural Sciences EpSBS XIX 450-455