

Table 15-1. continued

Group CC	5-Sub-networks 4-Networks 3-informal 2-Semi-Formal 1-Formal	5-Meritocratic 4-Plutocratic 3-Technocratic 2-Bureaucratic 1-Chaotic	5-Fixed 4-Semi-fixed 3-Inflexible 2-Semi-flexible 1-Flexible	5-Very Friendly 4-Friendly 3-Semi-friendly 2. Unfriendly 1. Hostile	5-High 4-Moderate 3-Low 2-Infrequent 1-Ad hoc	5-Supporting 4-Guiding 3-Commanding 2-Manipulating 1.Critiquing	5-Transcommunication 4-Pseudocommunication 3-Paracom-munication 2-Miscommunication 1-Metacom-munication
Personal CC	5-Home 4-Social 3-Semi-social 2-Anti-social 1-Work	5-Meritocratic 4-Plutocratic 3-Technocratic 2-Bureaucratic 1-Chaotic	5-Fixed 4-Semi-fixed 3-Inflexible 2-Semi-flexible 1-Flexible	5-Very Friendly 4-Friendly 3-Semi-friendly 2. Unfriendly 1. Hostile	5-High 4-Moderate 3-Low 2-Infrequent 1-Ad hoc	5-Supporting 4-Guiding 3-Commanding 2-Manipulating 1.Critiquing	5-Transcommunication 4-Pseudocommunication 3-Paracommu-nication 2-Miscommunication 1-Metacom-munication

as formal communication channels. The formal channels of communication help create and maintain authority as well as give authenticity to messages, but they also inhibit communication; indeed, they alienate users. In the global economy, informal channels such as the Internet prevail. They create a horizontal society which exchanges messages that otherwise would not have been created.

The fact that electronic media create new inter-organizational and interpersonal networks raises concerns about the individuals and groups excluded either intentionally through organizational policy and politics or accidentally through inadequate access to networking resources.

THE EFFICIENCY OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Applying these attributes in cross-cultural communication, let us take an example of communication in the global economy between the

Western-West and Egyptian cultures. To assess the influence of each attribute in the communication process, apply weights on the scale from 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest value of the attribute. Table 15-2 compares those attributes of two cultures, based on the authors' expertise within both cultures.

The cultural difference (D_c) in attribute weights of Western-West culture richness (R_{WW}) and Egyptian culture richness (R_E) is:

$$D_c = R_{WW} - R_E = 91 - 75 = 16 \text{ points} \quad [1]$$

in favor of the Western-West culture. This means that the two cultures are not at the same developmental level; but to succeed in communication among both partners in the global economy, both partners must invest in their own abilities to cross-communicate successfully. We shall see how to evaluate the cost of such investments.

The efficiency of Western-West culture in the global economy is $\eta = 91\%$. This means that only 9 times out of 100 is a Western-West business

Table 15-2. The comparison of richness of western-west and Egyptian cultures

Culture Components	Western – West Culture	Islamic (Egyptian) Culture
STRATEGIZING SUB-CULTURE 25	21	20
Religion	3	5
Law	5	5
Political	4	3
Society	4	4
Economy	5	3
DIFFUSING SUB-CULTURE 25	22	21
Customs	4	5
Language	5	5
Mediated Communication	5	3
Non-verbal communication	3	5
Infrastructure	5	3
ENLIGHTENING SUB-CULTURE 25	24	16
Art	4	4
Technology	5	2
Literature	5	4
Education	5	3
Knowledge	5	3
ENTERTAINING SUB-CULTURE 25	24	18
Performance	4	4
Music	5	4
Sport	5	3
Tourism	5	4
Life style	5	3
CULTURE RICHNESS (R) $R_{\max} = 100$	$R_{ww} = 91$	$R_E = 75$
CULTURE EFFICIENCY (η)	$\eta = 91 \%$	$\eta = 75 \%$

person likely to have errors in communication because of a lack of cultural understanding of or by a business partner. On the other hand, the Egyptian culture's efficiency in the global economy is $\eta = 75\%$, which means that an Egyptian business person may have faulty communication 25 times out of 100. Almost every fourth transac-

tion (with Western-West business person) will be communicated erroneously because of a failure to account for cultural differences.

The role of the communication climate in cross-cultural communication is to facilitate that communication. For example, let us examine a case of communication between the Western-West

and Egyptian cultures. Table 15-3 illustrates that comparison.

The communication climate difference (D_{CC}) between both cultures is:

$$D_{CC} = A_{WW} - A_E = 29 - 27 = 2 \text{ points} \quad [2]$$

in favor of the Western-West culture. This means that a Western-West business person entering into a transaction with an Egyptian partner should decrease the cultural difference (D_C) = 14 points by $D_{CC} = 2$, calculated above. The modified culture difference of Western-West culture ($D_{MC/WW}$) after the adjustment by the communication climate difference is:

$$D_{MC/WW} = D_C - D_{CC} = 16 - 2 = 14 \text{ points} \quad [3]$$

On the other hand, the Egyptian partner has to increase the Egyptian culture difference ($D_{MC/E}$) by the same coefficient:

$$D_{MC/E} = D_C - D_{CC} = 16 + 2 = 18 \text{ points} \quad [4]$$

After the adjustments, the modified culture difference (D_{MC}) between Western-West culture and Egyptian culture has increased for Egyptian

culture ($D_{MC/E}$) from 14 points to 16 points and for Western-West culture ($D_{MC/WW}$) it has decreased from 14 to 12 points. The communication climate favors Western-West culture, while it disfavors the Egyptian culture. In other words, a business person from a Western-West culture has a communication advantage in the global economy, while a business person from the Egyptian culture has to work harder at the communication effort in order to succeed in the global economy.

The ability of a Western-West culture's business person (B_{WW}) to deal with a business partner from Egyptian culture is:

$$B_{WW} = R_{WW} : D_{MC/WW} = 91 : 14 = 6.5 \quad [5]$$

The ability of the Egyptian culture's business partner (B_E) to deal with a business partner from Western-West culture is:

$$B_E = R_E : D_{MC/E} = 75 : 18 = 4.2 \quad [6]$$

The culture's ability reflects how a given culture's strength can overcome cultural differences. The comparison of both cultures' abilities reflects a partner's cultural strength at the business table.

Table 15-3. The comparison of communication climate attributes (A) of western-west (A_{WW}) and Egyptian cultures (A_E) in global economy settings

Global Comm. Climate Territory (Space)	Western-West Culture 3-Formal	Egyptian Culture 5-Personal
Style	5-Open	4-Semi-open
Time	5-Fixed	2-Semi-flexible
Relationship	4-Friendly	5-Very Friendly
Frequency (Participation)	5-High	3-High
Tone (Friendliness)	4-Guiding	2-Commanding
Quality	3-Paracommunication	4-Paracommunication
TOTAL POINTS	$A_{WW} = 29$	$A_E = 27$

It also reflects his/her competitive advantage (V). The competitive advantage of a Western-West partner over an Egyptian partner can be computed in the following manner:

$$V_{ww} = B_{ww} : B_E = 6.5 : 4.2 = 1.6 \text{ or } 160\% \quad [7]$$

In our example, B_{ww} is 1.6 (160%) times stronger than B_E . In common language, this comparison means that in a global economy of bilateral relationships, an American business person has almost twice the strength in overcoming cultural differences (dealing with an Egyptian) as the Egyptian partner. If such knowledge is known to either partner, it can bring competitive advantage to him/her.

THE CULTURE COST FACTOR IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

A business entering the global economy is aware that it has to improve the understanding of foreign markets' dynamics and practices. Usually, new entry to a foreign market is associated with two types of cost:

- The explicit cost (C_E) can be anticipated, planned and quantified (transportation, building purchase or rental, interpreter's salary and all other overhead costs) in terms of its financial impact on doing business in a specific culture.
- The implicit cost (C_I) of cultural differences is intuitively understandable, but it is usually very difficult to predict or evaluate its structure and range. So, to guarantee success, it is very critical for a global firm to identify, examine and project the implicit costs associated with entering a foreign market.

The following conceptual framework of the implicit cost of the culture factor (C_I) will provide a definition and range of that type of cost:

$$C_I = f(\text{GNP}_C, R_C, D_{MC}, N_D, N_W) \quad [8]$$

Where:

GNP – Gross national product per capita of a given culture in terms of purchasing power parity (*ppp*);

R_C - Richness of a given culture

D_{MC} - Adjusted modified culture difference between involved cultures

N_D - Number of working days in another culture

N_W - Number of workers in another culture

Based on the variables' relationships in formula [8], one can define a formula for the culture factor cost of the culture which has a positive culture difference ($+D_{MC}$):

$$C_{I(+D)} = [(\$ \text{GNP}_{C(+D)} - \$ \text{GNP}_{C(-D)}) : (R_{C(+D)} + D_{MC})] \times (N_D \times N_W) \quad [9]$$

In the case of the richer culture (formula [9]), the culture difference (D_{MC}) is in favor of that culture ($R_{C(+D)}$); therefore, both variables are added to decrease the cost of overcoming the culture difference.

This formula provides a balance between economic means, expressed in GNP level and culture richness (R). In other words, low-richness cultures (measured by a low R) with high GNPs will not communicate in the global economy at the low cost. By analogy, persons from such cultures may remind their associates of the behavior of a *nouveauriche*, whose manners sometimes appear assumed and uninformed to the point of indicating exploitability, "greenness." New millionaires from countries that are being transformed from a central planning to a market economy sometimes invade the French Riviera and behave there like an

elephant in a china shop. Due to a limited practice in the market economy and old attitudes, very often those *nouveaux riches* prefer quick deals rather than long-term business collaboration. They are aware that their low-richness culture does not generate enough confidence in partners from a rich culture to establish long-term business relations. An additional factor also plays a role. A fresh business culture in some of those countries, very often driven by mafias, does not motivate those business persons to long-term commitments. As a result of it, they prefer to invest abroad rather than in their own countries. In effect, their business cultures do not develop.

In the case of the less rich culture (formula [10], the culture difference (D_{MC}) is not in favor of that culture ($R_{C(-D)}$); therefore, D_{MC} is subtracted from $R_{C(+D)}$ to increase the cost of overcoming the culture difference.

$$C_{I(-D)} = [(\$GNP_{C(-D)} - \$GNP_{C(-D)}) : (R_{C(-D)} - D_{MC})] \times (N_D \times N_W) \quad [10]$$

The application of these formulas to the example of cross-cultural communication between a person of Western-West culture [9] and one of Egyptian culture [10] for the business duration = 30 days and the involvement of 1 worker, provides the following results (GNP according to World Bank, 1998-99):

$$C_{WW} = [(\$28,740 - \$2,940) : (91 + 14)] \times [30 \times 1] = \$7,400 \quad [11]$$

$$C_E = [(\$28,740 - \$2,940) : (75 - 18)] \times [30 \times 1] = \$13,600 \quad [12]$$

The richer culture (Western-West), in order to successfully communicate a business plan to the Egyptian culture, must invest only \$7,400 to overcome culture differences. However, the less rich culture should spend 1.8 times more than the rich culture to overcome culture differences in 20

culture components (Table 2) and seven culture communication climate attributes (Table 3).

This example only confirms the old truth, that the comprehensive development of a rich culture takes a long time and requires many means. The paradox of this example is that the culture of Egypt is about 6,000 years old, while the Western-West culture is only 1,200 years old, but has developed more comprehensively with much, much bigger means. This is reflected in the GNPs per capita of both cultures. Apparently 1+ millennium is enough time to enrich the culture of Western civilization.

The cost of overcoming culture differences should focus on learning through education, training, and practice in all culture categories that are disadvantageous. To see the scope of such an effort one must analyze a comparison of the two cultures, as is provided in Table 15-2 and Table 15-3.

CONCLUSION

This study has outlined and defined a framework for a cross-cultural communication process, its efficiency, and the cost of doing business in the global economy. A universal system design was developed not only to compare and quantify cultural efficiency and the attributes of communication climates through seven cultural layers (biological, personal, group, organization, regional, national and global), but also to explain the cross-cultural communication process and quantify the cultural cost in the global economy. This culture-specific design will help reduce miscommunication between partners across cultures and raise the awareness of differences in the levels of efficiency and cost in the communication process, behavior and practices between Western and non-Western cultural patterns.

Based on the presented framework, one can state that in order to be successful in cross-cultural communication in the global economy, engaged

parties should be aware of the following five efficiency and cost rules:

- *Culture Richness Rule I: A party from a less-rich culture (lower R) will more frequently communicate erroneously with a party from a richer culture (higher R) (Formula 1).*
- *Communication Climate Rule II: A party from a "warmer" communication climate (higher A) will be in the advantageous position over a party from a "cooler" communication climate (lower A) (Formulas 3 and 4).*
- *Communication Ability Rule III: When large differences exist between cultures, the person from the richer culture has the best chance to communicate his own message (higher R) (Formulas 5 and 6).*
- *Communication Competitive Advantage Rule IV: The difference in communication ability gives a measurable competitive advantage to the more skillful communicator (Formula 7).*
- *Communication Cost Rule V: A party with a higher GNP and a richer culture communicates in the cross-cultural setting at lower costs than a party with the opposite attributes (Formulas 8, 9, and 10).*

The presented framework of cross-cultural communication in the global economy provides pragmatic tools for how to define a communication strategy, train representatives and conduct business talks in order to achieve success.

It is obvious that each business acts in the broader context of a given civilization's culture; therefore, in order to pursue the best communication practice by a given company, it has to be supported by national policies promoting the development of harmonious culture.

This framework should motivate researchers and practitioners to increase production and distribution of knowledge and skills in the area of cross-cultural communication.

A. Further Research Directions

- Investigate dynamics of asymmetric communication between different kinds of civilizations in the 21st century by applying key indicators defined in this book.
- Investigate different key indicators which can impact asymmetric communication among civilizations.
- Investigate more rules and laws governing asymmetric communication.

B. Research Opportunities

- The research opportunity is in defining a communication space in a civilization and subsequently comparing cross-civilization communications.

C. Additional Ideas

- Asymmetric communication is most often used mode of communication which can be investigated (beyond a civilization level) at all levels of human activities, such as marriage, parenthood, teacher-hood, business-hood, and so forth.

D. Rationale

- Asymmetric communication is *de facto* about cross-cultural communication, which is a field of study that looks at how people from differing cultures (civilizations also) communicate. Since different cultures/civilizations have different patterns of behavior, roots, education, and economics, usually one of the communicating sides has an advantage over the other one. If one can know laws, rules, and principles governing such communication then one can be better prepared for such processes and predict their outcomes. These regularities of communication define cultural competence, which defines the abil-

ity of people of one culture to understand (via communication) and feel comfortable with the cultures of other people. This kind of ability is crucial for people who want to be successful in the global civilization, which horizontally integrates several religion-oriented civilizations. One of the main factors supporting this integration is the ability of people to minimize asymmetric communication. Improvements in communication and transportation technology have made it possible for previously stable cultures to meet in unstructured situations; for example, the Internet opens lines of communication without mediation, while budget airlines transplant ordinary citizens into unfamiliar milieus. Experience proves that merely crossing cultural boundaries can be considered threatening, while positive attempts to interact may provoke defensive responses. Some groups believe that the phenomenon of globalization has reduced cultural diversity and so reduced the opportunity for misunderstandings, but characterizing people as a homogeneous market is overly simplistic. If we cannot expect that people will be homogeneously communicating, at least they should be aware of the principles of asymmetric communication principles in order to avoid drastic errors.

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