

Analysis of International Business Communication Skills Based on Relationship Building

International Business Communication

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 International Business Communication

Business Communication means human action of relaying business information to others and ensuring it accepted in an effective way. (VARNER, 2000) The International Communication is defined as communication between governments or among cultures. (Mitchell,1994) Combined with the above definition, International Business Communication can be seen as information sharing among nations for business profits.

1.2 Communication Barriers

According to Kameda, International Business Communication can be divided into three main aspects: Business, Human Science and Linguistics.(Kameda,2005) Each aspect is composed of some small factors and each aspect also contains and overlaps with other aspects. According to this structure, the main communication barriers can be derived. In the aspect of Business, The business etiquette is quite different because of different cultural backgrounds. They hold different views on the etiquette and guidelines for interpersonal communication. In the aspect of Linguistics, although English is mostly used in international negotiations, the language barrier can not be fundamentally eliminated. As to Human Science, In the process of negotiation, the two sides will have competition for benefits. If one side treats the other side as an enemy, it is obviously not conducive to the progress of the negotiation work.(Linjing,2012)

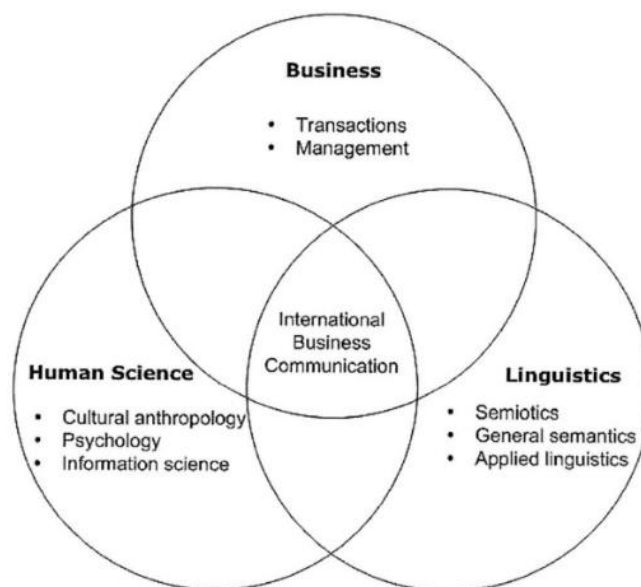


FIGURE 1.2 International Business Communication Kameda, 2005

1.3 The Structure of the Study

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the extent to which relationship building is the

main skill required in International Business Communications. The first part is to find out the definition of International Business Communications and three main communication barriers. Secondly, this report analyzes why relationship building is the main skill to deal with above barriers. In this part, relationship building will be elaborated and classified into three levels. Finally, three specific skills will be given with some instances.

2 MAIN BODY

2.1 Relationship Building

2.1.1 The Definition of Relationship Building

Relationship can be divided into three levels, these are: Interpersonal relationships, Relationship between companies and Relationship between countries/cultures. A successful communication is based on the development of the relationship. Specific in terms of international business communications, when a company or organization faces a business communication problem in international trade, he can find out solutions by considering its relationship building with others. In another words, he can find out the causes of the problem by reviewing above three levels. Relationship building can be seen as the source and overview of all specific communication skills.

2.1.2 The Logic between Relationship Building and IBC

The purpose of analyzing the levels of relationship building is to find out specific implements combined with three aspects of International Business Communication. In terms of linguistics, the staff of the company need to improve their own English level and native usage and the company can introduce policy to encourage bilingual environment such as bilingual file. In terms of human science, the staff of two companies from different countries need to identify the other persons' communication context and understand the meaning of each other beyond words. In terms of business etiquette, more culture relationship can be built through giving full attention to cultural differences. Above are some instances of specific skills and there are also many other skills concerned with three aspects of international business communication. The following paragraph will analyze four main skills required for professional.

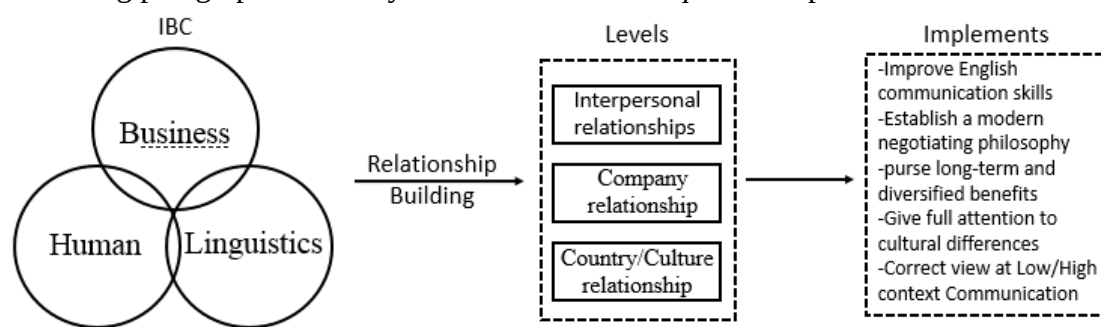


FIGURE 2.2 Logic between Relationship Building and IBC

2.2 Communication Skills

2.2.1 Capacity of Balancing Low and High-context Communication

In low context cultures, communication is stressed on direct communication. Contextual factors are less important. What the speaker has said is what he wants to express. So the meaning contained is very clear. However, in high context cultures, communication emphasize indirect communication. The context of communication conveys much of the meaning. Much of the information is not on the surface and listeners need to pay more attention to the way of saying. (Hall, 1976)

Low-Context Cultures	High-Context Cultures
Germany	Arab cultures
Scandinavian cultures	France
Switzerland	Japan
United States	China
	Russia

FIGURE3.1 Context and Countries (Hall, E.T. and Hall, M.R., 1990)

To be specific, staff from high context culture may bring more additional information into a communication to a degree that staff from low context culture can not catch. For instance, a Japanese staff may understand the meaning of Germanic boss's words according the boss's religion and hobby or even his own recent working performance. This action may decrease the efficiency and waste much human resource. (McDaniel, 2000) Economic globalization has not only accelerated the transformation of the social structure of the Third World, but also dissolved the traditional cultural order. In essence, it has also triggered a transformation that includes the characteristics of thinking, the way of life, the demeanor of words and deeds. For long-term development and progress, more people like low context culture. However, high context culture is more conducive to the overall harmony and avoids contradictions and conflicts. Therefore, we need to avoid weaknesses and take the best of them. The overall cohesion needs a high context culture, and a low context culture is needed for development and progress. (Adair and Brett, 2005)

2.2.2 High English Skills

According to HaiFang, 80% of the UN original documents are in English and 90% of the Internet is in English. (HaiFang, 2014) Most schools in the world have compulsory English classes. In international business communication, English is more popular than the languages of other countries. English has become a common language in the world and fluent English will become an important key to professionals.

As an ordinary employee, he should take into account language expression characteristics of both sides and achieve higher accuracy through professional translation skills. In addition, he should master the professional vocabulary related to business to improve the quality of translation. As a company that trades with foreign countries, it should promote the use of bilingual environment within the company. Although sometimes troublesome, it can create an international atmosphere and pave the way for further foreign trade.

2.2.3 Modern Negotiations Concept

In traditional international business communication, it is easy to treat each other as "enemies" because they place too much emphasis on winning or losing and are more easily caught in the stalemate. Therefore, it is very helpful to establish a modern communication concept to solve the communication barrier. For both parties, they need to establish a "win-win" negotiating philosophy and try to avoid any conflicts in the communication so that both parties can obtain the maximum benefits and satisfaction.

In international business communication, price factors and immediate interests can not be overemphasized in some cases. Rather, they should actively seek the long-term and diversified benefits. The proceeds from a communication may be relatively small, so long-term benefits are immeasurable as long as the two parties cooperate in a good manner. Meanwhile, when it is difficult to reach an agreement on the price negotiations, the company can strive for benefits on other terms of trade on the basis of price-centering, which is helpful to the successful conclusion of the communication objective.

2.2.4 Understanding Each Other's Culture

According to Trompenaars' Cultural Dimensions, Culture is the guideline which influences people's behavior patterns (Trompenaars 1996). Dimensions are summarized as follows: Universalism versus particularism; Individualism and Communitarianism; Achievement versus ascription; Neutral versus affective; Specific versus diffuse; Human-nature relationship; Human-time relationship. In general, an IBC professional can understand the other side's way of working, such as: The attitude on the rules, the individual and group interests, power distance, the way of expressing emotion, the attitude between work and private life, reaction to environmental change and the tendency between past and future.(R áthi, 2012)

A professional needs to have an accurate understanding of cultural adaptation. Cultural adaptation does not mean the negotiator has to completely adapt to the other party but rather allows the two parties to negotiate to think each other's values, cultural backgrounds and ways of thinking. On the basis of respectation, the two sides can make use of their advantages and strengths to reduce errors and disagreements in international business communication. Besides, a professional needs to accept different

cultures, which helps him to analyze the other part's behaviors. This is because psychological changes in communication are sometimes manifested through personal behavior, which is influenced by factors such as local cultural foundation. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize and respect each other's cultural differences and try to adopt a positive attitude of acceptance, so as to facilitate the settlement of various issues in international business communication.

3 CONCLUSION

3.1 Summary

When undertaking business activities during international business communication, enterprises inevitably will encounter various obstacles that affect the communication efficiency. If enterprises want to achieve the desired outcome of the communication, they need to find correct skills to build proper relationship with others. Besides, they need to prepare well and adopt effective evasion tactics according to the possible communication obstacles. The author of this report thinks that the most important skill is to learn about the different culture between each other. The respectation for cultural differences is the basis of relationship building and the precondition of more economic benefits in international business communication.

3.2 Limitation

This article just lists a few main tips but does not systematically summarize the skills required for professionals and does not rank the importance of these tips. Here put forward the following research ideas: firstly, find the appropriate theoretical support and establish a complete system of skill indicators. Secondly, by using of Delphi method, the indicators can be scored in order to determine the importance of these skills.

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GRADING CRITERIA AND STUDENT FEEDBACK

PLEASE UPLOAD THIS ON TURNITIN WITH YOUR ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

Common Assessment Criteria Applied	Percent age	Grade
1. Research-informed Literature Extent of research and/or own reading, selection of credible sources, application of appropriate referencing conventions.		
Task 1	10	
Task 2	10	
2. Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Extent of knowledge and understanding of concepts and underlying principles associated with the discipline.		
Task 1	10	
Task 2	10	
3. Analysis Analysis, evaluation and synthesis; logic, argument and judgement; analytical reflection; organisation of ideas and evidence		
Task 1	10	
Task 2	10	
4. Practical Application and Deployment Deployment of methods, materials, tools and techniques; application of concepts; formulation of innovative and creative solutions to solve problems.		

Task 1	15	
Task 2	5	
5. Skills for Professional Practice		
Attributes in professional practice: individual and collaborative working; deployment of appropriate media; presentation and organisation.		
Task 1	10	
Task 2	15	

Assignment Result (Assessment grades are subject to ratification at the Exam Board. These comments and grades are to give feedback on module work and are for guidance only until they are confirmed.)	Late Submission Penalties (tick if appropriate)		
	Up to one-week late		