

ROLLS ROYCE MOVE TO DUBAI

Student Name: Sevie Asanova

Student ID:191330

Course title: International Business Communication

Tutor's name: Husam Alharahsheh

Rolls Royce move to Dubai

Introduction

Business communication requires a different mindset depending on the cultural setting, especially if an organisation operates on a global scale. The way people understand cultural context can be a deciding factor as to how they interact with others. During intercultural interaction, an individual may decide to use a direct or indirect style to avoid conflict or offending others (Merkin, 2018). A direct style is essentially exchanging ideas without adding any extra explanation, while indirect reference means talking in a diplomatic way to foster social harmony (Abi-Raad, 2019). Every culture around the globe comes with its own set of norms. Therefore, situations that would be perfectly normal in one culture can be strange or outright offensive in another setting. Therefore, there is no single best way to communicate with people from different countries or cultural backgrounds. For that reason, it is important for businessmen to take advantage of all available contexts and adjust accordingly based on what they need to do to achieve better results.

Language is the key challenge in doing business internationally. Although Navigating international markets can be difficult, people who are culturally sensitive can build trust with their multicultural business partners and prosper. Cultural sensitivity helps break down barriers and establish rapport when working across cultures. This paper covers global business in greater detail, providing an indepth understanding of the cultural barriers to communication that Rolls Royce can encounter while moving to Dubai and strategies for overcoming those barriers.

United Arab Emirates (UAE)

The UAE is a commercial hub and one of the most competitive economic regions in the world. It is a Muslim country and adheres to Islamic laws, culture, and customs. Citizens are

expected to pray five times per day and fast during Ramadan (Viljanen & Vene, 2020). Emiratis also have a conservative culture as compared to Western cultures. So, it is important for foreigners to take these factors into account when conducting business in the country. Dubai is one of the most popular urban centres in the UAE since it is known for its ultra-modern architecture and luxury goods. Rolls Royce, a luxury brand, can easily start its vehicle production in the city and maximise sales, provided it handles communication challenges effectively.

Theories of international and intercultural communication

Hofstede critical analysis

Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory can be used effectively in the UAE. It is, however, not a wholly suitable model for understanding and working with Emiratis since it has some limitations and it is only useful in certain circumstances. For instance, Hofstede's individualism-collectivism dimension does not seem particularly relevant to the UAE context. The emphasis on collectivist values and behaviour systems in the region may be difficult to capture using Hofstede's construct of individualism-collectivism. While Hofstede's masculinity-femininity dimension may be more applicable to Arabic cultures as they are generally considered to be more patriarchal than Western societies (Ba-awaidhan, 2019). However, this dimension assumes that society is either masculine or feminine, yet in reality, many societies have both characteristics (Gosling, 2018). Additionally, the uncertainty avoidance dimension might not apply in the local cultural context. The reason behind this is that Arab societies may not necessarily share all the characteristics associated with high uncertainty avoidance cultures that are present in Europe (Miller et al., 2018).

The power distance index seems to be appropriate for use in the UAE because most

societies in the country are hierarchical by nature. However, even this dimension should be used carefully since it does not take into account intra-group differences at various levels of power which could vary from one organisation to another and even between different age groups (Gaweesh, & Haid, 2018). Therefore, one cannot assume that people would react similarly based on their position within an organisation because there are many other factors that influence how people behave, such as family background, education level, and socioeconomic status. Consequently, they are unlikely to follow any particular pattern at the macro level due to the heterogeneity of Emirati society. Such factors are important when defining communication patterns at an individual level.

Samovar critical analysis

Samovar's theory is based on the idea that considers communication as a process. The model has different parts, including the message, the medium, and the receiver (Idris & Muftia, 2021). During communication, the encoder sends a message through a medium to the decoder who then interprets its meaning. Since each person has different perceptions, ideas, and goals for communicating, one must pay attention to these differences to successfully communicate with another person. Therefore, the new meaning created by the decoder depends on both their frame of reference and the context of the situation. In this theory, noise acts as an extrinsic or intrinsic distraction that affects the quality and speed at which the message is received. Therefore, it emphasises on understanding how people's experiences shape their responses to messages without considering issues like culture and power dynamics.

Jandt critical analysis

Theories of international communication have traditionally been dominated by those that focus on interpersonal and intergroup communication. Nonetheless, the field has recently

expanded its scope to include the study of both interpersonal and intergroup communication. The expansion is a large part of what makes Jandt's theory so highly regarded, as it focuses on both interactions between individuals and groups and their concepts (AlTaher, 2019).

Jandt critical analysis is one of the most popular theories in intercultural communication. Written by John Jandt, it describes seven categories that are shared by all cultures, such as culture-specific artifacts, as well as groups within every culture and every time period (Hoa, 2019). For each category, Jandt explains why members of various cultures share some concepts with each other using joint analysis. The concepts can be used to analyse similar artifacts in different societies, expected behaviours in different countries, and how people cope with new cultures.

Cultural sensitivity in UAE

Cultural sensitivity is a pre-requisite for effective business practice in the UAE. The country has a diverse population representing several nations and global cultures. People of different cultures have different values, beliefs, and attitudes towards life (Cain et al., 2018). These differences can create challenges in communication, interpersonal relationships, and decision making but can also be rewarding if used to advance the business objectives of an organisation strategically.

As the economy of the UAE continues to develop rapidly, it has opened up opportunities for foreign investors to explore new ventures while embracing cultural diversity. However, the success of any company will depend on its ability to adapt to cultural differences within the country and use them effectively in business operations (Tahir, 2018). In situations where there is little or no awareness about the local culture's values, traditions, ritual practices, and communication styles, there are high chances of conflict arising in business dealings (Caputo et al., 2018). Consequently, it may result in misunderstandings that could eventually lead to losses

or damage the company's reputation due to breakdowns in communication between different parties.

Culture has a significant influence on the way individuals communicate, and it also defines how messages are interpreted. Culture includes not only language but also customs, traditions, and beliefs that define a particular social group or society (Hjerm et al., 2020). Religion is an essential part of the culture in many parts of the world. In Dubai, Islam has a strong influence on business practices and how people interact. For example, society expects Muslim women to dress modestly and cover their hair with scarves. It is inappropriate for a lady to remove her headscarf in the presence of men or foreigners. Therefore, investors from Western countries should be aware of this when visiting the country for business meetings or negotiations and dress appropriately.

The UAE is a high-context culture, meaning that communication relies heavily on nonverbal elements (Alfaqeeh et al., 2019). Understanding the culture is important because local citizens will pay more attention to body language and tone than the actual words being spoken. For example, some Emiratis may not directly say what they want or need from someone but instead communicate their desires through hints and suggestions. Therefore, this indirect communication can present hurdles to Rolls Royce managers from Britain, a low-context society, and they might not build relationships with colleagues and clients effectively. Another way that people in high-context cultures tend to interact differently is by using silence as a part of communication. If someone says something that the listener does not agree with, the listener will often stay silent rather than be outspoken about what they do not agree with. For instance, when an employee says something inappropriate at the workplace, colleagues might just disengage as a clue that what was said was offensive.

Awareness of collectivism is important while communicating with UAE nationals. As a united, family-based society, Emiratis place a higher emphasis on collective relationships than on individual goals and needs (Zeffane, 2020). Collectivism refers to a cultural value that emphasises the needs of the group over the needs of the individual. Therefore, in Emiratis' culture, people put their families and teams first. For instance, it is good practice to greet co-workers and ask about their family before talking about work. It is generally a beneficial social trait since it helps to facilitate trust among people and encourage cooperation. Foreigners who are aware of its presence in UAE culture tend to achieve effective communication and positive results while interacting with people from local communities.

Businesses in the UAE must take care to observe cultural sensitivities, and this includes attitudes about gender. Unlike other Arabic countries, women are well-represented in high positions as men. For Rolls Royce, the company may hire women in some administrative posts. However, the managers need to treat them with the same courtesy as men. For example, leaders should not engage in sexist behaviour or make disparaging remarks since women have equal rights under the law, and they are also accorded equal respect in society. Nonetheless, the Emirati society does not expect women to work in production lines that require heavy manual work. Therefore, the company needs to know about male-dominated jobs to avoid controversies.

UAE work culture might be slightly different from that of Westerners. For example, project deadlines are not as strict as in England (Albattah et al., 2021). As a result, many workers take more time brainstorming and revising work for perfection. However, the common problem that arises from such a work style is that it creates delays which can affect the output.

Communication barriers

One of the biggest communication barriers that foreign businesses experience in the UAE

is language. The official language is Arabic, but due to the international nature of the country, many other languages are spoken by both locals and foreigners (Thomure, 2019). Therefore, there can be challenges when people from different backgrounds try to communicate with each other. Rolls Royce, for instance, its European workforce might have trouble sharing ideas with native Arab Employees with little knowledge of English.

The tone of voice directly impacts how the message is perceived. A tone that is too fast or harsh may be interpreted as aggressive, disrespectful, or patronising, while a slow speech pattern may be seen as unenthusiastic or boring (Neto, 2021). For instance, when a project is behind schedule, it is inappropriate to demand the workforce to work harder using a sharp tone.

Inappropriate body language is another item that contributes to the communication barrier between foreign investors and UAE citizens. According to Uzun (2020), gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, posture, physical distance, and touching are all part of body language. People use gestures to reinforce messages, but some Western gestures are inappropriate in UAE. For example, pointing to a colleague or a customer with the index finger is unacceptable since some people can interpret it as singling someone out. Besides, gestures like thumbs up and middle fingers are also unacceptable, especially in public places.

Communication strategies

Effective communication strategies address all aspects of corporate communications, from customer relations to internal employee communications. Poorly planned or implemented strategies can lead to damaging misunderstandings and confusion within a company and among customers (Waxin et al., 2018). Rolls Royce can start creating its communication strategy in Dubai by clearly defining its goals in the region. It can also analyse its production lines to assess how its policies impact all stakeholders, including employees and customers. Understanding the

effectiveness of different messages is important in identifying potential pitfalls of the program and possible solutions.

Most people have some unconscious prejudices towards other cultures, and these biases sometimes create an unintentional barrier to understanding one another. Avoiding such misunderstandings requires individuals to be aware of cultural differences and how they may affect their interactions with others. Therefore, an employee should remember that building a good relationship with co-workers from different backgrounds is a two-way process (Kim, 2021). In the Rolls Royce case, the team from Europe needs to be open to learn about Emiratis' culture, and the other party should put equal effort to overcome communication challenges. The leaders should also value and respect each worker to prevent conflict.

Hiring translators is one of the ways Rolls Royce can overcome the language barrier while running its operations in Dubai. Translating English to local languages such as Arabic and vice versa is important since it helps employees from different backgrounds to share ideas. Besides, leaders can use simple words during meetings for easier translation to prevent misinterpretation, which can cause problems.

An important strategy that Rolls Royce can put in place to improve sensitivity is raising cultural awareness. Cultural competency creates a sense of belonging, which improves interactions among employees, customers, and other stakeholders (Varlani, 2020). The company can offer free training to enable the workforce to learn, understand and value other people's backgrounds and perspectives. With such knowledge, co-workers can relate to other people's thoughts or emotions and develop empathy which creates a social bond and improves communication.

The company can also create programs that can focus on improving employees'

communication skills. Lack of cultural awareness can limit internal and external communication, alienating workers and offending customers, which in turn affects production and sales (Marschlich & Ingenhoff, 2021). It is important for the automotive company to have programs that create awareness about the appropriate use of body language, words, gestures, and actions to improve cross-cultural communication.

Employees can only connect and interact successfully if they embrace good behaviour and a positive attitude. The company can come up with guidelines that indicate an appropriate code of conduct and communicate with employees using different channels such as social media and email to coerce the workers to act responsively (Al-Gamrh et al., 2020). The staff need to know what constitutes acceptable and unwanted behaviour and its impact on the company. People can only change their attitudes towards other groups if they have a deep understanding of other cultures. Behaviour-based training can foster inclusion by shaping the way employees interact in-person, on the phone, or online. Therefore, focussing on behaviour can help reduce complaints, negative reviews and misconduct in the organisation.

Conclusion

In summary, the UAE is a culturally rich country, and investors need to be aware of cultural differences between employees and customers. While the co-existence of multiple communities can be beneficial to business, it may also be a source of misunderstandings, especially if the marketers are unfamiliar with the local culture and their ways of doing business. If Rolls Royce was to move its production to Dubai, the European team would need to adopt the Emirati culture for peaceful co-existence with the local workforce. Therefore, they might need to understand the norms, dressing code, and language to prevent communication barriers. They can achieve this through cultural sensitivity training to create awareness among the workforce. Lastly, the

management can formulate policies or guidelines that highlight appropriate workplace code of conduct to prevent harassment, and discrimination.

References

- Abi-Raad, M., 2019. Western organisational theories: Middle Eastern style: How much do you know about the culture. *The Journal of Organizational Management Studies*, 2019, pp.1-16.
- Albattah, M., Shibeika, A. and Sami Ur Rehman, M., 2021. Understanding the Hiring Issues of the Craft Workers in the UAE's Construction Labor Market: Project Managers Perspective. *Buildings*, 12(1), p.26.
- Alfaqeeh, K., Hossan, C. and Slade, B.W., 2019. Influence of Arab culture on managing an innovative work environment: An exploratory study in the United Arab Emirates. *International Journal of Business Innovation and Research*, 19(2), pp.232-250.
- Al-Gamrh, B., Ismail, K.N.I.K., Ahsan, T. and Alquhaif, A., 2020. Investment opportunities, corporate governance quality, and firm performance in the UAE. *Journal of Accounting in Emerging Economies*.
- AlTaher, B.B., 2019. The necessity of teaching Intercultural Communication in higher education. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*.
- Ba-awaidhan, A.G., 2019. Culture Diversity in G. Hofstede's Model with Reference to English—Arabic Proverbs. In *Contacts and Contrasts in Cultures and Languages* (pp. 47-63). Springer, Cham.
- Cain, C.L., Surbone, A., Elk, R. and Kagawa-Singer, M., 2018. Culture and palliative care: preferences, communication, meaning, and mutual decision making. *Journal of pain and symptom management*, 55(5), pp.1408-1419.
- Caputo, A., Marzi, G., Maley, J. and Silic, M., 2018. Ten years of conflict management research 2007-2017: An update on themes, concepts and relationships. *International Journal of*

Conflict Management.

- Gaweesh, K. and Al Haid, A., 2018. The image of united arab emirates culture among the non-Arab expatriates in the UAE., *2018(64)*, pp.1-41.
- Gosling, J., 2018. Gender fluidity reflected in contemporary society. *Jung Journal*, *12(3)*, pp.75-79.
- Hjerm, M., Eger, M.A., Bohman, A. and Fors Connolly, F., 2020. A new approach to the study of tolerance: Conceptualising and measuring acceptance, respect, and appreciation of difference. *Social Indicators Research*, *147(3)*, pp.897-919.
- Hoa, N., 2019. Intercultural communication competence from an identity constructionist perspective and its implications for foreign language education. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*, *35(1)*.
- Idris, N.S. and Muftia, S.N., 2021, January. Verbal and Nonverbal Communication in American Culture and Its' Implications for BIPA Teacher's Intercultural Competence. In *Fifth International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture, and Education (ICOLLITE 2021)* (pp. 525-530). Atlantis Press.
- Kim, Y., 2021. Building organisational resilience through strategic internal communication and organisation–employee relationships. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *49(5)*, pp.589-608.
- Marschlich, S. and Ingenhoff, D., 2021. Stakeholder engagement in a multicultural context: The contribution of (personal) relationship cultivation to social capital. *Public Relations Review*, *47(4)*, p.102091.
- Merkin, R.S., 2018. Individualism-collectivism applied to direct versus indirect facework. In *Saving face in business* (pp. 119-136). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

- Miller, J., Snyder, G., Antoniou, D., Bitar, E., Garrett, C., Alcocer-Loredo, F., Qutu, A. and Norman, G., 2018. HOFSTEDE'S 6 DIMENSION COMPARISON OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, CHINA, COLUMBIA, CHILE, CANADA & THE UAE. *Copyright 2018 by Institute for Global Business Research, Nashville, TN, USA*, p.149.
- Neto, FMNBDA, 2021. *The Dos and Don'ts of Doing Business in the Middle East: GCC/United Arab Emirates* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Taha Thomure, H., 2019. Arabic language education in the UAE: Choosing the right drivers. In *Education in the United Arab Emirates* (pp. 75-93). Springer, Singapore.
- Tahir, R., 2018. Expanding horizons and expatriate adjustment: Perceptions of Western expatriate managers in multinational companies in the United Arab Emirates. *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*.
- Uzun, G.Ö., 2020. A Review of Communication, Body Language and Communication Conflict. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24(09).
- Varlani, L., 2020. The Impact of Cross-Cultural Training on Employee Performance in the UAE Hospitality Industry. In *Human Capital in the Middle East* (pp. 25-50). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Viljanen, A. and Vene, M., 2020. Dubai-Handbook how to survive and succeed in one of the most diverse working environments.
- Waxin, M.F., Lindsay, V., Belkhodja, O. and Zhao, F., 2018. Workforce localisation in the UAE: recruitment and selection challenges and practices in private and public organisations. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 52(4), pp.99-113.
- Zeffane, R., 2020. Gender, individualism-collectivism and individuals' propensity to trust: A comparative exploratory study. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 26(4), pp.445-

459.