

Leena Louhiala-Salminen
Anne Kankaanranta
(Editors)

The Ascent of International Business Communication



HELSINGIN KAUPPAKORKEAKOULU
HELSINKI SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

B-109



Leena Louhiala-Salminen – Anne Kankaanranta
(Editors)

The Ascent of International Business Communication

HELSINGIN KAUPPAKORKEAKOULUN

JULKAISUJA

B-109

© Leena Louhiala-Salminen, Anne Kankaanranta and
Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu

ISSN 0356-889X
ISBN 978-952-488-373-3

Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu -
HSE Print 2009

This book celebrates the work of
Professor Emerita
Mirjaliisa Charles

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword by the Editors	3
Kankaanranta, Anne & Louhiala-Salminen, Leena	
Introduction	5
Charles, Mirjaliisa	
The Ascent of International Business Communication: Are we on board?.....	9
Kankaanranta, Anne	
From strategy communication to reputation management: IBC Master's theses grounded in global communication practice	25
Du Babcock, Bertha	
English as a business lingua franca: A framework of integrative approach to future research in International Business Communication	45
Frandsen, Finn & Johansen, Winni	
Wash and communicate: Actions and artifacts in crisis communication	67
Heikkinen, Marja & Louhiala-Salminen, Leena	
International communication for a defensive purpose: Ideology and language awareness at work	87
Jung, Yeonkwon	
A review of theory of rapport management	115
Laine, Päivö	
Electronic commerce – Challenges and opportunities for business communication	137
Lehmuskallio, Sari	
Communicating strategy through corporate intranet news	151
Lehtonen, Miikka & Kampf, Constance	
A case for combining meaning, culture and knowledge: Extending Nonaka's theory of the Knowledge Creating Firm through Peirce's semiotics	175
Nickerson, Catherine	
The challenge of the multilingual workplace	193
Nikko, Tuija	
A dialogic approach to meeting interaction in an international business environment	205

Rogers, Priscilla & Tan Joo-Seng

Fifty years of intercultural study: A continuum of perspectives for research
and teaching 215

Tammelin, Maija

Learning to communicate CSR: A challenge for business communication
teaching 241

Tienari, Janne

On the symbolic (and practical) benefits of English language in multinational
corporations 251

Townsend, Taija

Communicating images of women leadership through implicit collocations 259

Victor, David

A re-evaluation of three interdisciplinary fields in higher education in business:
A post-silo repositioning of Business Communication, International Business
and Information Systems 275

Vuorela, Taina

Company-internal communication in BELF requires interactional strategies 295

Authors 310

Foreword by the Editors

This book celebrates the work of Professor Emerita *Mirjaliisa Charles*, who spearheaded the creation and ascent of International Business Communication (IBC) at the Helsinki School of Economics (HSE) during the last ten years before her retirement in April 2009. As her team members and co-workers, we are extremely happy to be able to put this volume together and this way thank Mirjaliisa for her superb instinct of direction and her determination to go forward on the route chosen. In addition, and maybe even more importantly, we want to express our thanks for her wonderful ability to inspire us others on the way.

Mirjaliisa Charles joined the HSE Faculty on 1 August 1974. For some time, she was teaching HSE students the English language skills needed in their future working life. Her research interest emerged in the 1980s, and gradually, the focus turned more towards international communication as a wider concept, including the perspectives of language, communication and that of international business. In 2000, Mirjaliisa Charles was appointed Professor of Applied Linguistics, particularly English Business Communication. She headed a curriculum renewal project that in fact meant that the core of the specific area defined for the professorship shifted from linguistics to communication. Thanks to her insight and commitment, we now have two professorships in IBC.

We have travelled a long way together – not only here in HSE but also in a number of conferences, workshops, and seminars giving papers about our shared research interests. In doing so, we have felt like *April*, *May*, and *June* (of Duckburg) constructing shared understandings and complementing each other. On 1 April 2009 - what an appropriate day for *April* - when we were listening to Mirjaliisa's Farewell Lecture (see the first chapter in this volume), we heard her well deserved happiness over the 'mission accomplished', i.e. that of launching International Business Communication. We also knew that she was at least as happy over another mission ahead, that of a Grandmother who has time.

We are sure that Mirjaliisa – Professor Emerita and Grandmother – will greatly enjoy reading this book. At the same time, thanks to the contributions by all of the twenty authors, we are proud to be able to present an overview of the field that we believe will further strengthen its position in future. We also hope that you readers will enjoy and find inspiration in this collection of articles mapping research foci, research questions and theoretical stances within International Business Communication today.

Leena and Anne

INTRODUCTION

Leena Louhiala-Salminen

Professor (acting), International Business Communication
Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

Anne Kankaanranta

Professor (acting), International Business Communication
Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

This book is dedicated to Mirjaliisa Charles. Its content is related to the research fields she has been involved in over the years, but in particular, the book focuses on the field in which she has done pioneering work over the past ten years: International Business Communication (IBC). The authors of the book are Mirjaliisa's research fellows, colleagues and doctoral students from all over the world.

The history of International Business Communication as a discipline or field is short, and although the Google search on 'international business communication' produces 42 700 hits, most of them seem to revolve around individual courses or study modules in foreign language skills or English skills needed in international business operations. It seems that at the moment only a few universities such as Copenhagen, Aarhus, and Antwerp run either Bachelor's or Master's programs in IBC, which are somewhat similar to ours. However, the specific foci are not identical and in many of the other programs, the emphasis tends to be on communication in English or other languages needed in international business.

At the Helsinki School of Economics (HSE), the mission of IBC is defined as follows (www.hse.fi/ibc):

“The mission of the International Business Communication Unit is to enhance the business knowhow of internationally operating companies by contributing to greater understanding of the strategic role of communication in international business operations.

We look at global communications at two levels:

- in the operations of the corporate communication function in international corporations*
- in all interactions taking place in corporate contexts”*

With this mission in mind, the doctoral program in IBC was started in 2002 and the Master’s program in 2005. Currently, we have ten active doctoral students (and three IBC Doctors) and the Master's program has had a yearly intake of some twenty students since 2005.

The development and establishment of IBC at HSE was significantly influenced by two major research projects funded by the Academy of Finland (2000-2002 and 2006-2009) that were (co)directed by Mirjaliisa. Both of them investigated communication phenomena in present-day global business. The first one focused on company-internal communication and inspired the conceptualization of *Business English Lingua Franca (BELF)*, which was introduced in Louhiala-Salminen, Charles, & Kankaanranta (2005), and which has been readily adopted by the research community (witness a separate chapter on the concept in Bargiela-Chiappini (Ed.), 2009, *The Handbook of Business Discourse*). The second project revisited the concept and explored the overall ‘success factors’ of BELF communication among internationally operating business professionals (e.g. Charles, 2007; Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, in press). The project was motivated by our strong belief that communication knowhow is an essential component of business knowhow.

As the above research projects suggest, our definition of IBC emphasizes its role as a ‘subject’ or a ‘research field’ in its own right, which typically occupies a function of its own in the operations of multinational corporations (MNCs). However, since it is closely intertwined with other business functions such as marketing and management, and with

other business research areas such as international business in general, and strategy formation and implementation in particular, IBC is inherently multidisciplinary. Therefore, by focusing on the nature of communication processes and procedures of global players, our research addresses issues which lie at the very heart of business operations. We also draw on diverse conceptual frameworks developed, for example, within communication and media studies, linguistics, as well as in international business, and social and cultural studies. Further, since IBC related issues and problems tend to be multifaceted and complex, we have investigated them by combining different methods such as quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews and discourse analysis. Recently, other researchers have increasingly followed suit since such approaches can simultaneously tap into the context and the communication proper (see Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson & Planken, 2007).

This edited volume introduces a variety of perspectives to IBC and reflects the overall ascent of communication in society in recent years. The first two papers focus on IBC as it has been conceptualized at HSE. Mirjaliisa Charles's Farewell lecture on 1 April 2009 is first given in full: *The Ascent of International Business Communication: Are we on board?*. In her 'response' to the challenging question, Anne Kankaanranta reviews the first seventeen theses produced by October 2009 in the IBC Master's Program at HSE. After that, the contributions by Mirjaliisa's research fellows, colleagues and doctoral students follow in the alphabetical order by the first author of the article.

Finally, we would like to extend our thanks to two colleagues without whom this book would not exist. Taija Townsend was invaluable in the early stages of the project when we started developing the idea of producing this book in tribute to Mirjaliisa's work. Arja Dahlstedt, on the other hand, has assisted us in the final stages of the project when the book was starting to get shape.

Now, only a few days before we – HSE – are about to merge with two other Finnish universities to form the new AALTO University, we are happy to invite you, our readers,

to enjoy this book on the Ascent of International Business Communication. We are confident that in the AALTO University the ascent of communication will continue.

References

- Bargiela-Chiappini, F., Nickerson, C. & Planken, B. (2007). *Business Discourse*. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave, MacMillan.
- Charles, M. (2007). Language Matters in Global Communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44 (3), 260-282.
- Gerritsen, M. & C. Nickerson. (2009). BELF: Business English as a Lingua Franca. In F. Bargiela-Chiappini (Ed.), *The Handbook of Business Discourse* (pp. 180-192). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Kankaanranta, A. & Louhiala-Salminen, L. (in press). "English? – Oh, it's just work!": A study of BELF users' perceptions. *English for Specific Purposes*.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., Charles, M., & Kankaanranta, A. (2005). English as a lingua franca in Nordic corporate mergers: Two case companies. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24 (4), 401–421.

Farewell lecture, April 1, 2009

THE ASCENT OF COMMUNICATION: ARE WE ON BOARD?

Mirjaliisa Charles
Professor Emerita
Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

Introduction

What is business communication? Here are some definitions given in class by our International Business Communication students:

“Business communication is:

- interaction through messages
- knowledge sharing in organizations
- dialogue through which organisations reach their goals
- the glue that ties an organisation together
- the corporate function that maintains business relations

In these definitions, the emphasis is on a process with multiple actors – or a two-way dialogue. There is also emphasis on the functional role of communication: It is goal oriented, and has an internal as well as an external function.

As always, I gain inspiration from my students. It is therefore these views which form the backbone of my talk today. I will argue that awareness of the potential offered by skilful communication is an essential prerequisite for success in the business world of today. I also argue that research into communication processes contributes to our understanding of sensemaking in organizations. My talk will be based on the work my

colleagues, my students and myself have done over the years - and still do - here in the Department of Languages and Communication.

I will start by briefly looking at a key question that our research has to answer:

1) What is the relationship between communication and organizations?

After this ontological question, I shall consider:

2) The power of communication, and the responsibility that goes with power.

Then, I will look at how my field - and my unit - have reacted to a very important issue:

3) globalization.

I know that globalization is a laboured old cliché. But is there a better word we can use? And anyway, I want to interest you in a consideration of what I hope to be some fresh aspects concerning language and communication in the globalization process.

4) We shall finish by glancing at the future.

Communication and organizations

Researchers have held two distinct research paradigms.

1) The first perspective is that communication is a phenomenon that exists in organizations – as though it's been dropped in from above (see Deetz 2004). Communication - or discourse, or interaction - the term we use can vary - is seen as a phenomenon that exists side by side with other phenomena within an organization. According to this view, organizations are the locus for the phenomenon, or process, of communication; they are the site, the context, in which communication – somewhere - takes place, and within which, and for the purposes of which, discourse is created. This view is what leads companies to talk about the 'communications function' - as contrasted with, for example, the marketing or the sales function - in organizations.

Such a research paradigm is, in many ways, an approach of convenience; it puts disciplines in their place - each cutting up a little slice from a complex reality. For companies, it is a neat organizational solution. But in its convenience, and neat arrangement, it is based on a far too narrow and restricted view of communication. Personally, I have never understood how management, or marketing, or sales can be undertaken without communicating. A broader perspective is required.

2) This second perspective sees an organization as being created by means of the discourse and communication through which it operates. Accordingly, analysing organizational discourse and communication means describing and explaining the very essence, the very being, of organizations. In the same way that economics, management principles, sociology and psychology can be thought of as capable of explaining organizational processes, communication and discourse can also be thought of as a distinct mode of explanation, or a way of thinking about organizational existence. With this focus, one asks “How do communication processes create, impact, change or consolidate the organization?” In this, communication, or discourse if you like, is seen as the creative force that drives phenomena and processes in organizations. An organization is not merely seen as the locus for the phenomenon of communication; it is the result, the manifestation, as well as the origin of a vast communicational impulse. For research, the ultimate aim is not to produce theories of organizational communication, but rather to produce a communication theory of organizations.

Of course, this research paradigm is slippery and unwieldy. It does not provide us with a neatly boxed up item called “communication”. It is, however, nearer to the knuckle of the everyday reality of organizations. I sometimes used to say that our Master’s Programme produced experts to work in the communication function of corporations. I quickly got corrected - quite rightly – by the most enlightened corporate communication managers, who pointed out to me that it is not just the ‘communications department’ that communicates. We all do. In 2006 an International Business Communication PhD graduate, Hanna Kalla, formalized this social constructivist view by calling it ‘integrated communications.’ (Kalla 2006). She defined it as “All formal and informal communication taking place at all levels of an organization.”

It is this research paradigm which was bought by the Liike2 Research Programme of the Finnish Academy. Our project “Does Business know how? The role of communication in the business knowhow of globalized and globalizing companies” argues that communication knowhow is an integral part of business knowhow; by improving your communication, you are improving your business knowhow; by communicating efficiently - informally and formally, externally and internally - employees can sharpen the competitive edge of their companies.

Communication, power, and responsibility

If communication has the power to create organizational reality, it must be very powerful indeed. Let's approach power from a simple perspective, and look at two very basic examples, which actually have little to do with business, but lots to do with manipulating people's thinking. That is what I take to be power.

You're probably all familiar with pictures used in psychological testing, for example the one where you can either see an old woman or a young girl; a mouse or a man. The questions you're asked when you take these tests are 'What do you see?' That question gives you a free hand. But now I'm going to do things differently.

About this picture (shown on slide), I'm not going to ask you 'What do you see?' I'm going to ask you 'How many sheep are there?' By phrasing my question like that, I am feeding into your minds the idea that what you are looking at is sheep. So the answer is obvious – three. Unless, that is, you're very sceptical and say "Err ... yeah, but one is actually a lamb." OK. Does a lamb count as a sheep? Or is it half a sheep? Now, if I were to tell you that one of the sheep is actually pregnant and will very soon be giving birth to another little lamb... Are there still three sheep? Or the two and a half? Or three and a half? You may well have been changing your minds as I went along, and I achieved that by communicating and sharing information on the picture. I used the power of communication to feed you ideas, guide your thinking. For this simple little exercise, I had a communication plan.

Let me take another example. Some of you will have read the book *Peripheral Vision*, by George Day and Paul Schoemaker, published by Harvard Business Press in 2006. Day and Schoemaker report on an experiment where, in their management consulting seminars, they used a short video which shows basketball players passing the ball around. The managers are asked to count how often players on the team with white shirts pass the ball among themselves. As the managers count, someone dressed in a black gorilla suit walks slowly across the scene. The gorilla stops in the middle, pounds his chest demonstrably, and then slowly leaves. Then the managers are asked "How many times was the ball passed?" About 90% get the count right. Next they are asked:

“Did you happen to notice anything else?” Hardly any managers, it seems, noticed the gorilla. When told about it, many demanded a replay. And when they now clearly saw the gorilla, some suspected it had been faked, and others just stared in total disbelief. From an organizational point of view, we may ask: What gorillas are being hidden in, and by, our organizations, or exist in the periphery of our organization, when carefully calculated communication draws our attention elsewhere?

Official corporate communications – like, for example, strategies and mission statements on websites - strive to make people see what top management want them to see. These communications are the glue that is meant to give the organization its character, tie the organization together. Such official communications can, however, also anaesthetize people so that they do not see other trends and processes occurring at the same time; the gorillas in our organization may well remain unnoticed. If organizations want individual employees to see possible gorillas - to hear Day and Schoemaker’s so-called “weak signals” deep down, or on the periphery, the communication ‘glue’ must be loosened by comprehensively opening up dialogue, and even cultivating and recognising the proverbial informal chat by the coffee machine. In other words, we need to look at communication from the integrated perspective that Hanna Kalla so aptly established and analysed.

With power come concepts like responsibility, and discretion. I can see few areas of business where the ethical imperative is greater than in corporate communication. If we can see gorillas in our organization, are we hiding them through non-communication? Should we perhaps talk about them? If so, to whom - and when? These questions are at the core of the corporate communications dilemma. I need just to mention the name Enron to drive this point home. Now, more than ever, corporate honesty and integrity are directly connected to success and growth. Intensive effort should be put into candid, frank, frequent and multi-pathed communication. This comes through clearly from a recent study done by Porrini, Hiris and Poncini. The authors did case studies of the ethical aspects and attitudes of companies, searching for best practices. The resulting book - (“Above the Board. How ethical CEOs create honest corporations”; 2008) - provides strategies and methods for building a solid foundation of ethical corporate values into organizations. How? Through dedicated communication efforts, of course.

Globalization

In the 21st century, globalization is a truism. It affects most spheres of life. I take as our point of entry the categorization of the globalization process offered by Friedman, in 2005, in his very readable book “The World is Flat”. Friedman argues that globalization is not a new phenomenon that has recently emerged; it has been around for a while, and developed through stages. He divides globalization into three stages. In the first stage, he claims, globalization concerned countries; in the second, it concerned companies; in the third, it is individuals that globalize. Let me expand on this.

Globalization Stage 1.0

For Friedman, stage 1.0 of globalization emerged a long time ago. It approximates the more familiar term ‘foreign trade’. My generation will remember this stage very well, as our careers started up in that spirit. In stage 1.0, globalized business - in the form of international trade - was well structured; everyone benefited from it, of course, but it was seen to occupy a space at the economic level; it was not seen as a major concern for all individuals - only those who chose careers in foreign trade.

In teaching terms, Kauppakorkeakoulun Kielten laitos was at that level when I came in as a very junior lecturer to teach English. Students then, as now, were a mixed bunch. There were those who saw themselves as future ‘export managers’. They were motivated students of English, whom it was a joy to teach. Then there were those who did not target an international career, and who therefore only did English because they had to. These students mostly majored in subjects like entrepreneurship, accounting, finance, management, organization studies. And of course, all my students were convinced they would have secretaries to do their correspondence - no one could imagine ever having to produce any text themselves! In those days, we didn’t talk of communication. Our emphasis was on terminology, grammar, Business English – topics that, of course, in many ways are still important. However, language, at that stage, was seen as an independent system for us to master, yet always controlled by its native speakers - a system which could - after many years of studying - be put to use in this foreign trade business. We Kauppakorkeakoulun language teachers took pride in our

profession. And it was through our work that the school gained the reputation that it still has for high quality language teaching.

Globalization Stage 2.0

Then, on came Friedman's 'globalization stage 2.0': This stage describes what in corporate speech is referred to as 'internationalization', or 'going international'. Though foreign trade obviously continued, as such, multinationals started to be created through international acquisitions and mergers. It was the Nokia phenomenon. And Kone. And others. In these operations, businesses faced greater requirements in overseas performance, and keener international competition than they had ever done in the long period of 'foreign trade'. Most conspicuously, foreign language needs now encompassed virtually all corporate activities, and most employees in internationally operating companies. And importantly, this stage was accompanied by Business Communication descending into Europe from America.

For me and my colleagues, this was a turning point. While the teaching of English as a foreign language obviously continued, our needs analyses themselves needed total revision. Even our reluctant finance and management majors now woke up in class as they realized they might well have to function as, for example, HR managers or lead the consolidation of accounts in a multinational, all in English. For everybody, there was a real need to communicate in English - not just to produce correct grammar and words that sounded like English. We took this challenge on board. We completely revised the whole curriculum, and changed the name of our subject to "English Business Communication".

This development was accompanied by a concentrated research effort, largely led by the American based Association for Business Communication. In retrospect, I can see that at this stage, our research paradigm was "Communication is a phenomenon in organizations." We strove to understand what was being said and written in companies, and how it was being done. With my colleague Helena Kangasharju, we launched a research project in Stora-Enso and what was then Merita-Nordbanken, to investigate in-house communication in newly merged Scandinavian companies. We got finance from the Finnish Academy. We aimed to research the reasons which motivated employees to

communicate. The ‘us’ and ‘them’ dichotomy, for example, had to be made to disappear when former rivals joined forces. Also, language choice became an issue. (For project publications see eg Charles 2002, 2007; Charles & Louhiala-Salminen 2007; Kangasharju 2007; Kankaanranta 2005, 2007; Louhiala-Salminen 2002; Louhiala-Salminen & Charles 2006; Louhiala-Salminen et al 2005; Nikko 2009.)

In a recent article published in the Journal of Business Communication, Pal and Buzzanell explore some of the communicative challenges associated with globalization in a transnational workplace culture. The article focuses on communication in outsourced call centres, many of them located in India. Call centre work involves employees providing ‘voice-to-voice’ service to clients dialing numbers from all over the world. It is a huge industry, with an estimated 600 000 employees in India alone. There is fierce competition, and every attempt is made to satisfy clients. And since communication is the main tool, satisfaction is given through tailor-made communication. Employees are trained to identify and emulate the accent and cultural characteristics of the caller with whom they’re dealing. As a result, an American calling a toll-free number gets an American voice, speaking her accent, even able to chat about local matters, although the person is physically located in New Delhi! Switching between multiple accents, call centre employees aligned and adjusted - and readjusted - to different customer expectations. The article quotes one worker:

“You talk to a person, a normal person (Indian), you will have a neutral accent. But as soon as you get a call and there is an American on the line or a British person, you go on to the accent straight away without even knowing it. You just go straight into your job... You have to adapt yourself to the way they speak. Else they won’t tell you anything.”

Interestingly, in the above quotation we can see that to an Indian speaker of English, the Indian accent is “normal”. Just as in Finland, our Finnish accent is “normal”. Then: You just go straight into your job. Your job is to communicate, and in that, language is your tool. Through your communication, you do your job. And third: You adapt your communication to your client. Call centre staff see accent here as a strategy for increasing credibility.

The need to be customer centred is, of course, old hat in marketing. It has also been taught for a long time. However, it is only fairly recently that it has dawned on academics and professional communicators that customer centredness should be applied to other than activities in your own mother tongue. The teaching of this customer - or audience - centred English communication was pioneered in Finland by my unit. We were very much on board.

This customer based attitude towards communication was already clearly in the spirit of the next stage of globalization.

Globalization stage 3.0

‘Globalization stage 3.0.’ lacks an easy parallel. Although progression in all Friedman’s stages was fuelled by technology, in this third stage technology is the driving, dynamic force to an unprecedented degree. The emergence of this stage of globalization saw technology being brought down to the level of the individual, and becoming part and parcel of our everyday reality, taken for granted. Globalization now affects individuals functioning in their own, local environments. However, as Friedman points out, it is not globalization reaching out to the local, or the individual; it is the local - the individual - becoming global. This he refers to as the ‘globalization of the local’ - the real challenge.

For companies, Stage 3.0 is the age of strategic alliances and networking, of virtual operations. The challenges for the individual merge with corporate challenges. In communication research and teaching, our research paradigm now shifted from looking at communication in corporations to corporations as communication entities. Communication knowhow as business knowhow. Because of the world wide web, business done locally, ie in some physical locus, is global - at least if you use English.

Again, I look to my students for inspiration, and I find examples to illustrate this process. Doctor Hanna Kalla, whom I mentioned earlier, asked employees in a Finland based multinational company to define ‘their closest colleagues, with whom they communicate on an almost daily basis’. In reply, her respondents mentioned people who shared knowledge requirements and did similar work, with comparable challenges, in different parts of the company, and in different parts of the world. In Kalla’s study, ‘My

closest colleagues' did not have anything to do with geographical proximity, or shared nationality; they had everything to do with professional knowledge needs and knowledge sharing.

Another PhD student, Salla Huttunen, collected data on meetings in a multinational where she herself works. When I asked her at the beginning of her data collection period - displaying my outdatedness - what nationality her interactants were, or what their mother tongues were, she looked at me, baffled, and said she wasn't quite sure. These people, with whom she met daily, were not Finns, Brits, Germans, Chinese for her; some nationalities she knew because of her personal acquaintance; some she guessed because of external appearance or a heavy identifiable accent - or the two combined - but where there were no obvious external clues, she just did not know. Neither did the others in the meetings that she recorded know. What's more, it didn't matter. They were all company employees, operating in their professional capacity, using English as a working language.

Our research, in fact, should already have prepared me for this. A few years previously, my colleague Leena Louhiala-Salminen had conducted a survey as part of our project on recently merged Finnish and Swedish companies. The survey contained the following question: "In your work, which of the following categories do you identify with – strongly or weakly (on a scale of 1 to 4)?" The amalgamated results show that the strongest identification by far was to the 'local' – the closest work environment – your unit, or team, with national cultures perceived as less important. Now, in an even more global world, this 'unit', the 'team', with which employees identified, has become Hanna Kalla's virtual teams of knowledge workers.

Thus, globalization stage 3.0 is making us reconsider some traditional concepts. Instead of talking about national cultures, cross-cultural management, intercultural communication - and culture shock - all of which imply that there are barriers to cross, that cultures are problematic and challenging - the default assumption now is that our professional environment is global and diverse, national cultures being part of this diversity. The focus is on professional teamwork, often virtual. What is needed now, therefore, is the skill to create, facilitate, maintain, and expand these relationships and alliances, at both individual and corporate levels.

With these new requirements, a new approach to language also emerged. We call this the B-E-L-F approach. BELF stands for Business English lingua franca – English used as a shared language, whatever your mother tongue is. The acronym was coined by my colleague and a researcher in my team, Dr Leena Louhiala-Salminen, and we first used it in a joint article in 2005. I'm happy to say that it has rather caught on. A recent volume on Business English Discourse (Bargiela-Chiappini et al 2007) devotes several pages to a discussion of BELF, and there will now be a special Journal of Business Communication issue focusing on BELF.

While previously, English was looked upon as a foreign language, and we Finns, like other non-native speakers, were in the role of learners, trying to emulate the language of native speakers, BELF speakers see themselves as communicators in their own right. They see themselves as part of the global business community, adapting themselves to best communication practices to achieve their own and corporate level interests, and to do the communication jobs required. BELF is largely a spoken variant, but it does not operate in terms of native and non-native speakers. BELF is a gift that native speakers of English have given to the global business community. It now lives a life of its own, changing, and developing accepted practices of its own, as the values and circumstances and requirements of its speakers change. It is a facility - a tool - to be used as seen fit.

The BELF approach is reflected in our current Finnish Academy research project. We have again conducted a survey, followed by interviews. We asked corporate staff what are the most important components of successful communication. Our findings show that successful communication requires 1) Communication knowhow (2) Knowledge of business (3) Language skills – in that order. Interestingly, managers see communication as something more than, and beyond, language; and language skills, as such, are subservient to communication skills.

Again, some research done in HSE had pre-empted this - as we can now, in retrospect, see. In 2002, Rebecca Piekkari and myself wrote a little article for the Business Communication Quarterly. Based on Rebecca's PhD dissertation data, we looked at what could be done to address what she had identified as a real challenge for in-house horizontal communication in multinationals: A major problem was comprehension - quite simply understanding the Englishes that colleagues in different parts of the world

were using. We examined what employees said about communication particularly between Finnish headquarters and the Chinese subsidiary. It was no surprise for us to discover that English language training was pretty high class at Finnish headquarters, with native English speaker teachers and qualified Finnish English teachers. The Finnish employees were thus (presumably) learning native speakerlike English, as well as English with a (slight) Finnish accent. But as their problems focused on understanding Chinese speakers of English, the training did not address that challenge. It doesn't matter how good your own production of English is, if you can't understand their English. What the Finns needed, we suggested, was (a) a Chinese English teacher – preferably one with a heavy Chinese accent, helping the Finns understand Chinese English and Chinese communication patterns; what they also needed was (b) the mirror image in China: a Finnish speaker of English - preferably with a heavy Finnish accent, helping the Chinese understand Finnish English and appreciate the Finnish communication style. It is in this way that communication skills could have been improved, rather than just language skills. I must say that readers of our article found our suggestion rather amusing. Perhaps that's the reason why it is frequently cited in communication training circles. But of course, I've seen precious few Chinese English teachers in Finland...

A Glance at the Future

Are we now on our way to 'Globalization Stage 4.0'? We must be, and fast. Of course, as usual, we shall only know that we're at that stage after we've been in it for a while. Meanwhile, let's try and imagine what the future might hold for communication – and communication research and teaching.

To find out how communication professionals see their job developing - and therefore to get ideas for how our International Business Communication Master's Programme should be developed, the Programme Director, Leena Louhiala-Salminen, together with the Programme Coordinator, Anne Kankaanranta, initiated a study where close on 200 communication professionals - communication managers, directors, and consultants - offered their views about what is important in communication for the future. Their views confirm my views very nicely. Namely that:

- Communication, now and in the future, is seen as absolutely integral to corporate strategy.
- Accordingly, a communication manager / director should have a key role in strategy consolidation in an organization.
- In the future, it will be increasingly important for communication professionals to be able to operate in an international environment.
- When various communication skills were itemized, top position went to 'overall persuasive rhetoric'.
- This rhetorically persuasive communication will increasingly be done in English.

Finally, best of all - from my perspective: Although the best educational qualification for a communications manager was still seen to be the degree in Communications offered by the University of Helsinki - people know about it, it is well established - almost on a par is our new Master's degree in International Business Communication. (Although, with all due respect, I don't think they knew much about it when they said it offered a good basis for careers in communication - but they must have thought it sounded good. That's the power of communication!)

For me, that is a nice way to finish my talk. Particularly when I can add to this bright future scenario the ambitious research projects of our IBC doctoral students. They do research for the future, by focusing on the way communication creates and re-creates, shapes and consolidates organizations. They do multidisciplinary, multimethod research, explicating the significance and critical role of multidimensional communication processes in organizations. I wish them well. Their work is crucial for this fairly new, and relatively unestablished research field that calls itself 'Business Communication.'

Conclusion

I have shared with you my ideas of where we – with my new discipline of Business Communication, and we - with my International Business Communication team – are, now. The story I have told you is the story of the powerful ascent of communication within not only the business world, but also within academia, with its new research

focuses and innovative approaches to the teaching of communication for the future globalized world.

For the new Aalto environment, all this bodes well. It is exciting to contemplate the opportunities and potential that Aalto University can offer for my field. The story of the ascent of communication has shown us that we, at HSE, are well poised to take on the Aalto challenge, and the challenge to keep communication studies flying. For me, it's been a great privilege to have had a part in these exciting developments in the field of communication. I will be a very happy pensioner indeed.

References

- Bargiela-Chiappini, F., C. Nickerson & B. Planken (2007). *Business Discourse*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Charles, M. (2002). Corporate policy and local realities in communication. In Lambertsson Björk, E. (ed.) *Life-long learning in business and industry*. Halden: Högskolen in Ostfold. Pp. 91-108.
- Charles, M. (2007). Language matters in global communication. *Journal of Business Communication* 44, pp. 260-282.
- Charles, M. & L. Louhiala-Salminen (2007). Vems språk talas, vilken är verksamhetskulturen? In Kangas, O. & H. Kangasharju (eds.) *Ordens makt och maktens ord*. Helsingfors: Svenska litteratursällskapet. Pp. 417-447.
- Charles, M. & R. Marschan-Piekkari (2002). Language Training for Enhanced Horizontal Communication: A Challenge for MNCs. *Business Communication Quarterly*.
- Day, G. & P. Schoemaker (2006). *Peripheral Vision*. Harvard: Harvard Business Press.
- Deetz, S. (2004). Conceptual Foundations. In Jablin, F. & L. Putnam (Eds.) *The New Handbook of Organizational Communication*. New York: Sage. Pp 3-46.
- Friedman, T.L. (2005). *The World Is Flat. A brief history of the twenty-first century*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Huttunen, S. (forthcoming). Multiple understandings in company internal meetings. PhD thesis.

- Kalla, H. (2006). Integrated Internal Communications in the Multinational Corporation. Acta Universitatis Oeconomicae Helsingiensis. A-280. Helsinki: HeSePrint.
- Kangasharju, H. (2007). Interaktion och inflytande. In Kangas, O. & H. Kangasharju (eds.) Ordens makt och maktens ord. Helsingfors: Svenska litteratursällskapet. Pp. 341-377.
- Kankaanranta, A. (2005). Hej Seppo, could you pls comment on this!" - Internal Email Communication in Lingua Franca English in a Multinational Company. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, Centre for Applied Language Studies, available also <http://ebooks.jyu.fi/solki/9513923207.pdf>
- Kankaanranta, A. (2007). "Could you pls comment on this!" E-post på engelska mellan finländare och svenskar. In Kangas, O. & H. Kangasharju (eds.) Ordens makt och maktens ord. Helsingfors: Svenska litteratursällskapet.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2002). Communication and Language Use in Merged Corporations: Cases Stora Enso and Nordea. HSE Working Papers. Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. & M. Charles (2006). English as the Lingua Franca of International Business Communication: Whose English? What English?. In Palmer-Silveira, C. & F. Ruiz-Garrido, Intercultural and International Business Communication. Frankfurt: Peter Lang. Pp. 27-54.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., M. Charles, & A. Kankaanranta (2005). English as a Lingua Franca in Nordic Corporate Mergers: Two case Companies. English for Specific Purposes, 24, pp. 401-421.
- Nikko, T. (2009). Dialogic Construction of Understanding in Cross-border Corporate Meetings. Helsinki: Acta Universitatis Oeconomicae Helsingiensis.
- Pal, M. & P. Buzzanell (2008). The Indian Call Center Experience: A Case Study in Changing Discourses of Identity, Identification, and Career in a Global Context. Journal of Business Communication. 45, pp. 31 - 60.
- Porrini, P, L. Hiris & G. Poncini (2008). Above the Board. How ethical CEOs create honest corporations. New York: McGraw Hill.

FROM STRATEGY COMMUNICATION TO REPUTATION MANAGEMENT: IBC MASTER'S THESES GROUNDED IN GLOBAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

Anne Kankaanranta

Professor (acting)

International Business Communication

Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

Anne.Kankaanranta@hse.fi

Abstract

This paper reviews the seventeen Master's theses that have been completed in the International Business Communication Master's program at the Helsinki School of Economics since the launch of the program in 2005. In accordance with its mission, the IBC unit has always encouraged its students to take on research projects that are grounded in the everyday communication practices of globally operating players. The first generation of IBC theses exhibits a neat selection of such projects and it also demonstrates what kind of topics drive the research activity carried out by our students. This paper discusses those topics as well as the methodologies and theoretical approaches of the theses. Finally, it introduces five research projects in more detail. They represent excellent thesis-level research work, which spans from strategy communication to reputation management in the global business environment.

Key words: International Business Communication, Master's theses, corporate communication, communication practices, global business

Since its launch in fall 2005, the International Business Communication (IBC) Master's program at the Helsinki School of Economics (HSE) has produced seventeen M.Sc. (Econ. & Bus. Adm.) theses – all pioneering work in IBC. While meeting the goals of all HSE theses, i.e. to demonstrate the students' preparedness for demanding international postgraduate programs and their ability to independently produce and apply economic knowledge (www.hse.fi), the IBC theses also provide an interesting view to a new, developing discipline, which is grounded in global communication practices.

Since IBC as a discipline emerges partly from the issues and problems encountered by the business and communication professionals in the rapidly changing global business environment, it needs to keep a close eye on the everyday practices. In other words, it needs to be well poised to observe and investigate what is going on 'out there', or as Rheinsch (2000) put it, bear in mind that "business is a communication-based activity." For the IBC unit at the HSE this approach is natural since it has been part of our mission from the very beginning: "The mission of the IBC Unit is to enhance the business knowhow of internationally operating companies by contributing to greater understanding of the strategic role of communication in international business operations" (www.hse.fi/ibc). In other words, we consider communication knowhow an integral component of business knowhow. In addition to investigating practice-driven issues and problems in major multidisciplinary research programs (e.g. www.hse.fi/ckh; see Charles, 2007), the IBC unit encourages its Master's students to take on thesis projects that are embedded in the everyday communication practices of globally operating players. As a number of IBC students also work either full or part-time in corporate communications, typically in multinational corporations (MNCs) or in various communications and marketing agencies, they are able to identify such practice-driven research topics and are also highly motivated – even enticed – by them. Not surprisingly then, the majority of the IBC theses have been completed in the authentic workplace: either in close cooperation with MNCs or communications agencies or with their assistance, for example, in finding the right people to interview. This type of cooperation has been beneficial for both parties. The student feels inspired by the authenticity of the research problem and also gains access to authentic research data, both people and documentation, which is hard to come

by without corporate contacts. In some cases the student has also received a ‘practical’ advisor from the company in addition to the academic one. The benefits for the corporation are often in direct relation to its commitment to the thesis project: the more commitment it shows, the more willingness it also has to exploit the findings, i.e. raise issues emerging from the project onto the corporate agenda and increase the awareness about such communication-related issues among its personnel.

This paper reviews the seventeen IBC Master’s theses completed at HSE from May 2007 until October 2009 and reports on what kind of topics drive the research activity carried out by our students. In addition, it outlines the methodologies used in these endeavors as well as the theoretical underpinnings the theses draw upon. Finally, it introduces five theses in more detail because they represent excellent thesis-level research, which can be characterized as innovative and insightful, and which thus meets the goals set by HSE in an exemplary manner. All the five theses received an ‘excellent’ grade (90-100 /100 points).

Ascent of communication – a multitude of research topics

The ascent of communication-related issues in international business is also reflected in the topics of the IBC theses: they range from strategy communication to reputation management. In line with the “I” of IBC, all the topics share an international orientation: be it the perspective of a Finnish subsidiary of an American ICT giant or that of a business professional working in a multinational project environment. The “BC” perspective, on the other hand, allows for a multitude of topics in the business context (for a thorough discussion on ‘business communication’, see Louhiala-Salminen, 2009). In the following, the seventeen theses have been classified under four ‘communications’: internal, external, intercultural, and visual (cf. Cornelissen, 2009). From a theoretical perspective, this classification is not entirely successful since it simplifies a highly multifaceted phenomenon; for example, Welch (2007) discusses the blurry notions of external vs. internal communication at length. However, since this is not a theoretical research paper,

the classification should merely be considered a shortcut to illustrate different facets of the communication activity in the business context.

First, *internal* communication practices of internationally operating companies or organizations have attracted five students. They investigated, for example, cooperation negotiations in a marketing agency, media and stakeholder perspectives of a project environment, and corporate intranets after a merger (Isohaaro, 2009; Kemppilä, 2009; Laajarinne, 2008). Two students worked closely with the organizations whose communication practices they investigated and produced concrete recommendations on how to enhance those practices. Virta (2009) assisted a nongovernmental organization (NGO) in designing a communication strategy based on its organizational identity and Wessman (2007) created a model of internal communication for a case company. Second, an equal number of students have been interested in *external* corporate communication activity involving issues such as reputation management, corporate homepages, electronic newsletters, and the role of headquarters vs. subsidiaries in decision making about PR activities (Kaustinen, 2009; Kärkkäinen, 2009; Sassone, 2009; Kilpeläinen, 2007; Lappalainen, 2008). Third, the theses focusing on *intercultural* communication have been concerned with the role of cross-cultural training in enhancing interpersonal communication between Finns and Chinese, Finns and Indians communicating knowledge in a virtual team environment, message localization in a Finnish subsidiary of an IT giant, and the role of Russian in the Russian business of Finnish companies (Jing, 2009; Lehtonen, 2009; Reitamo, 2008; Bloigu, 2008). Finally, the three theses on *visual* communication focused on visual persuasion of sales presentation slides and the communicational value of corporate logos of international players (Hyytiäinen, 2008; Niemelä, 2008; Forsström, 2009).

In addition to the above categorization based on the type of ‘communication’, the theses could also be classified according to a number of other criteria that have played a central role in their research design. Examples of such criteria are the type of industry (e.g. ICT, logistics, advertising), stakeholder group (e.g. employees, clients, funders), and medium (e.g. corporate homepage, electronic newsletter, memo). Rather than trying to classify the

theses using such criteria, however, I will give the floor to the students themselves. Thus, let's have a look at the keywords they have chosen to portray their research. In total, there were more than 110 different key words given on the *Abstract* pages of the theses. A number of them were shared among the students – most often those depicting different types of ‘communications’ introduced above in addition to ‘international business communication’. Table 1 presents the other keywords chosen by the students in the order of their popularity. The words have been grouped under eleven common denominators.

Common denominators for key words	No of related keywords
Visual identity, logo	8
Online corporate communication	8
Multinational corporation	8
Identity, image, reputation	7
Intercultural issues	6
Project communication	5
Strategy	4
Employee communication	3
Change communication	2
Knowledge communication	2
Miscellaneous	13
Total	65

Table 1. Common denominators for the keywords given in IBC theses.

As can be seen from Table 1, the seventeen IBC theses cover quite a range of topics. Since each common denominator further covers a number of related key words, their total number amounts to 65, excluding the ‘communications’. For example, ‘online corporate communication’ includes key words such as Internet, Intranet, Home page, and Web-mediated genre, and ‘strategy’ covers Communication strategy, Strategy communication,

Strategy implementation, and Strategic planning. As Table 1 shows, ‘miscellaneous’ contains the largest number of key words (N=13) and can be regarded as giving evidence of the specter of the issues related to the theses. It contains, for example, the following key words: Communicator credibility, Cooperation negotiations, Genre analysis, IBM, Information design, Linguistics, Localization, Semiotics, Stakeholder perceptions, and Translation. In sum, the topics of the theses bear witness to the multitude of issues and problems that the IBC students have been able to identify and then investigate in the everyday communication practice of global business.

Qualitative research approaches dominating

The research methods applied in IBC theses rely heavily on qualitative research approaches, which emphasise words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data although quantitative methods have also been applied. The preference for qualitative research is understandable, as Ghauri & Grønhaug (2005, p. 112) argue, since it allows the researcher to explore into the attitudes towards and perceptions of, for example, trends and behaviour, which would be difficult to tap into using solely quantitative methods. Since many of the theses also focus on one corporation or a particular phenomenon in an organization, they often make use of single case study design (see Yin, 2003).

Table 2 shows the various research methods employed in the seventeen IBC theses. Every method used by the students has been inserted into the table but their particular combinations are not visible.

Research method	No of theses
Interview	14
Questionnaire survey	7
Focus group	4
Discourse analysis	3
Visual/semiotic analysis	3
Benchmarking analysis	1
Observation	1
Total	33

Table 2. Research methods employed in IBC theses.

As Table 2 shows, interviews and questionnaire surveys are the most frequently employed methods to investigate IBC-related phenomena followed by focus groups, discourse analysis and visual analysis. The popularity of the interview method seems to be due to its ability to surface perceptions of the interviewees about such issues which may prove difficult to frame into questions in a questionnaire survey simply because the phenomena are new (see e.g. Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2000). For example, since there was practically no research into electronic newsletters in late 2006, Kilpeläinen (2007) first interviewed business professionals about their preferences regarding such newsletters. Based on the interviews, she then designed a questionnaire survey to map out the views of a larger population.

As can also be seen from Table 2, the total number of methods employed in the theses is 33, which shows that typically IBC students use more than one method in their investigations. They seem to follow the ‘best practices’ of the field in the sense that a recently published *Handbook of Business Discourse* compliments such research projects, which combine a number of methods and are thus able to explore a particular phenomenon from different perspectives (see Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009; also Bargiela-Chiappini et al.,

2007). Such multi-method approaches provide for triangulation and enhance the trustworthiness of the investigations.

I + B + C = Multidisciplinarity

Theoretical approaches adopted in the IBC Master's theses reflect the multidisciplinary nature of the discipline (see also Charles, 2009; Suchan & Charles, 2006). For obvious reasons, theoretical underpinnings from International Business, Marketing, and Management studies in particular together with various business and corporate communication-related approaches contribute to the construction of the theoretical frameworks in the IBC theses. For example, when the aim of the thesis was to investigate the role of the Russian language in the Russian business of Finnish companies (Bloigu, 2008), the theoretical framework was built using three perspectives. The institutional view of business strategy contributed to explicating how the institutional framework of Russia affects the communication practices of Finnish enterprises (see e.g. Karhunen, 2007). In addition, the role of language in international management in general (e.g. Marschan-Piekkari et al., 1999) and that of Business English Lingua Franca (BELF) in particular (Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005; Louhiala-Salminen & Charles, 2006) addressed the language issue in more detail. An exceptionally ambitious theoretical framework was constructed by Lehtonen (2009), who combined the theory of the knowledge-creating firm (e.g. Nonaka et al. 2000) with cultural identity (e.g. Jameson, 2007) and Peirce's (1931-1958) work on semiotics in order to investigate how Finns and Indians communicate knowledge in a virtual team environment. Also, theoretical constructs from applied linguistics such as 'genre' (e.g. Askehave & Nielsen, 2004) have proven useful in the investigations into the web-mediated communication products such as corporate home pages (Sassone, 2009; Kärkkäinen, 2009).

From strategy communication to reputation management – with flying colors!

In what follows, I will briefly introduce five IBC theses in more detail to give the reader an idea of the kind of research projects the first generation of IBC graduates at HSE have accomplished. The five theses represent the cutting edge of the seventeen theses: they exhibit ambitious, carefully constructed research designs, which have been followed through successfully. In addition, each one of them demonstrates innovative thinking in its theoretical approach. In a nutshell, they represent excellent thesis-level research in IBC.

Wessman (2007) and Lehtonen (2009) investigated internal communication practices of their case companies, while Lappalainen (2008) and Kaustinen (2009) focused on what can be characterized as ‘external’ communication. Virta’s (2009) main interest was in ‘internal’ communication but she also exploited findings from Kaustinen (2009) investigating the same non-governmental organization (NGO), i.e. Crisis Management Initiative (CMI).

Aino Wessman (2007), the first IBC graduate, developed a model of internal communication for a Finnish multinational company. She set out to find answers to research questions relating to the elements, challenges and management of internal communication of a Finnish multinational corporation. The particular strength of her thesis was the theoretical framework she constructed. It drew upon Kalla’s (2006) ‘integrated internal communications’ and Aaltonen et al.’s (2001) ‘strategy implementation gap’, but she showed exceptional skill in building up her own model. Empirical data were collected through 12 interviews in Sweden and Estonia and two questionnaire surveys: a job satisfaction survey with 3,816 responses and another targeted to Senior Management and Communications and Human Resources managers in seven countries with 16 responses. Her findings showed that there were three main types of internal communication in the case company. First, the aim of *strategy/corporate communication* was to ensure that each employee understood his/her role in implementing business strategy and also received information about it. Second, since *supervisory communication* had received less attention in the company, the researcher recommended

that measures would be taken to make sure that the supervisors understood their key role as communicators and actively addressed the subordinates' information needs. Third, Wessman saw great potential in making effective use of *interpersonal/ organizational* communication in ensuring organizational learning. In other words, each employee should see him/herself as a communicator who actively shares information, gives feedback and seeks new networks in the company to promote knowledge sharing.

Interestingly, knowledge sharing received more attention in Miikka Lehtonen's (2009) thesis, whose focus was on how Finnish and Indian team members share and communicate knowledge in multicultural project teams in the case company. His thesis project was theoretically ambitious, combining Nonaka et al.'s (2000), Jameson's (2007) and Peirce's (1931-1958) work. The data was collected through 11 semistructured interviews and one focus group interview with both Finnish and Indian team members. Lehtonen's findings showed that a number of factors affected knowledge communication such as language, interpersonal similarity, attitude towards knowledge sharing, organizational environment, trust and personal relationships. Trust was perceived as a prerequisite for knowledge sharing but it often seemed to have an instrumental value rather than a value on its own. The biggest challenges in sharing knowledge were the differences in the way the shared language, English, was used since it also served as the conduit of culture of the Finnish and Indian team members. The managerial implications of the study were two-fold: since knowledge sharing calls for personal involvement, Lehtonen recommended that the management should consult and empower the operational level when formulating its knowledge management strategies. Also, the management should ensure that the organizational environment promotes knowledge sharing - but not only within the organization. It is particularly important in interactions with outsiders to the organization such as clients, suppliers, authorities and universities.

Tiina Lappalainen (2008) explored the external corporate communication function of Finnish ICT subsidiaries of multinational corporations. In particular, she was interested in the role of Finnish subsidiaries in the external communication, or PR, activities of the MNC. Lappalainen used a specialist informant to explicate the specific operational

characteristics of the ICT sector, after which she interviewed five Finnish communication managers of Finnish ICT subsidiaries of MNCs. Her theoretical framework was partly inspired by Ghostal & Bartlett's (1998, p. 120) model of the Generic Roles of National Organizations, which she later modified to illustrate the role of country subsidiaries in the MNC's external corporate communication function and their potential for development (see Figure 1). Lappalainen's approach was innovative in modifying a theoretical construct from International Business to the MNC's external corporate communication function.

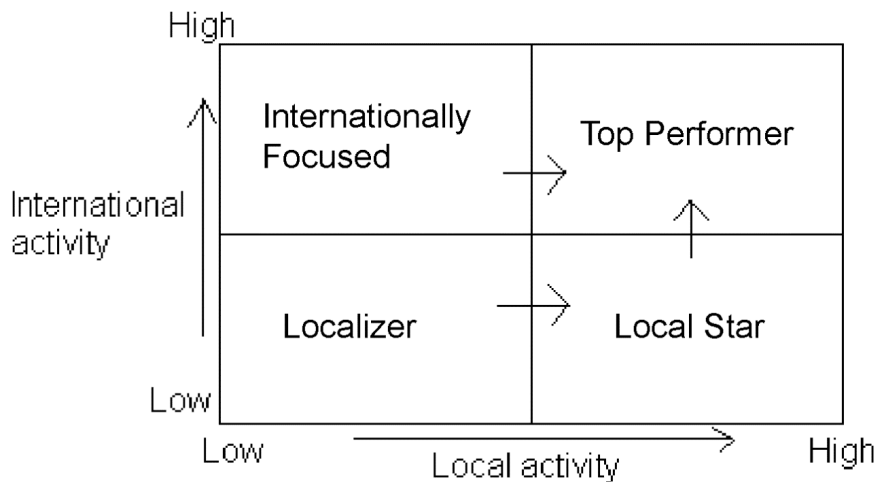


Figure 1. The role of country subsidiaries in MNCs' external corporate communication (Lappalainen, 2008, p. 68).

In Figure 1, 'localizers' are subsidiaries, which are internationally and locally passive in their external communication, whereas 'local stars' are internationally passive but locally active – most of the companies in the data represented these two types. 'Internationally focused' subsidiaries are active in localizing themes for the local market but do not play an active role in producing their own themes. 'Top performers' are active both locally and internationally. Such subsidiaries are active on the local market and also strong in

networking with other domestic players. They work in close cooperation with the HQ's communication team and also proactively report about cases that may attract an international audience. One of the subsidiaries in the data represented a 'top performer'. As Figure 1 shows, a 'localizer' can ultimately develop into a 'top performer': the communication managers interviewed for the study were interested in developing their activities towards that direction.

Laura Kaustinen's (2009) and Pia Virta's (2009) theses opened up new horizons for the research in the IBC unit since they focused on the communication activity of a non-governmental organization (NGO), which is a less researched area in the corporate communication field. The case organization was Crisis Management Initiative (CMI; <http://www.cmi.fi/>), an internationally operating NGO based in Finland. Interestingly, while the students were working on their theses, the Chairman of the organization, President Ahtisaari received the Nobel Peace Prize and CMI was also mentioned in the reasoning for the award as facilitating the Laureate's work. For practical reasons, the IBC unit decided to set up a research project involving the two theses since the topics were closely intertwined.¹ Kaustinen (2009) focused on the perceptions of CMI's reputation among 19 representatives of the funding organizations and Virta (2009) on its identity among all the 17 members of the personnel. Virta (2009; see also Virta et al., 2009) also combined the findings in order to provide guidelines for designing a communication strategy for the organization. Thus, in total, 36 semistructured interviews were conducted in Finland and in Brussels. The theoretical approaches drew upon Dowling (2001), Argenti & Forman (2002) and van Riel & Forbrum (2007), whose conceptualizations of corporate identity, image and reputation were modified to fit the world of an NGO. The main findings of the project showed that several positive features were attached to CMI's reputation and identity by both funders and personnel, such as innovativeness of operations, high professionalism, extensive networks, a visible figurehead and Nordic values. Similarly, the uncertainties that the employees attached to CMI's identity were

¹ The project "The communications function in a globally operating non-profit organization" was funded by Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation. It was led by Prof. Leena Louhiala-Salminen and Dr. Anne Kankaanranta supervised the students' theses.

also mentioned by the funders. For example, while the employees pointed out the need to develop CMI's internal processes, the funders admitted that they had noticed the employees' heavy workloads, some inconsistencies in CMI's communication policies, and overall, a somewhat unclear vision. Finally, it was recommended that in drafting its communication strategy, CMI should construct a common understanding of its mission, vision and strategy among the personnel; create a clear organizational story and core messages; emphasize its concrete accomplishments in concrete language in its external communication; and develop internal communication practices concerning its projects, responsibilities among personnel, and networks of outside experts.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the IBC Master's theses are firmly grounded in global communication practices. The IBC students have been intrigued by the issues and problems they have identified in the everyday operations of MNCs, communications and marketing agencies, and international organizations to the extent that they have taken on research projects to investigate them. They have also been able to make use of theoretical frameworks from a variety of disciplines to construct the theoretical basis for their own project, and many of them, simultaneously, have produced their own IBC specific frameworks that future students and other researchers can build on. For a new, developing research discipline such research activity is of great value: it does not let the discipline estrange from the very practice it emerged and it is also able to surface topics that may attract more experienced researchers later on.

Our IBC students - as novice IBC researchers - have been, and will be, apprenticed into the discipline of IBC through their thesis work. They have shown competence in addressing communication-related issues analytically and in also combining them with various business perspectives. For our IBC graduates, communication knowhow is business knowhow.

The next seventeen IBC theses should be completed within 2010. Similarly to the work completed so far, this new generation of theses seems to contain a wide variety of topics. Some of them are also popular among the more experienced corporate communication researchers, such as those related to Corporate (Social) Responsibility (CSR), but there are others that cannot easily be found on research agendas elsewhere. Such topics include, for example, exploring, defining and managing the processes for business communication activities and documents in the international corporate communication function, rolling forecasts as tools for internal communication practices among IR professionals in particular, and the promotion of the international debt instruments of the Finnish State Treasury.

As much as the IBC faculty has enjoyed working with the students of the first generation of IBC'ers, we are eagerly looking forward to this new generation of students, who will continue exploring the terrain where corporate communication, language, and business meet. Although such expeditions tend to be labor intensive and time consuming, the end results are typically highly rewarding for students and faculty alike. And as the saying goes: in the end, it is the journey itself which makes the difference!

On 1 April 2009, Professor Mirjaliisa Charles posed a challenging question to her large audience during the farewell lecture she held at HSE. She articulated it like this: "The ascent of communication. Are we on board?" On the basis of the theses completed in the IBC Master's program at HSE over the past two years, we are confident in replying: Yes, we are!

References

- Aaltonen, P., Ikävalko, H., Mantere, S., Teikari, V., Ventä, M. & Währn, H. (2001). *Tiellä strategiasta toimintaan: tutkimus strategian toimeenpanosta 12 suomalaisessa organisaatiossa. Teknillinen korkeakoulu, tuotantotalouden osasto, työpsykologian ja johtamisen laboratorio*. Helsinki: Yliopistopaino Oy.
- Argenti, P. & Forman, J. (2002). *Power of Corporate Communication. Crafting Voice and Image of your Business*. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Askehave, I. & Nielsen, A.E. (2004). *Webmediated genres. A challenge to traditional Genre theory*. Working Paper No 6. Aarhus: Centre for Virkomhedskommunikation. Aarhus School of Business.
- Bargiela-Chiappini, F. (Ed.), (2009). *The Handbook of Business Discourse*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bargiela-Chiappini, F., Nickerson, C. & Planken, B. (Eds.), (2007). *Business Discourse*. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave, MacMilan.
- Charles, M. (2009). Future Horizons: Europe. In F. Bargiela-Chiappini (Ed.), *The Handbook of Business Discourse* (pp. 454-464). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Charles, M. (2007). Language Matters in Global Communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44, 260-282.
- Charles, M. & Marschan-Piekkari, R. (2002). Language Training for Enhanced Horizontal Communication Training: A Challenge for MNCs. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 65, 9-29.
- Cornelissen, J. (2009). *Corporate Communications: Theory and Practise*. London: Sage Publications.
- Dowling, G. (2001). *Creating Corporate Reputations, Identity, Image and Performance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ghauri, P. & Grønhaug, K. (2005). *Research Methods in Business Studies, A practical Guide*. Harlow: Prentice Hall.
- Hirsjärvi, S. & Hurme, H. (2000). *Tutkimushaastattelu, Teemahaastattelun teoria ja käytäntö*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

- Jameson, D. A. (2007), Reconceptualizing cultural identity and its role in intercultural business communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44, 199-235.
- Kalla, H. (2006). *Integrated internal communications in the Multinational Cooperation*. Acta Universitatis Oeconomicae Helsingiensis. A-280. Helsinki: HeSe Print.
- Karhunen, P. (2007). *Field-level change in institutional transformation: Strategic responses to post-socialism in St. Petersburg hotel enterprises*. Acta Universitatis Oeconomicae Helsingiensis. A-280. Helsinki: HeSe Print.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2009). Business Communication. In F. Bargiela-Chiappini (Ed.), *The Handbook of Business Discourse* (pp. 305-316). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., & Charles, M. (2006). English as the lingua franca of international business communication: Whose English? What English? In J. Palmer-Silveira, M. Ruiz-Garrido, & I. Fortanet-Gomez (Eds.), *Intercultural and international business communication* (pp. 27-54). Bern: Peter Lang.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., Charles, M., & Kankaanranta, A. (2005). English as a lingua franca in Nordic corporate mergers: Two case companies. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24, 401-421.
- Marschan-Piekkari, R., Welch, D. E. & Welch, L.S. (1999). In the shadow: The impact of language on structure, power and communication in the multinational. *International Business Review*, 8, 421-440.
- Nonaka, I., Toyama, R., & Konno, N. (2000). SECI, Ba and Leadership: A Unified Model of Dynamic Knowledge Creation, *Long Range Planning*, 33, 5-34.
- Peirce, C.S. (1931-1958). *Collected Papers*. Cambridge. Harvard University Press.
- Reinsch, L. (2000). *Presidential Address*. Paper presented at the 24th Annual Convention of the Association for Business Communication, Atlanta, USA, 18-21 October.
- Suchan, J. & Charles, M. (2006). Business Communication Research. Past, Present, and Future. *Journal of Business Communication*, 43, 389-397.
- Van Riel, C. & Forbrum, C. (2007). *Essentials of Corporate Communication. Implementing practices for effective reputation management*. London: Routledge.
- Virta, P., Kankaanranta, A., & Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2009). Identity and reputation as foundations for a communication strategy of a non-profit expert organization.

- Conference on Corporate Communication 2009 Proceedings*. (pp. 309-318). Baruch College/CUNY: Corporate Communication International.
- Welch, M. (2007). Rethinking internal communication: a stakeholder approach. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 12, 177-198.
- Yin, R. (2003). *Case Study Research: design and Methods*. London: Sage Publications.

IBC Master's Theses: May 2007- Oct. 2009²

- Bloigu, K. (2008). *Russian or English? Examining the role and importance of the Russian Language in the Russian business of Finnish companies*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/EN/ethesis/id/12011>.
- Forsström, M. (2009). *The communicational value of the corporate logo. Case: IBM*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/FI/ethesis/id/12084>.
- Hyytiäinen, H. (2008). *Visual communication and persuasion in technical sales situations*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from http://www.hse.fi/NR/rdonlyres/BFAF4DD9-9219-42AA-9EA8-EB697AE4CE46/0/Heidi_Hyytiäinen_2008.pdf.
- Isohaaro, S. (2009). *Internal communication practices during an organizational change. Case: Cooperation negotiations in a marketing agency*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/FI/ethesis/id/12083>.
- Jing, C. (2009). *The role of a cross-cultural training program in interpersonal communications between Finnish and Chinese partners. Case: Kone Corporation*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/FI/ethesis/id/12093>.

² The web address takes you to either the full thesis (since 2009) or the abstract of the thesis (2007-8).

- Kaustinen, L. (2009). *Funder perceptions of the dimensions of repuration of a nonprofit expert organization. Case: Crisis Management Initiative*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/FI/ethesis/id/12013>.
- Kemppilä, L. (2009). *Communication in a Multinational Project Environment: Media and Stakeholder Perspectives*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/FI/ethesis/id/12089>.
- Kilpeläinen, A. (2007). *Creating an effective electronic newsletter. Case: UK trade and investment*. Kärkkäinen, V. (2009). *The structure and function of a car industry home page: A genre approach*. Helsinki School of Economics.
http://www.hse.fi/NR/rdonlyres/D68ED4FC-3CF5-403C-BACD-A779556A4CCB/0/Anna_Kilpeläinen_2007.pdf.
- Kärkkäinen, V. (2009). *The structure and function of a car industry home page: A genre approach*. An IBC Master's thesis, Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/FI/ethesis/id/12082>.
- Laajarinne, J. (2008). *Post-merger internal communication via the intranet: a study of the end user perspective*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from http://www.hse.fi/NR/rdonlyres/7C995E71-1F03-427F-9892-1DB12AB07382/0/Jenni_Laajarinne_2008.pdf.
- Lappalainen, T. (2008). *External corporate communication of Finnish ICT subsidiaries*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from http://www.hse.fi/NR/rdonlyres/A854931A-42E9-4968-892B-A1304ABA04C9/0/Tiina_Lappalainen_2008.pdf.
- Lehtonen, M. (2009). *Nonaka's knowledge creation theory revisited: a semiotic analysis of communicating knowledge in a geographically dispersed team*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/FI/ethesis/id/12048>.
- Niemelä, H. (2008). *Communicating through logos: a study of the communicational means of organizational logos*. Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from http://www.hse.fi/NR/rdonlyres/F8397BC3-07E4-4371-90D6-C2BD827DFD30/0/Hetti_Niemelä_2008.pdf.

- Reitamo, U. (2008). *Message localization in internal communication. Case: IBM.* Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from http://www.hse.fi/NR/rdonlyres/FC9048B5-C4F8-484F-B55C-04AE78147D25/0/Unna_Reitamo_2008.pdf.
- Sassone, D. (2009). *A genre perspective into communicating about environmental issues on corporate web sites in the oil and gas industry.* Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/FI/ethesis/>.
- Virta, P. (2009). *Developing a communication strategy based on employee perceptions of a non-profit's organizational identity.* Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from <http://hsepubl.lib.hse.fi/FI/ethesis/id/12052>.
- Wessman, A. (2007). *Towards a model of internal communication in a Finnish multinational corporation.* Helsinki School of Economics. Retrieved on 15 Oct. 2009 from http://www.hse.fi/NR/rdonlyres/8033B557-69B3-4983-BCEC-7CC3448731ED/0/Aino_Wessman_2007.pdf.

ENGLISH AS A BUSINESS LINGUA FRANCA: A FRAMEWORK OF INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO FUTURE RESEARCH IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Bertha Du-Babcock

Associate Professor

Department of English

Director of International Exchange

College of Humanities and Social Science

City University of Hong Kong

enebrtha@cityu.edu.hk

Abstract

The work of Mirjaliisa Charles and her associates has made a significant contribution to the understanding of international and intercultural business communication, but more importantly, these scholars have provided a basis and foundation for the future development of research and theory development in this field. This paper is written as a tribute to Mirjaliisa Charles, but I also want to recognize those who have worked with Charles in a cooperative team effort, especially members such as Leena Louhiala-Salminen and Anne Kankaanranta. It is my considered judgment that their research and theory development have the potential to make a similar impact on the field of international and intercultural communication as the Hawthorne Studies had on the field of organizational behavior (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1967). In this article I summarize the contributions made by Charles and her associates, explain the relationship of their work with that of other researchers, and show how the work has provided a foundation on which to build future research studies and theory development.

Key words: BELF, language-based communication zones, intercultural communication, business communication, meetings, turn-taking patterns, English language proficiency

Studies by Charles (1996, 2001) have recognized the importance of language choice, and that language designated to be used as a *lingua franca* (company official language) is based on responses to situational factors and organizational needs. Drawing on both discourse analysis and business studies of negotiation, Charles's (1996) study used a linguistic text-based approach to examine organization and rhetoric of sales negotiation genres of the British salespeople. In this study, Charles adopted Brown and Levinson's (1978) face framework and introduced the concept of "professional face" through a series of strategies or tactical moves, highlighting the strategic nature of the communication event. The findings of this study demonstrated the differences of linguistic choices between the participants in negotiation situations depending on whether a relationship has or has not been established among participants. Charles's (1996) study "partly filled the gap between a contextual, business approach and a linguistic text-based approach" (p. 20).

In more recent work, Charles and her associates have engaged in large scale longitudinal studies. These studies (Louhiala-Salminen, Charles, & Kankaanranta, 2005; Louhiala-Salminen & Charles, 2006) describe and examine the communication patterns that took place in the merger of a Finnish paper manufacturer (i.e., Paper Giant) and a Swedish bank (i.e., PankkiBanken). In these two longitudinal research studies, Charles and associates investigated intercultural meetings by examining language use, communication practices, turn-taking behaviors, and cultural views in two international corporations, both of which had been formed as a result of a merger between a Swedish and a Finnish company. In the workplace, employees needed to be able to communicate effectively in a variety of different genres. In the meetings, employees of the two merged companies (i.e., Paper Giant and PankkiBanken) who were formerly independent companies had to represent both cultures in the merged company, the new entity, and two different languages, "one of which was a foreign language" (Nickerson, 2005, p. 373). Charles took painstaking effort in analyzing the collected qualitative data by comparing the use of business English as a *lingua franca* (BELF) of the Swedes to the use of the Finns. The language choice had implications for both communication effectiveness and the interpersonal relationships of Finns and Swedes. The choice of English put both the Finns and Swedes in neutral-

language proficiency positions as the use of BELF is nobody's native or first language, and therefore, the "language superiority" positions are greatly reduced (Du-Babcock & Babcock, 2007, p.363).

Significance of the Charles et al. (2005, 2006) Study

The research by Charles and her associates is significant for five major reasons. I next outline and discuss these five reasons. The first has to do with the research process. The project demonstrated the importance of the development of an effective research team in order to carry out such a large scale project. The management of this research effort can serve a model for future researchers. Important elements contributing to the successful management of the research project were the mutual respect that the researchers gave to each other, continually updating the objectives of the research, and recruiting new team members who could contribute to the project.

The mutual respect was demonstrated to me when principal team members gave progress reports at regional and international conferences. As a personal note, I have learned much about the division of project responsibilities and the need for mutual support by attending sessions at the European Network for Communication Development in Business and Education (ENCoDe) and the Association for Business Communication. I will use this model in my future research efforts.

The second reason for the project's significance, also pertaining to the research process, is that it can provide guidelines for other researchers on how to secure and maintain the cooperation of companies. Charles and her associates were able to convince the companies that the data collection would be unobtrusive, that proprietary information would be held in confidence, and that individuals would not be identified by name. More importantly, the companies would be offered something of value so that having the researchers would be considered an asset rather than a liability. In effect, the merging companies were being offered free consulting in exchange for the access to data in the companies. An especially important component was the regular contact that was maintained with the companies.

Third, the project demonstrated the importance of using multiple data collection and data analysis methods, and in taking measurements over time. Charles and her associates present a model of how to manage data. The significance of their findings relies on their real world data gathered over time. They were able to use multiple data collection techniques to capture the complex data, including a questionnaire survey, in-depth interviews, observations to examine an overview of the communication practices, the collection of written documents and audio-and video-recording of meetings. Consequently, they combined the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Furthermore, they were able to collect data at different data points. Maintaining their connection with the subject firms enabled them to have this ongoing data collection, and ultimately resulted in a longitudinal research project.

After gaining an overview, they analyzed the discourse that employees produced when they were actually working together on a day-to-day basis. The multiple data collection methods allowed them to analyze the data from multiple points of views. They also contrasted the perceptions that Swedish and Finish employees had of each other's cultures. It is my judgment that this research is the equivalent to the *Hawthorne* Studies (see, Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1967) as it forms the basis for defining a new field and for guiding research in this field.

The fourth reason this research is significant is that important theoretical advances were made as a result of it. In sum, the research demonstrated the effect of language choice on intercultural and international communication. Charles and her associates showed how English as a lingua franca impacted the communication processes among merger employees from two nationalities (Finns and Swedes), and in doing so, they demonstrated that communicating in a lingua franca is different from communicating in either one of the national languages (Swedish or Finnish). Language choice impacted the power relationships among the Finnish and Swedish communicators.

Fifth, Charles and her associates have set the stage for studying international and intercultural business communication patterns in an increasingly multilingual and multicultural communication environment. They have established the importance of building on their research and theory and have contributed theoretical constructs to help guide future research and theory development.

In viewing Charles's contribution in the area of intercultural business communication and business English as a lingua franca, in this paper, I attempt to find the way of integrating Charles's research framework with two areas of my research. In doing so, I will first review two of my areas of research that are aligned with Charles's research, and second, I will examine how my research can be located within Charles's established framework. I will conclude this paper by putting forward the recommendation of integrating my research work with Charles's so as to make the intercultural business communication research framework more complete.

Summary of Du-Babcock's Research Aligned with Charles

Two streams of Du-Babcock's research align with Charles's research framework, studies of turn-taking behavior and the development of a model of language-based communication zones. The body of research in relation to turn-taking behavior (Du-Babcock, 2006, 2003, 2005, 1999) is made up of empirical studies that examined turn-taking behaviors and strategies of Cantonese bilinguals (Cantonese and English) participating in intra-cultural and intercultural decision-making meetings. Du-Babcock's studies (1999, 2006) offered linguistic and cultural explanations for the turn-taking and topic management strategies that Cantonese bilinguals follow in their first- and second-language decision-making meetings. In examining different turn-taking behaviors and strategies, Du-Babcock investigated the premise that the choice of language communicators use can influence both message content and communication behaviors.

Findings of the first research data set revealed that (a) the average number of turns in Cantonese meetings was more than those in English meetings, and that (b) individuals with

higher second-language proficiency took more turns than did individuals with lower second-language proficiency, even though the actual length of speaking time was similar. The results of the original findings therefore only provide partial explanations as to how bilingual individuals from collectivistic cultures interact differently when using their first and second languages to make decisions in intra-cultural small-group meetings. In other words, the aspect of the language proficiency-based explanation argued that it was first- and second-language proficiency differentials that triggered the various communication behaviors of the Cantonese bilinguals.

The follow-up study (Du-Babcock, 2003, 2005) was an intercultural study that expanded the geographical location to include individuals from the United States in intercultural information sharing and decision making meetings. This follow-up study further examined whether Hong Kong bilinguals exhibited similar or different turn-taking behaviors when they participated in a homogeneous group, as compared with a decision making meeting in a heterogeneous group.

The findings of the intercultural research on turn-taking behaviors (Du-Babcock, 2003, 2005) show that (a) participants from collectivistic cultures not only spoke less than those from individualistic cultures, they also took fewer turns than those from individualistic cultures; (b) participants from collectivistic cultures took more turns and spoke for longer in intracultural than in intercultural decision making meetings; and (c) no significant difference occurred in the number of turns or in the amount of speaking time among individuals from individualistic cultures when they participated in either intracultural or intercultural and decision making meetings.

In sum, Du-Babcock's research in turn-taking behaviors (1999, 2003, 2005, 2006) suggested that culture and second-language proficiency are likely to be factors that affect the communication behaviors of Chinese bilinguals. While Du-Babcock's original turn-taking behavior research suggested that second-language proficiency is positively related to communication effectiveness and participation rates in second-language communication environments, her intercultural research study on turn-taking behavior revealed that

Chinese bilinguals exhibited different communication behaviors when participating in decision making meetings in a homogeneous group as compared to a heterogeneous group.

In comparing the studies on turn-taking behavior of second-language non-native English speakers between Du-Babcock (2003, 2005) and Charles et al (2006), the difference lies in the research approach. While the research by Charles and her associates examined only a very small sample size using qualitative data analysis approach, Du-Babcock's turn-taking behavior used a quantitative approach to data analysis with a sample size of 350 participants. The findings of Du-Babcock's studies could supplement Charles's (Charles et al., 2006) small sample size and serve as a basis for generalization.

The language-based communication zones model (Du-Babcock & Babcock, 2007, 1996; Babcock & Du-Babcock, 2001) is another line of research that is aligned with Charles's research work. In studying language competence, I developed the language-based communication zones model, which provides a framework for describing differing patterns of international business communication (2007a; 2007b; 2001; 1996). Over a ten-year period, the language-based communication zones model has progressively defined the language competence variables more completely and described the language patterns associated with the different language zones. In their initial study, Du-Babcock and Babcock (1996) developed models showing how expatriates in Taiwan operated within three language-based communication zones (Zone One, Zone Two, and Zone Three) according to their relative abilities to speak a second language. A more fully developed model of language-based communication zones of international business communicators (IBCs) was later offered to complement the previously developed models and explain other aspects of international business communication (Babcock & Du-Babcock, 2001). The language competence in the theoretical framework published in 2001 was defined in terms of the ability to use general language.

In two recent publications (Du-Babcock, 2007a; Du-Babcock & Babcock, 2007b), the 2001 theoretical model has been further expanded by relating competence to the ability to communicate directly in specific tasks and situations and by adding genre competence, the relationship of genre competence to general language competence, and intercultural

communication competence to the model. The objectives of the first publication (2007a) were to add genre competence (Bhatia, 1999; 2004) and distinguish general language competence from professional genre-based language competence. In the second article (Du-Babcock & Babcock, 2007b), the language-based communication zones model was reconsolidated into three language-based communication zones; Zone Two and Zone Three were renamed MegaZone Two and MegaZone Three to encompass all the sub-patterns (see Figure 1) and commercial and relational genres.

Placing Charles and Associates in a Research Framework and Stream

In this section I will discuss how Du-Babcock's two streams of research can be situated in relation to the research of Charles and associates. I assume that Charles and her associates are studying the communication patterns of speakers who are proficient second-language (English) communicators, since they did not test for English proficiency. Using the language-based communication zones framework (Du-Babcock & Babcock, 2007, 1996; Babcock & Du-Babcock, 2001), these speakers would be communicating at a parallel language competency position in a sub zone of MegaZone Three: that is, the interlocutors possess equivalent full fluency in the shared language. As a consequence, they would communicate at a fully fluency level and would not have to make language adjustments in order to communicate effectively with each other in either language. In addition, although there are cultural differences between Finns and Swedes, both nationalities share a larger Scandinavian culture and would be similar in many cultural traits (Hofstede, 1991; Trompenaars, 1993) and therefore they are more likely to communicate effectively.

Other communication patterns can emerge when the communicators have different levels of language competency or cultural differences. To illustrate, the linguistic and cultural situation in Finnish-Swedish communication is both similar and different when contrasted to that occurring with my research on Chinese and Japanese business communication (see below for description of this current joint research project with Professor Tanaka). The Japanese and Chinese speakers have intermediate (the majority) to advanced (the minority) English language proficiency, and therefore, would be interacting from parallel language

competency positions (where both Chinese and Japanese have equivalent but intermediate language competence), or from non-parallel language competency positions (where they would have either superior or subordinate language proficiency in relation to their communication counterparts). Consequently, in contrast to the MegaZone Three communication of Finns and Swedes, the Japanese and Chinese would be primarily interacting in MegaZone Two with some MegaZone Three communication.

The similarities in communication patterns take place as both Japanese and Chinese are communicating as second-language speakers and both have cultures based upon Confucian philosophy and ethics. The differences take place when Chinese or Japanese possess different language competence or communicate with Westerners. In these intercultural communication encounters, the Chinese or Japanese are likely to take an inferior or subordinate language proficiency position and are interacting with dissimilar cultures.

Studies Extending the Research of Charles and Others

In this section, I present two in-progress studies to illustrate how additional methodologies can further uncover the communication patterns in Finnish-Swedish communication and to compare Finnish-Swedish communication with Japanese-Chinese communication. These examples of on-going research show how the data collected by Charles and her associates can be further analyzed to develop theoretical advances and to contrast communication among and between cultural groups. It is hoped that these examples can spur the efforts of other researchers.

To further analyze Finnish-Swedish communication, I am currently cooperating with Charles in a study funded by the City University of Hong Kong Strategic Research Grant (SRG project No. 700 2403) entitled “An Examination of English as a Business Lingua Franca: A Comparative Analysis of Communication Behavior and Strategies”. The study’s data set comes from audio and video recordings of communication in the meetings of Finns and Swedes.

This collaborative research will first extend Du-Babcock's studies based on student samples to include data from real-world business dialogues between Chinese business professionals. The study also intends to examine the similarities and differences of the communication behaviors of Chinese and Swedish / Finnish business professionals. Specifically, the study will examine the use of English as a business lingua franca (BELF) between business professionals. Consequently, the focus of this collaborative research is to confirm prior research findings as well as extend the research to a comparison of Chinese and Swedish/ Finnish business professionals in that the study examines the communication behaviors (i.e., turn-taking behaviors, speaking time, and number of words) of business professionals from the two high- and low-context societies. As such, the study will analyze the turn-taking and topic management strategies taking place in the intercultural meetings using the methodology that I have used in my studies (Du-Babcock, 1999, 2006). Key findings in the earlier studies are that (Finding 1) Chinese engage in spiral topic management strategies in first-language communication and most often engage in linear topic management (see Figures 1 and 2) but sometimes in spiral patterns in second-language communication (see Figure 3); (Finding 2) Chinese bilinguals exhibited different turn-taking behaviors when participating in decision-making meetings using their first language (Cantonese) and compared with decision-making meetings using their second language (English); and (Finding 3) Chinese bilinguals exhibited different turn-taking behaviors when participating in intra-cultural decision-making meetings as compared to when participating in intercultural decision-making meetings.

The comparative study will use the data set from Charles and her associates to examine the communication patterns of Westerners according to the Du-Babcock analytical approach. From a theoretical perspective, Western cultures have been associated with linear discussion patterns and Asian cultures with spiral discussion patterns (Kaplan, 1966, 1987). The findings from this study will clarify the turn-taking patterns and lead to advances in turn-taking theory to substantiate explanations based on cultural and linguistic competence. More specifically, the study should be able to answer the following two research questions put forward in Du-Babcock and Charles's collaborative research project.

RQ1: Do business professionals from mainland China compared with business professionals from Sweden and Finland exhibit equivalent or different turn-taking behaviors in English business meetings?

RQ2: Does English language proficiency affect the communication behaviors (e.g., turn-taking and number of words) of mainland Chinese and Swedish and Finnish business professionals in their English-language communication?

The second on-going research project extends Du-Babcock's turn-taking behavior and topic management studies and will examine the turn-taking behaviors and topic management strategies of bilingual Chinese and Japanese managers using the methodology that Du-Babcock developed and used in her prior studies. This study aims at confirming prior research findings as well as extending the research to a comparison of Chinese and Japanese business professionals from two high-context cultural societies. In other words, the study attempts to examine how individuals speaking high-context languages (Japanese and Chinese) manage topics differently than when they speak in their native language (i.e., Chinese or Japanese) as compared to when they speak in a low-context language (English). In this collaborative study, Du-Babcock and Tanaka are first examining the communication behaviors between Chinese and Japanese business professionals and then comparing the results of these communication behaviors to those of Finns and Swedes. The research questions guiding the second research study are included in Appendix 1.

The second on-going research study which is funded by a Hong Kong SAR General Research Fund (GRF, Project Number 9041451 / CityU 141509) is such that we are first studying the communication between similar cultures (i.e., Chinese and Japanese) and then the communication patterns between dissimilar cultures (i.e., Asian/ Chinese and Japanese; and Western / Swedish and Finnish). In other words, we will take the results from the study of Japanese – Chinese business communication and compare these communication patterns with Swedish and Finnish communication patterns as discerned in the Du-Babcock and Charles study described above.

Taken together, the two on-going research projects use intercultural group comparisons among the four different language and cultural environments. Consequently, these findings can contribute to a better understanding of intra-and intercultural communication behaviors of Chinese, Japanese, Swedish, and Finns business professionals and managers.

The Future Research Direction and Practice

The framework of the business English as lingua franca (BELF) in international business communication context that has resulted from the research by Charles and her colleagues has significantly contributed to the development of a framework for guiding future research. They have established that communication in English as a lingua franca is different from communication in a native language. The choice of language carries with it cultural implications. The future development of research in international and incultural communication will involve extending the research development to other parts of the world and between different cultures. The special attention will be given to the Asian business environment due to its prominent position in the world of business.

The emphasis can also be on integrating the research findings to make generalizations about communication among different cultural groups and among individuals possessing differing levels of language and intercultural competencies. I modestly suggest that the language-based communication zones model provide part of this framework: the influence of language proficiency on intercultural business communication. Another part of the framework relates to cultural differences. In this regard, I have preliminarily developed the concept of intercultural corridors (See Figure 2) as a framework to classify communication among those with cultural differences and having different levels of intercultural competency (Du-Babcock & Babcock, 2006). In addition, the research should be extended to the study of other languages that operate as *linguae francae*.

The research that Charles and her colleagues have established suggests three possible ways to move forward for future research of English as a business *lingua franca* and in international business communication. These are: (1) the development of a shared framework for research that integrates and adapts an existing framework; (2) the need for

collaboration between native English speakers and nonnative speakers in business; and (3) the immediate need for bridging the gap between workplace communication and business communication research.

The Development of a Shared Framework

The international and intercultural business communication studies have captured the dynamics influencing interactions among full bilinguals from different cultures. While these various studies and models have made valuable contributions, they have overlooked the communication events between partial bilinguals and unilinguals in IBC. In the past, research was operated on the assumption that all participants within an IBC setting functioned as fully proficient users of all languages being spoken, with no accounting for communication difficulties arising from varying levels of language proficiency or intercultural communication competence. Since 2000, studies recognizing competence differentials have been emerging. European studies have focused on language choice (see, Charles, 2001) and second-language (English) communication in multinational corporations. In their study, Charles and her associates examined language-influenced communication in Nordic and Scandinavian companies such as Finnish-Swedish companies where they have focused on language choice and its effect on communication effectiveness. Comparisons are made based on when Swedish, Finnish, or English is chosen as the company's *lingua franca* (language of convenience, used by people for whom it is not their native language). Consequently, the integration of the language-based communication zone model with Charles's research is the first step to develop a shared framework.

The language-based communication zones model (Babcock & Du-Babcock, 2001; Du-Babcock & Babcock, 2007) shows how interactants with varying language competence developed different communication strategies and tactics in three language-based communication zones. The BELF model emphasizes the idea of English as business *lingua franca* in that English became the official corporate language of both merged companies. Du-Babcock and Babcock's language-based communication zones model is in the same line as Charles's BELF framework in that both studies accept that English is a key language in international business communication. The difference lies in language environment and

linguistic competence between the two research subjects. While the research subjects of Charles can be classified as a sub-zone of MegaZone Three where business professionals are fully bilingual in speaking English, the business professionals of Du-Babcock and Babcock's are situated in the environment where English is seen as outer circle (Kachru, 1985) where the linguistic competence of business professionals is varying widely.

Integrating these two theoretical frameworks provides a competence-based framework that recognizes the need for linguistic and intercultural competence and that diagnoses the development of the requisite competence for communicating in different situations and tasks in international business communication. In addition, through the integration of the language-based communication zones and the BELF, a mechanism can be introduced to identify communicators' competence match at the beginning or throughout interactions of communicators, and to apply the framework to different languages that communicators may choose to use. This integrated approach allows a more systematic detection of whether intercultural miscommunication emanates from linguistic competence or deep meanings of exchanged messages in which there are cultural differences.

In sum, by merging the concepts of language-based communication zones and BELF, a more realistic and accurate portrayal of intercultural language competence is hopefully to be achieved.

The Need for Collaborations across the Disciplines and across the Globe

Forman (2006) suggested that:

. . . the research issues we address are driven by our own curiosity, heightened by our gaps in knowledge. Those gaps are created to some extent by the functional silos (e.g., English, management, speech communication, information technology) in which we work. That combination of personal curiosity and gaps in knowledge created by our own particular educational backgrounds and the functional areas in which we work makes our research autobiographical: a narrative of what each of us believes we need to know. (Suchan & Charles, 2006, p. 395)

Forman's remarks imply the "Elephant and blind man" phenomenon and the immediate need for collaborations across the disciplines and across the globe. Due to advances in technology, there are increasing research efforts at collaboration between institutions and between disciplines. However, these research collaborations are still largely limited by region. Research by Charles et al. (2006) and Poncini (2002, 2003, 2004) in Europe, and the research by Du-Babcock and Varner (2008) in Hong Kong and the US have addressed some of the research issues within the boundaries of the geography they are investigating. While I agree with Poncini's call for "the need for research in multicultural and multilingual settings," I propose that the future research agenda should involve a "global focus" in that we cannot examine the research issues only from geographically specific region, but we also need to compare the findings across the globe. In doing so, we can prevent "elephant and blind man syndrome".

Let me provide an example to illustrate the possibility and opportunities of an internationally collaborative research project funded by the Hong Kong Government's general Research Fund and chaired by my colleague, Professor Vijay Bhatia. In his research team, Professor Bhatia has successfully involved scholars from 25 countries in working on the same research issues related to legal discourse. This current research project draws on discourse-based data (e.g., narrative, documentary, and interactional) to examine the extent to which the "integrity of arbitration principles is maintained in international commercial arbitration practice." As stated by Bhatia, "Building on the wide degree of interest created by the focus of the overall project theme, the international research collaboration it enabled, and the excellent research opportunities for interdisciplinary and international teamwork it provided, the research team has undertaken a further research project focusing on the actuality of arbitration practice across linguistic, socio-cultural, political, and legal boundaries" (<http://144.214.44.26/arbitration/arbitration>). This longitudinal large-scale discourse analysis study is an example of the research collaboration across disciplines and across the globe.

This example illustrates that international research collaborations can facilitate the development of the discipline and improve our effectiveness as researchers. We should work not only within our discipline with researchers from other cultures and countries (providing firsthand experience in intercultural and multidisciplinary communication) but also outside our discipline with scholars and business professionals (legal specialists in this case) in other disciplines and fields (providing exposure to the knowledge bases and professional genres in different professional fields). These collaborations will allow us to undertake research projects that we could not do individually but also place us in a collaborative and supportive environment to guide our development as researchers and teachers.

Bridging the Gap between Workplace communication and Business Communication Research

Suchan and Charles (2006) have raised concerns about the gap between the development of the theoretical framework, operationalized research, and its implications for the corporate world. To bridge the gap, Thomas (2007) in her 2006 Outstanding Researcher Award address also re-emphasized that, “if scholars do not venture into the field and connect with those who ‘do’ business communication . . .” (Thomas, 2007, p. 283), eventually the same argument that the business communication literature is becoming less and less relevant to practicing managers can be true when applied to business communication. As Thomas argues, the world of business has become globalized, and organizations have expanded their operations overseas; and thereby business or organizational communication has become increasingly intercultural. Thomas, however, questions whether the business communication literature has kept up with the business communication theory development. An example of her work demonstrates the importance of bridging the academic - practitioner gap in order to develop better theoretical frameworks about workplace communication.

References

- Babcock, R., & Du-Babcock. (2001). Language-based Communication Zones in International Business Communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 38, 372-412.
- Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analyzing genre: Language use in professional settings*. London: Longman.
- Bhatia, V. K. (2004). *Worlds of written discourse: A genre-based view*. London: Continuum International.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1978). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Charles, M., & Marschan-Piekkari, R. (2002). Language training for enhanced horizontal communication: A challenge for MNCs. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 65(2), 9–29.
- Charles, M. L. (2002). Corporate policy and local realities in communication. In E. L. Björk (Ed.), *Life-long learning in business and industry: Information and communication technology (ICT)* (pp. 91-108). Halden, Norway: Hogskolen I Ostfold.
- Charles, M. L., & Charles, D. (1999). Sales negotiations: Bargaining through tactical summaries. In M. Hewings & C. Nickerson (Eds.), *Business English: Research into practice* (pp. 71-82). London: Longman.
- Charles, M. (1996). Business negotiations: interdependence between discourse and the business relationship. *English for Specific Purposes*, 15(1), 19–36.
- Charles, M. (1995). Organization power in business negotiations. In K. Ehlich & J. Wagner (eds). *The discourse of business negotiations*. Walter de Gruyter & Co. 65(2), 9-29.
- Du-Babcock, B., & Varner, I. (2008). Intercultural Business Communication in Action: Analysis of an International Videoconference. In D. Starke-Meyerring, & Melanie Wilson (Eds). *Designing globally networked learning environment* (pp. 156 – 169). Canada: Sense Publishers.
- Du-Babcock, B., & Babcock, R. (2007a). Genre patterns in language-based communication zones. *Journal of Business Communication*. 44, 340-373.

- Du-Babcock, B. (2007b). Language-Based Communication Zones and Professional Genre Competence in Business and Organizational Communication: A Cross-Cultural Case Approach. In Zhu, Y. & Hildebrandt, H. (Eds.), *Culture, Contexts, and Communication in Multicultural Australia and New Zealand*, *Journal of Asia-Pacific Communication*, 17(1), 149–171.
- Du-Babcock, B. (2006). An Analysis of Topic Management Strategies and Turn-taking Behavior in the Hong Kong Bilingual Environment: The Impact of Culture and Language Use. *Journal of Business Communication*, 43(1), 21-42.
- Du-Babcock, B. (2005). An analysis of communication behaviors between intra-and inter-cultural decision-making meetings. In Bargiela-Chiappini, F. & Gotti, M. (Eds.), *Journal of Asian-Pacific Communication*, 147-168.
- Du-Babcock, B. (2003). A Comparative Analysis of Individual Communication Processes in Small Group Behavior between Homogeneous and Heterogeneous Groups. *Proceedings of the 68th Association of Business Communication Convention*, Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA, 1-16.
- Du-Babcock, B. (1999). Topic Management and Turn-taking in Professional Communication: First- versus Second-language Strategies. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 12(4), 544-574.
- Du-Babcock, B., & Babcock, R. (1996). Patterns of Expatriate-local Personnel Communication in Multinational Corporations. *Journal of Business Communication*, 33(2), 141-164.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Cultures' consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Hofstede, G. (1991). *Cultures and organization: Software of the mind-intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*. Berkshire, UK: McGraw-Hill.
- Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: the English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. G. Widdowson (Eds.), *English in the World* (pp. 11–30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kaplan, R. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in inter-cultural education. *Language Learning*, 16(1/2), 1- 20.

- Kaplan, P. (1987). Cultural thought pattern revisited. In U. Connor & R. Kaplan (Eds.), *Writing across languages: Analysis of L2 text* (pp. 9-21). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., & Charles, M. L. (2006). English as the lingua franca of international business communication: Whose English? What English? In J. C. Palmer-Silveira, M. F. Ruiz-Garrido, & I. Fortanet-Gomez (Eds.), *Intercultural and international business communication* (pp. 27-54). Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., Charles, M. L., & Kankaanranta, A. (2005). English as a linguafranca in Nordic corporate mergers: Two case companies. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24(4), 401-421.
- Nickerson, C. (2005). English as a lingua franca in international business contexts. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24, 367-380
- Poncini, G. (2002). Investigating discourse at business meetings with multicultural participation. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 40, 345-373.
- Poncini, G. (2003). Multicultural business meetings and the role of languages other than English. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 24(1), 17-32.
- Poncini, G. (2004). *Discursive strategies in multicultural business meetings*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Roethlisberger, F., & Dickson, W. (1967). *Management and worker: An account of a research program conducted by the Western Electric Company, Hawthorne works*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1939)
- Suchan, J., & Charles, M. (2006). Business communication research: past, present, and future. *Journal of Business Communication*, 43, 389 - 397.
- Thomas, G. F. (2007). How can we make our research more relevant?: Bridging the gap between workplace changes and business communication research. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44, 283-296.
- Trompenaars, F. (1993). *Riding the waves of culture: Understanding cultural diversity in business*. London: Nicholas Brealey.

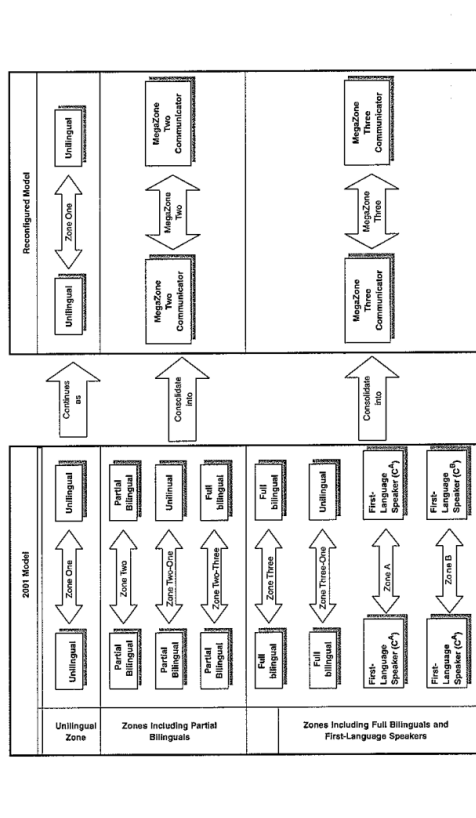


Figure 1. Language-Based Communication Zones and the Reconfigured MegaZone Models

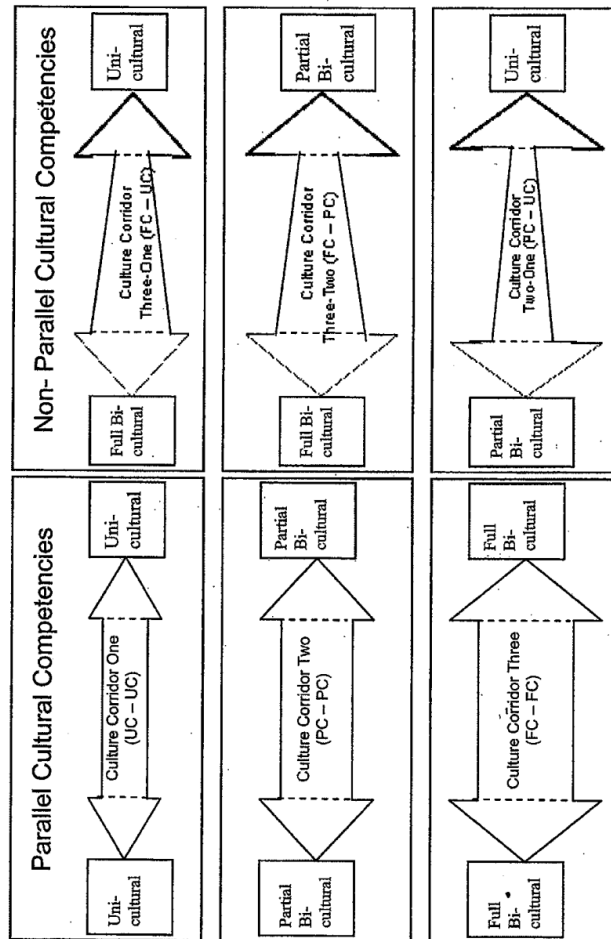


Figure 2: Culture Corridors in Language-based Communication Zones.

Source: Du-Babcock, B., & Babcock, R. (2006). Developing linguistic and cultural competency in international business communication. In *International/intercultural business communication*, edited by Palmer, Juan Carlos; New York: Peter Lang, 55-82.

Turn-taking Behavior and Topic Management Strategies of Chinese and Japanese Business Professionals and Managers: A Comparative Analysis of Intra- and Inter-cultural Group Communication (GRF Project Number: 9041451)

- RQ1: Do Chinese and Japanese business professionals exhibit equivalent or different turn-taking behaviors in similar L1 and L2 communication tasks and situations?
- RQ2: Does L2 proficiency affects the communication behavior (e.g., turn-taking) of Chinese and Japanese business professionals and managers in their L2 communication?
- RQ3: Do Chinese and Japanese business professionals and managers exhibit different turn-taking behaviors and lengths of speaking time when they participate in first language (homogeneous group) meetings?
- RQ4: Do Chinese and Japanese business professionals and managers exhibit different turn-taking behaviors and lengths of speaking time when they participate in L2 (heterogeneous) group meetings?
- RQ5: Do Chinese and Japanese business professionals and managers exhibit different turn-taking behaviors and lengths of speaking time when they participate in homogeneous (intra-cultural) as compared to heterogeneous (inter-cultural) group meetings?
- RQ6: Do Chinese and Japanese business professionals and managers use different topic management strategies in low-context (e.g., English) and high-context (i.e., Japanese and Chinese) languages?

WASH AND COMMUNICATE: ACTIONS AND ARTIFACTS IN CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Finn Frandsen

Professor

ASB Centre for Corporate Communication, (ASBccc)
Department of Language and Communication
Aarhus School of Business, University of Aarhus, Denmark
ff@asb.dk

Winni Johansen

Associate Professor

ASB Centre for Corporate Communication, (ASBccc)
Department of Language and Communication
Aarhus School of Business, University of Aarhus, Denmark
wj@asb.dk

Abstract

The aim of this article is to show how anthropology, as represented by the British social anthropologist Mary Douglas and her cultural theory of risk, can contribute to a better understanding of how and why organizations communicate as they do in a crisis situation. The focus is on the description and explanation of a particular crisis response strategy remained unstudied so far where the organization in crisis uses specific types of actions and specific types of artifacts in its crisis communication. The empirical basis for the study is a case study of the Wash and Go rumor crisis which the American multinational corporation Procter & Gamble experienced in Denmark in 1990.

Key words: Anthropology, Artifact, Crisis Communication, Risk, Rumor

Introduction

During the last ten to fifteen years, crisis communication has established itself as a recognized academic research discipline within the fields of public relations, corporate communication, strategic communication, or business communication. Crisis communication is also one of the areas that have developed most rapidly, almost growing from conference to conference and from journal article to journal article. Characteristic of this development is that crisis communication has taken inspiration from an important array of disciplines within both the humanities and the social sciences. Thus, crisis communication research has been inspired by rhetoric, psychology, sociology, media studies, and research within management, organization and communication.

One of the disciplines, from which crisis communication research has taken inspiration to a lesser extent, is linguistics, although the study of language use, text, and discourse unquestionably can contribute to a more detailed understanding of the crisis response strategies used by organizations. This is true in particular when one applies a social constructivist perspective focusing on how language affects how persons and organizations perceive themselves and others, including the crisis situation itself (Charles, 2007). The findings produced so far within the study of language use, text, and discourse may also eliminate some of the 'reductionism' that crisis communication research has been accused of recently (Jacobs, 2001; Johansen & Frandsen, 2007, pp. 315-317).

Another discipline, from which crisis communication research has taken inspiration to a lesser extent, if at all, is anthropology. The aim of this article is to show how anthropology, in this case the British social anthropologist Mary Douglas and her cultural theory of risk, can contribute to our understanding of how and why organizations communicate as they do when they find themselves in a crisis situation. Based on a case study of a crisis (a false rumor) experienced by American multinational corporation Procter & Gamble, producer of the shampoo Wash & Go, in Denmark in 1990, it is demonstrated how Douglas's theory of risk perception and risk selection, and especially the relationship between what is viewed as pure and impure within a specific culture, can throw light on a rather complex crisis response strategy remained unstudied so far.

The article is divided into three sections. In the first section, we briefly describe the course of events, from the launching of the new shampoo Wash & Go in January 1990 to the first rumors, which start circulating in September 1990, and from the climax of the crisis in October 1990 to the acquittal of Procter & Gamble by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency later that month. In the second section, we give a short presentation of two of the most important approaches within crisis communication research, represented by Benoit's (1999) Theory of Image Restoration Strategies and Coombs' (2007) Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) respectively, in order to show how far we can go in the analysis of Procter & Gamble's crisis communication strategies when applying these approaches. In the third and last section, we finally give a short introduction to Mary Douglas' cultural theory of risk, demonstrating how social anthropology can help us describing and explaining, not only how, but also why Procter & Gamble uses a specific type of action and a specific type of artifact in a crisis response strategy dramaturgically staged on public television.

Case Study: The Wash and Go Rumor Crisis (1990)

In collaboration with a Danish distributor, Salko Import, Procter & Gamble launches a new hair shampoo called Wash & Go on the Danish market in January 1990.¹ Wash & Go is a so-called two-in-one shampoo combining ordinary hair shampoo with conditioner, a type of product, which seems to be very popular at the time (cf. the launching of similar two-in-one shampoos by two competitors, Elida-Gibb and Mölnlycke, during the same period). The advertising campaign for the new shampoo, which has a budget of approximately DKK 10 million, consists of door-to-door distributed samples and a series of television commercials. The launching is very successful, and already in September Wash & Go has gained a market share of 13 %.

In September, too, the first rumors start circulating. First, there is a rumor saying that the use of Wash & Go makes it difficult to perm and color hair due to the

¹ The following account of the course of events is based on Møller Jensen and Kofoed Madsen (1992), documents from the Danish State Archives, a series of television commercials (broadcasted by TV2), a television programme called *Mediemagasinet* (produced by DR2 and broadcasted on December 15, 1999) together with newspaper articles in the following Danish newspapers: *Jyllands-Posten*, *Politiken*, *B.T.* and *Ekstra-Bladet*, all from October 1990.

amount of silicone in the shampoo; thereupon, the use of Wash & Go makes you loose your hair. The new shampoo suddenly gets a lot of negative publicity, and in November and December the market share has dropped to only 3 %. The negative media coverage reaches its climax in the middle of October with dramatic headlines like "Panic among hairdressers: Silicone in shampoo" (B.T. 13.10.1990), "Combi shampoo makes you loose your hair" (Politiken 18.10.1990), "Collapsed when she lost her hair" (B.T. 20.10.1990), "Disputed shampoo" (Jyllands-Posten 23.10.1990) and "Shampoo producer washes its hands" (Politiken 23.10.1990).

Concerning Procter & Gamble's crisis management and crisis communication activities, the American multinational corporation organizes a press conference in the afternoon of October 22, 1990, with representatives from Procter & Gamble in Denmark, Sweden, and England (CEO for Procter & Gamble in Scandinavia, Bjørn Christophersen, environmental director Monica Nygren, marketing director Erik Christoffersen, and development director Jan O'Connell). Later in the afternoon, the same people visit the Danish Consumer Council. Three days later, on October 25, Procter & Gamble inserts a full-page advertisement in some of the Danish newspapers entitled "A lot has been said about Wash & Go. Here is the truth!" (Politiken 25.10.1990).

The crisis response strategy we would like to study is performed on October 22, that is, on the very same day as Procter & Gamble's press conference takes place. Mogens Christensen, who represents the Danish distributor Salko Import, gets his hair washed with Wash & Go at Danish hairdresser Tage Frandsen's hairdressing saloon at the SAS hotel in Copenhagen. While sitting in the hairdresser stool, Mogens Christensen declares: "We have not been fairly treated, we did not have the chance to defend ourselves" (*Mediemagasinet*, DR2, 1999). The whole scene is broadcasted on Danish national television.² There are others who feel tempted to enact the same strategy, including a Danish journalist from B.T. by the name Trine Larsen who also has her hair washed with Wash & Go by Tage Frandsen.

An Analysis of Procter & Gamble's Crisis Response Strategy

² This information is based on the e-mail correspondence with Kirsten Dinesen, founder and director of Danish public relations agency *Front Page PR*, which worked for Procter & Gamble during the rumor crisis in Denmark.

Previous crisis communication research can be divided into two lines of thought or traditions: 1) the rhetorical or text-oriented research tradition which first of all is interested in studying what and how an organization actually communicates verbally when it finds itself in a crisis situation, and 2) the strategic or context-oriented research tradition which is more interested in studying how contextual or situational variables have an impact on the organisation's crisis communication.

A Theory of Image Restoration Strategies

The North American rhetorician William L. Benoit's Theory of Image Restoration Strategies (cf. Benoit, 1995, 2004) is undoubtedly the most important representative of the first of the two research traditions mentioned above. This rhetorical theory, which originally was not intended as a theory of crisis communication, is inspired by generic criticism and the *apologia* tradition (Burke, 1970, Ware and Linkugel, 1973) and the sociology of accounts (Scott & Lyman, 1968). It is based on the assumption that when a person or organization is attacked, accused of something or criticized by someone, the person or organization in question will try to restore its image or reputation by an attempt to explain, justify or apologize for its behaviour. Based on a large number of empirical case studies Benoit (1995) has established a typology of verbal image restoration strategies embracing five broad categories, three of which have one or more subcategories: 1) *denial* (simple denial, scapegoating), 2) *evasion of responsibility* (provocation, defeasibility, accident, good intentions), 3) *reduction of offensiveness* (bolstering, minimalisation, differentiation, transcendence, attack of the accuser, compensation), 4) *corrective action* and 5) *mortification*.

If we apply this rhetorical approach to Procter & Gamble's communication during the Wash & Go rumor crisis, it promptly becomes clear that Benoit's rhetorical theory in general, and his typology of image restoration strategies in particular, allow us to describe and explain important aspects of what is going on. First, it appears that the Wash & Go shampoo, and therefore also Procter & Gamble, are exposed to at least two attacks on the image of the product/the producer. Firstly, Wash & Go is attacked by angry hairdressers accusing the shampoo for hindering them in perming and coloring their client's hair (allegedly because of its content of silicone). Secondly, Wash & Go is attacked by angry end consumers accusing the shampoo for leading to loss of hair. If we take a closer look at the verbal strategies used by the American

multinational corporation, especially two image restoration strategies seem to dominate, that is, *denial* and *reduction of offensiveness*, primarily through the use of two tactical subcategories (*bolstering* and *attack the accuser*).

Denial. Procter & Gamble denies any problems with their product. In one of the first negative articles "Panic among hairdressers: Silicone in shampoo", marketing director Mogens Christensen, Salko Import, Denmark, declares: "We take all the reactions from hairdressers very seriously, but we have not planned to do something right now, because we know that we are selling a good product" (B.T. 13.10.1990). Procter & Gamble's CEO in Scandinavia, Bjørn Christoffersen, continues along the same lines: "It is completely unfair. If people loose their hair and their perm does not last, it is not because they have used our shampoo. The product has passed all our tests, and I will do what ever I can in order to stop this scare campaign" (Politiken 19.10.1990). The denial strategy also appears at the press conference on October 22, and gains support from various hairdressers and experts.

Reduction of offensiveness. In order to mitigate the accusations brought forward by hairdressers and clients, Procter & Gamble uses the subcategory of *bolstering* by referring to their sales figures and to the testing of the new product: "Selling so much Wash & Go naturally proves that people are happy with the product. Every year 250 million bottles of shampoo are sold in 23 countries, and the shampoo has passed all kinds of tests after Vidal Sassoon in France developed the product". Bolstering is also used when Procter & Gamble brings in testimonials from various experts, as for example dermatologists, and publishes these testimonials in a full-page advertisement in the national newspapers.

Procter & Gamble also uses the subcategory of *attacking the accuser*. Firstly, when the corporation criticizes those hairdressers who do not think that they will be able to perm and color their clients' hair: "We are sure that the product will not prevent a perm if the hairdressers follow the normal procedure", declares marketing director Mogens Christensen, Salko Import (B.T. 17.10.1990). Secondly, when the corporation criticizes the Danish Consumer Council for not releasing the names of those clients who have complaint about Wash & Go: "It is irresponsible that the Consumer Council does not register the names of those people who phone and complain about hair loss and eczema after having used Wash & Go. [...] One may ask the question if the Council is equal to the task when we cannot get the names of the

complainants, declares marketing director Erik Kristoffersen from Procter & Gamble” (Politiken 25.10.1990). Thirdly, when the corporation claims that it is a scare campaign and malignant rumors: ”I will do all that I can in order to stop this scare campaign, says CEO for Scandinavia: Bjørn Christophersen (Politiken 19.10.1990). And again: ”CEO Bjørn Christoffersen will comment on the question whether competitors might have started the accusations against the product. It is always cold at the top because everybody wants to get up there, he says” (Politiken 23.10.1990).

Finally, in order to restore faith in the product, Procter & Gamble also uses *corrective action*, but still in order to support the denial strategy: ”As soon as it is possible, we will change the labels on our product, so that the clients can make sure that everything is in order” (B.T. 23.10.1990).

Situational Crisis Communication Theory

The North American public relations researcher W. Timothy Coombs’ Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) (cf. Coombs, 2007, 2009) is one of the most important representative of the second tradition within crisis communication research, that is, the strategic and context-oriented approach. This theory is based on the assumption that the best way to protect the reputation of an organization is to choose a crisis response strategy that matches the reputational threat represented by the crisis in question, and that a series of specific situational variables will have an impact on this reputational threat. SCCT is inspired by public relations theory, relationship management, corporate apologia, and last, but not least: attribution theory.

According to Coombs, it is crucial to incorporate the stakeholder’s attribution of crisis responsibility to the organization in crisis and to identify how serious the threat against the organization’s reputation is. This can be done by following a two-step process.

The first step in this process is to identify *the crisis type*, that is, the frame used to interpret the crisis. Coombs has established a distinction between three primary crisis types or crisis clusters: a) *victim crises* (natural disaster, rumors, workplace violence, product tampering/malevolence), b) *accident crises* (challenges, megadamage, technical breakdown accidents, technical breakdown recalls), and 3) *preventable crises* (human breakdown accidents, human breakdown recalls, organizational misdeed with no injuries, organizational misdeed management

misconduct, organizational misdeed with injuries). Depending on the type of crisis, the reputational threat will be either mild, moderate, or severe, and the stakeholders will attribute a crisis responsibility to the organization in crisis, which will be either very little, low, or strong.

The second step is to identify *intensifying factors* that can have an impact on the stakeholder's attribution of crisis responsibility. Has the organization in crisis been involved in a similar crisis before? How good or bad was the reputation of the organization prior to the crisis? How high or low is the organization's credibility or believability? And how serious is the crisis? Crisis types and intensifying factors are then combined to determine the reputational threat of a crisis situation. Determining the crisis type provides an initial assessment of the reputational threat by indicating the level of crisis responsibility associated with the crisis. This initial assessment is then adjusted by the intensifying factors.

After having looked at the crisis type, the intensifying factors, and after having assessed the reputational threat, the organization in crisis can finally select a crisis response strategy, which *matches* the crisis situation. Here Coombs has introduced a continuum of crisis response strategies including four postures or clusters of strategies: 1) *denial posture* (attacking the accuser, denial, scapegoating), 2) *diminishing posture* (excusing, justification), 3) *rebuilding posture* (compensation, apology), and 4) *bolstering posture* (reminding, ingratiation, victimage). Coombs claims that the bolstering strategies are supplemental to the other three postures, that is, they combine with any of the other crisis response strategies.

Also the SCCT approach can give light to important aspects of the Wash & Go rumor crisis. According to Coombs, the Wash & Go rumor crisis belongs to the cluster of crises mentioned above called *victim crises*: Procter & Gamble is the victim of rumors, which have been invented by others in order to discredit their product. In principle, a victim crisis represents a mild reputational threat to the organization, and in his SCCT Guidelines or Recommendations for Crisis Response Strategy Selection, Coombs therefore recommends the use of either denial strategies (attacking the accuser, denial, scapegoating) (cf. Coombs, 2007: 143) or diminishing strategies (excusing, justification) (Heath and Coombs, 2006: 206) as the most relevant crisis response strategies. Concerning intensifying factors, Procter & Gamble's reputation and crisis history does not seem to involve accelerators, which may aggravate the

perception of the crisis situation, although big American multinational corporations more often than other corporations are exposed to negative rumors. On the other hand, when it comes to the seriousness of the crisis, Procter & Gamble is dealing with a problem perceived as very serious by the individual consumer: hair loss in consequence of the use of a shampoo. According to Coombs, this aspect can raise the perception and the attribution of crisis responsibility to the organization a little, making a more accommodative crisis response strategy necessary.

How to Handle Negative Rumors

So far, the only study investigating Procter & Gamble's Wash & Go rumor crisis has been conducted by two Danish marketing researchers, Jan Møller Jensen and Tage Koed Madsen. In their 1992 article on rumors, they examine the Procter & Gamble's crisis with special reference to how negative rumors are spread in a market and how rumors of this type can be handled by a company. The study is inspired by Rogers's (1983) Theory of Diffusion of Innovations.

Møller Jensen and Koed Madsen (1992: 35) define rumors as an attempt to make sense out of a situation, which is ambiguous or difficult to understand for the persons involved. In order to reduce or remove the uncertainty generated by the situation, an 'explanatory model' is created, in this case a rumor, which the persons involved start sharing with others. According to Møller Jensen and Koed Madsen, dissatisfaction with a product or a company is often the triggering event behind the spread of a negative rumor.

The two Danish researchers classify rumors by combining two parameters: 1) *involvement*, that is, how low or high is the risk for the persons involved, if the rumor turns out to be true?; and 2) *ambiguity*, that is, how many facts are there, which can prove or disprove the substance of the rumor? The result is a scheme for classifying the risk of diffusion of negative rumors in a market consisting of four types: 1) low risk of diffusion (low involvement, many facts), 2) moderate risk of diffusion (high involvement, many facts), 3) high risk of diffusion (high involvement, few or no facts), and 4) little risk of diffusion (low involvement, few or no facts).

When applying Møller Jensen and Koed Madsen's classification to the Wash & Go crisis, the rumor of problems with hair loss and perming hair has a low risk of diffusion, as it does not affect everyone but also as it involves the hairdresser's

expertise. In this case, the hairdressers have an opinion shaping function. On the other hand, however, when looking at the rumor of permanent hair loss, the situation is completely different. Here, there is a high risk of diffusion, since this rumor affects everyone and only leaves little tangible options of disproving.

Inspired by Tybout et al. (1981) and Weinberger et al. (1981), Møller Jensen and Koed Madsen suggest four possible strategies for countering a negative rumor:

1) The company can *ignore or reject the rumor* without any further explanation. This strategy is only appropriate if the market does not find the rumor important and the risk is low. Procter & Gamble uses this strategy at the beginning of the Wash & Go crisis.

2) The company can *refute the rumor* by presenting counterevidence. This is a strategy, which requires a reliable source and tangible facts. According to this strategy, Procter & Gamble's press conference will not be convincing, as the organization participates as the source. Møller Jensen and Koed Madsen claim that this strategy is appropriate, if the organization directs a selective counterevidence strategy toward opinion leaders. It is debatable whether Procter & Gamble did so in wide enough extent, even though they tried to use the Danish hairdresser Tage Frandsen, to persuade the consumers.

3) The company can *shout down the rumor* by retrieval, i.e. trying to revive the product's positive characteristics towards the consumers. Procter & Gamble did the opposite choosing to stop an otherwise effective advertising campaign when the crisis broke out.

4) The company can *divert the rumor* through a 'switch' in the consumers' associations, i.e. try to weaken the undesirable associations by establishing new tracks inside the cognitive network. This could for example be done by transmitting positive information about the silicone component linking positive associations to this word. However, it is a difficult strategy when it comes to hair loss.

As it appears from our analysis, both Benoit's Theory of Image Restoration Strategies, Coombs' Situational Crisis Communication Theory, and Møller Jensen and Koed Madsen's rumor management strategies for handling negative rumors are applicable to the extent that they describe and explain important aspects of Procter & Gamble's communication during the Wash & Go rumor crisis in Denmark. However, these approaches are still very limited in their scope. They only apply to verbal crisis

response strategies and do not take into account all the visual, auditive, or tactile aspects including Procter & Gamble's use of a specific action (hair wash on public television) and a specific artifact (the Wash & Go shampoo) as integrated elements of the corporation's crisis communication.

From Rumor to Risk: A Sociocultural Perspective

The crisis response strategy that we want to study in this article is the scene where the representative of Procter & Gamble gets his hair washed with Wash & Go on national television in order to show that, despite of the negative rumors, there is nothing wrong with the new product. This crisis response strategy is first of all characterized by a high degree of multimodal *complexity* in so far as words, pictures, actions, and artifacts are used simultaneously. The scene includes the following elements:

1) A *product*, which can be eaten, drunken or smeared on the human body (such as food articles and cosmetics) or which involves the human body in another way (such as a means of transport). The product is accused of being dangerous to the consumers in some sense, that is, it is presumably a *defect* product.

2) An important representative of the *company* that has produced the product in question. It may be the CEO of the company, a chief communication officer, a marketing director, a quality director, or the like. The defect product constitutes a major or minor organizational crisis to the company.

3) A crisis response strategy, which is performed in the shape of a public, mass mediated event, which is staged dramaturgically and where the representative of the company consumes the allegedly defect and dangerous product in order to demonstrate that there is nothing wrong with the product according to the producer.

4) A crisis response strategy, which can be used both in order to *defend* and to *attack* the image or reputation of the product and/or the company within the crisis communication used by the company and/or one or more of its key stakeholders. In the Wash & Go rumor crisis, it is obvious that the response strategy is used by Procter & Gamble in an attempt to defend the corporation against the accusations. An attack strategy, again, can be seen in another case from Denmark where two supermarket chains, SuperBest and Kvickly, in 2009 are accused of selling meat and fish to their clients, which has been kept for too long in the refrigerated counters and which therefore is no longer fit for human consumption. A journalist from the consumer

program *Kontant*, broadcasted by national TV channel DR1, performs the response strategy as an attack when he on-screen invites two managers representing the two supermarket chains to taste dishes prepared with the tainted meat and fish.

As demonstrated above, the previous crisis communication research as represented by Benoit's Theory of Image Restoration Strategies and Coombs' Situational Crisis Communication Theory, allow us to study important aspects of Procter & Gamble's crisis communication. However, none of the theories presented are able to explain why Procter & Gamble makes use of public hair wash on national television as part of their crisis communication. At least two reasons for that may be identified.

Firstly, crisis communication researchers have so far almost exclusively concentrated their attention on *verbal* crisis response strategies, that is, strategies formulated by means of the human language. This means that the researchers have not examined silence as a response strategy and that they have not shown interest in response strategies involving other kinds of semiotic resources than words (such as visual crisis communication). But the scene where the representative of Procter & Gamble gets his hair washed with Wash & Go is exactly a multimodal type of communication involving not only words and pictures, but also a specific action (hair wash) and a specific artifact (the shampoo).

Secondly, we are dealing with a crisis where the appearance of negative rumors seem to have considerable impact on the course of events and which may therefore be categorized as a rumor crisis according to already existing crisis typologies (see for example Coombs, 2007, p. 142). But behind these rumors, there is something else which is at least as important as the rumors, namely the activation of a specific *risk perception* (and *risk behavior*). Wash & Go is depicted by hairdressers and clients, and not least by the mass media, as a risky product that may harm you. It is possible to explain this process departing from the theoretical framework of Social Amplification of Risk (SARF). According to this theory, most of our knowledge (in this case a specific risk perception) is second hand knowledge, that is, knowledge transmitted to us from other sources, first of all the mass media, which in this way contributes to the strengthening or the weakening of the population's knowledge (risk perceptions) within important areas in society (cf. Renn, Burns, Kasperson, Kasperson and Slovic, 1992). The representative of Procter & Gamble is exactly

trying to eliminate or at least to weaken the perception of Wash & Go as a risky product by *smearing on* the product in a relevant way (hair wash with shampoo). In the rest of this section, we will focus exclusively on this aspect of Procter & Gamble's crisis communication.

Maybe the discipline of social anthropology can help us with describing and explaining this distinctive crisis response strategy? The British social anthropologist Mary Douglas has played an important role in the development of what one can term the *risk paradigm* within the social sciences and the humanities. (Peretti-Watel, 2000, 2001, Taylor-Gooby & Zinn, 2006). She has in particular contributed to the functionalistic and Durkheim inspired theory claiming that an individual's or group of individuals' perception of risk and response to risk always will be marked by the socio-cultural context into which they are embedded. Or to formulate this in a different way, people *select* risk in a manner that maintains well established and preferred cultural norms supporting the social relations of the group. "The core assumption of the cultural approach is that the individual's perception and response to risk can only be understood against the background and identity as a member of a social group, rather than through individual cognition" (Zinn and Taylor-Gooby, 2006, p. 37). Thus, with her cultural theory of risk, Mary Douglas has contributed to the important move away from the narrow statistical-probabilistic or psychometric approaches to risk towards a broad anthropological, cultural, or sociological approach to risk. Where the previous approaches focused on the *acceptable* risk or the *perceived* risk, Douglas focuses her attention on the socially and culturally *constructed* risk.

Mary Douglas's cultural theory of risk consists of several theoretical components that have emerged at different points in time in her body of work. The most central and most well known is her *grid/group theory* the aim of which is to examine the relationship between social organization and values and beliefs (risk perception). This theory is first of all set forth and used in books published at the beginning of the 1980s or later such as *Risk and Culture* (1982, written together with A. Wildavsky), *Risk Acceptability According to the Social Sciences* (1985) and *Risk and Blame* (1992).

Group can be defined as "the outside boundary that people have erected between themselves and the outside world" (Douglas & Wildavsky, 1982, p. 138), or

as "the degree of identification with a particular group" (Zinn and Taylor-Gooby, 2006: 37). *Grid* can be defined as "all the other social distinctions and delegations of authority that they [people] use to limit how people behave to one another" (Douglas and Wildavsky, 1982: 138, or as "the degree to which an individual's life is regulated or prescribed by the roles in a social group" (Zinn & Taylor-Gooby, 2006, p. 37). Ostrander (1982) is more concise in his definition: group concerns with whom you interact, whereas grid concerns how you interact with them (cf. Tansey & Rayner, 2009, pp. 64-67).

Douglas's combination of group and grid results in a four-category typology of archetypal cultures or solidarities: 1) the cultural type of *individualism* (low degree of both group regulation and group identification); 2) the cultural type of *egalitarianism* (also called the sectarian type) (low degree of group regulation, but high degree of group identification); 3) the cultural type of *hierarchy* (high degree of both group regulation and group identification); and 4) the cultural type of *isolation* or fatalism (low degree of group identification, but high degree of group regulation). The grid/group theory or typology was developed as a heuristic device where the distinctions are "relative to some norm in some particular activity in some particular place and period" (Douglas & Wildavsky, 1982, p. 139).

A less well known, but in this context very relevant theoretical component of Mary Douglas's cultural theory of risk is her study of *purity* and *impurity*. This part of her work has been presented in earlier books such as *The Lele of Kasai* (1963) and *Purity and Danger* (1966). At the beginning of the 1960s, Douglas conducted field studies among African tribes in former Belgian Congo. One of the purposes was to study the tribe members' idea about purity and impurity. From these field studies and studies conducted later in the 1960s, a theory crystallized about the relationship between purity and impurity as a fundamental mechanism for the maintenance of social order, not only in primitive, but also in modern societies.

It is important here not to understand the concepts of *pure* and *impure* as rational and absolute hygienic categories established on the basis of scientific research. On the contrary, *pure* and *impure* are highly symbolic, abstract, and relational concepts representing the following antithesis: *purity* represents order, things that are not contaminated, things that are 'in their proper place', things that are good, right, and safe, whereas *impurity* represents disorder, things that are

contaminated, things that are 'out of their place', things that are bad, wrong, and unsafe. To put it briefly: what is considered *impure* represents a risk and must therefore be tabooed.

A pair of shoes is often used to illustrate this antithesis: "Social norms that define what counts as dirt describe objects that are 'out of place' in the social order. Shoes are not inherently dirty; they become classified as dirty when they are placed on a kitchen table. In a fundamental sense, the functional role of this attribution process is to defend social order as a sense-making activity" (Tansey and Rayner, 2009, p. 58).

Two other examples are blood and nail clippings, which to begin with are considered as 'natural' parts of the human body. If you cut yourself on a knife, most people have no problem sucking blood from the cut until you find a plaster. And if you bite your fingernails, most people have no problem eating one or two pieces. However, once the blood or nail clippings have left the inside of your body, it is a different situation (cf. Breck, 2001, p. 48). These two examples emphasize another important aspect: that the *pure* is something, which we can have *inside* or *on* our body, whereas the *impure* is something, we cannot have inside or on our body. Or as expressed by Mary Douglas: "to organize means to organize some things *in* and other things *out*" (Douglas & Wildavsky, 1982, p. 8).

We propose to use Mary Douglas's cultural theory of risk, and especially her anthropological theory of *purity* and *impurity*, to describe and explain the crisis response strategy used by Procter & Gamble: the representative of the corporation gets his hair washed with the 'impure' and allegedly risky shampoo/conditioner in order to make it 'pure' again. It is a purification strategy moving along the following time line and logic (Figure 1):

Procter & Gamble	Stakeholders
January 1990	
Launching of the new two-in-one shampoo Wash & Go: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising campaign 	The consumers' and the hairdressers' risk perception: A <i>pure</i> product, i.e. a product that is not connected to any risks and which

	<p>therefore can be applied to the body (in)</p> <p>Potential risk factor: the product combines ordinary shampoo and conditioner (?)</p>
September 1990	
	<p>A rumor, which changes the risk perception arises: the use of Wash & Go leads to hair loss</p> <p>A new risk perception among consumers and hairdressers: An <i>impure</i> product connected with the risk of losing your hair, and which therefore cannot be applied to the body (out)</p> <p>Risk factor: the shampoo contains silicone, which many consumers perceive in a specific way</p>
October 1990	
<p>Crisis communication in order to defend the new product and/or change the consumer's risk perception:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal crisis response strategies • Hair wash on national television 	<p>A crisis response strategy that changes the risk perception (?):</p> <p>A new risk perception: A <i>pure</i> product that is not connected to any risks, and which therefore can be applied to the body (in), because the manufacturer dares it himself (?)</p>

Figure 1. Wash & Go: From a *pure* to an *impure* product (and back again).

Is there something in the media coverage of the Wash & Go rumor crisis, which can support our interpretation of Procter & Gamble's crisis communication? Yes, there is. In a newspaper article with the headline "Experts: Silicone Not Harmful to Hair", Niels Thillerup from L'Oréal expresses his view concerning the risk factor to which everybody seems to return again and again in the media: "Silicone is a very

pure and effective ingredient. We use it in most of our hair care products” (B.T. 20.10.1990). In the same newspaper, hairdresser Tage Frandsen also gives his opinion about silicone: ”There is silicone in most conditioners and hair care products [...]. But it is of course not the type of silicone used for tightening windows or cars” (B.T. 20.10.1990). In the first statement, the risk factor (silicone) is presented as something very ’pure’. In the second statement, the hairdresser tries to change the clients perception of silicone as something ’out of place’ with regard to hair wash.

On October 26, 1990, the press announces that the Danish Environmental Protection Agency has ’acquitted’ Procter & Gamble’s new two-in-one hair shampoo Wash & Go: ”The ingredients found in the combined shampoo/conditioner are all well known and legal” (Politiken 26.10.1990). Two days later, the Danish newspaper *Politiken* publishes a funny cartoon accompanied by a subtle text according to which Procter & Gamble have planned to ”compare ’Wash & Go’ with ordinary shampoo by letting a hundred people having one half of their hair washed with ’Wash & Go’ and the other half with ordinary shampoo. Afterwards, their hair will be permed and examined by four independent experts” (Politiken 28.10.1990).

Limitations

First of all, our study is a single case study, for which reason it is difficult to generalize about the use of this distinctive crisis response strategy in Procter & Gamble’s crisis communication. We need to expand our study with similar case studies of organizational crises where organizations try to ’purify’ products accused of being risky and dangerous in order to change the risk perception of their key stakeholders. Secondly, we have not examined whether there may be important intercultural differences in relationship with the Wash & Go rumor crisis, that is, differences in risk perception between American and Danish consumers. Finally, we have not examined to what extent Procter & Gamble succeeded in persuading their key stakeholders that Wash & Go was a ’pure’ product.

Concluding Remarks

Crisis communication is still a young academic research discipline within the fields of public relations, corporate communication, strategic communication, or business communication. It is characteristic of the discipline’s rapid development during the

last decade or so that crisis communication research has taken inspiration from many disciplines within the humanities and the social sciences. However, crisis communication scholars have so far not attempted to incorporate into their research the important insights produced by anthropology or linguistics (the study of language use, text, and discourse). This article has tried to show how Mary Douglas's cultural theory of risk can serve as an alternative theoretical framework for the study of organizational crisis communication allowing us to study the very distinctive crisis response strategy, applied by Procter & Gamble during the Wash & Go rumor crisis, where words and pictures combine with actions and artifacts.

References

- Benoit, W. L. (1995). *Accounts, Excuses, and Apologies*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Benoit, W. L. (2004). Image restoration discourse and crisis communication. In D. P. Millar & R. L. Heath (Eds.), *Responding to Crisis: A Rhetorical Approach to Crisis Communication*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 263-280.
- Breck, T. (2001). *Dialog om det usikre – nye veje i risikokommunikation*. Viborg: Akademisk Forlag.
- Burke, R. K. (1970). *The Rhetoric of Religion*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Charles, M. (2007). Language matters in global communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44(3), 260-282.
- Coombs, W. T. (2007). *Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing, and Responding*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Second edition.
- Coombs, W. T. (2009). Conceptualizing crisis communication. In: R. L. Heath and H. D. O'Hair (Eds.), *Handbook of Risk and Crisis Communication*, 100-119.
- Douglas, M. (1963). *The Lele of Kasai*. London: Oxford University Press for International African Institute.
- Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge Classics. Second edition 2002.
- Douglas, M. (1985). *Risk Acceptability According to the Social Sciences*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

- Douglas, M. (1992). *Risk and Blame: Essays in Cultural Theory*. London: Routledge.
- Douglas, M. & Wildavsky, A. (1982). *Risk and Culture: An Essay on the Selection of Technological and Environmental Dangers*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Heath, R. L. & Coombs, W. T. (2006). *Today's Public Relations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Jacobs, G. (2001). What's in a crisis? A critical look at the field of crisis communication. *Document Design*, 2(3), 225-234.
- Johansen, W. & Frandsen, F. (2007). *Krisekommunikation: Når virksomhedens image og omdømme er truet*. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur.
- Møller Jensen, J. & Koed Madsen, T. (1992). Analyse, klassifikation og behandling af negative rygter. *Ledelse og Erhvervsøkonomi*, 56(1), 33-42.
- Peretti-Watel, P. (2000). *Sociologie du risque*. Paris: Armand Colin.
- Peretti-Watel, P. (2001). *La société du risque*. Paris: Editions La Découverte.
- Renn, O., Burns, W., Kasperson, J., Kasperson, R. & Slovic, P. (1992). The social amplification of risk: Theoretical foundations and empirical applications. *Journal of Social Issues*, 48(4), 137-160.
- Scott, M. H. & Lyman, S. M. (1968). Accounts. *American Sociological Review*, 33, 46-62.
- Tansey, J. & Rayner, S. (2009). Cultural theory and risk. In R. L. Heath & H. D. O'Hair (Eds.). *Handbook of Risk and Crisis Communication*. New York: Routledge, 53-79.
- Taylor-Gooby, P. & Zinn, J. (Eds.) (2006). *Risk in Social Science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tybout, A., Calder, B. J. & Sternthal, B. (1981). Using information processing theory to design marketing strategies. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18, 73-79.
- Zinn, J. & Taylor-Gooby, P. (2006). Risk as an interdisciplinary research area. In Taylor-Gooby, P. & Zinn, J. (Eds.) (2006). *Risk in Social Science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ware, B. L. & Linkugel, W. A. (1973). They spoke in defense of themselves: On the generic criticism of apologia. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59, 273-283.
- Weinberger, M. C., Allen, T. C. & Dillon, W. R. (1981). Negative information: Perspectives and research directions. In K. B. Monroe (Ed.). *Advances in Consumer Research*. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 398-404.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION FOR A DEFENSIVE PURPOSE: IDEOLOGY AND LANGUAGE AWARENESS AT WORK

Marja Heikkinen

IBC Doctoral Student
Helsinki School of Economics, Finland
marja.heikkinen@elisanet.fi

Leena Louhiala-Salminen

Professor (acting)
International Business Communication
Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

Abstract

This paper explores international business communication from a different perspective, that of an SME-type (small and medium sized enterprise) organization which is state-controlled and has only recently started to go international. Drawing from van Dijk's (1998) notion of 'ideology' and Fairclough's (e.g. 1992) 'language awareness', we set out to investigate the views and perceptions of employees in our case organization, a major state lottery, and asked the following questions: What is the role of international communication in the case organization? How does the lottery manage the different elements of international communication? How do the employees perceive their international communication? We conclude by discussing the current requirements for communicative success in the lottery.

Key words: international business communication, lottery communication, language awareness, communicative practices, genre use, ideology

Introduction

In International Business Communication (IBC), the focus of inquiry is on the communication of internationally operating (usually) profit-making enterprises, which can be investigated at two levels. First, the organization's formal, function-based communications can be examined, and second, we may analyze various dimensions in the communication of individual employees operating across borders in their daily business activities. Although IBC is a new area, it has gained momentum along advancing globalization, and in recent years we have seen a growing interest towards communication issues. However, on both fronts, the organizational and the individual, plenty remains to be done. As Charles (2007, p. 279) points out, in international business "we ... need research that helps us to better understand the complex process of how people relate to each other across language barriers".

The present case study is part of a communications project titled "Does Business Know How? The role of communication in the business know-how of globalized and globalizing companies". The project is funded by a research program of the Academy of Finland, which investigates business know-how from a variety of perspectives (see <http://www.aka.fi/Liike2>). The aim of the communications project is to identify features that contribute to perceptions of communication being 'successful' in today's international business. The underlying argument is that the communication know-how of today's business practitioners is an integral part of their business know-how. Since much of the communication in present-day international business takes place in English, but between non-native speakers of English, the project specifically looks at communication in English as a Lingua Franca, i.e. ELF, (see also 'BELF' in Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta, 2005), and regards competence in ELF/BELF as a necessary and integral part of the business know-how and competence required of internationally operating individuals and organizations.

Earlier IBC research has overwhelmingly looked at communication issues in large, globalized companies where some practices of international communication already exist. Our case study on a major Finnish gaming company assumes a different

perspective, that of an SME-type (small and medium sized enterprise) organization which is state-controlled and has only recently started to go international. We investigate views and perceptions of employees in our case organization, and aim at finding answers to the following questions: What is the role of international communication in the case organization? How does the case organization manage the different elements of international communication? How do the employees perceive their international communication? In the end, we will discuss the current requirements for communicative success in the case organization.

The communicative environment of lotteries

Going international does not always entail conquering new markets abroad, not even in the world of business. In fact, it may entail anything but conquering new markets; international cooperation may be needed to make sure that there will not be competition from other markets. This can be achieved when the actors join forces with other operators in the same situation and field world wide. State lotteries are one example of this phenomenon, which could be called *defensive internationalization*

State lotteries all over the world have been working to raise funds for different socially beneficial purposes within their jurisdictions for decades. They are either state-owned or state licensed, and have, in most cases, the exclusive right to operate (certain types of) games within their territory. The majority of their revenues are contributed to the good causes (e.g., health care, sports, culture, science, youth work, or the state treasury to allocate the funds further to various beneficiaries). Working for the benefit of their communities, the state lotteries' activities have been restricted to their own jurisdictions, and cross-border operations have been strictly forbidden by virtue of national legislation. This strongly restrictive system has been justified by the need to channel the inherent human desire to play to options that are ethically and socially sustainable, at the same time preventing social detriments, crime, and fraud that might be involved in gaming activities unless they were officially controlled. Further, it has also been justified by the need to raise funds for society, which would not be possible if the gaming activities were left to be taken care of by private operators.

As state lotteries are highly domestic and national in nature, we might ask if they were in need of any kind of international cooperation: since cross-border operations are entirely out of the question, why should lotteries invest in foreign relations? This, in fact, used to be the case still some 15 years ago. However, over the past two decades, and especially since the introduction of the new media to the gaming business, the privileged status of the national lotteries has started to falter. Private enterprisers have not hesitated to offer their competing games with attractive payout percentages over the Internet and across national borders, no matter what the national legislations had to say about such actions. Further, at the European level, lawsuits against state lotteries have been filed with the European Court of Justice, claiming that the present exclusive-right based system violates the principle of the free movement of services, laid down in the EC Treaty. All this has added to the pressure on the state lotteries around the world to join forces and defend their territories, their principles, and ideology.

Following these developments, a global umbrella organization of the state-licensed gaming industry WLA (World Lottery Association, see <http://www.world-lotteries.org/>) was founded in 1999, as the two former global gaming organizations (AILE and Intertoto) merged in order to join their forces. The organization has currently members from 76 countries and five continents. In addition to WLA, there are five regional associations gathering together the lotteries and suppliers of different territories. In Europe, the regional Association is called EL (European Lotteries, see <https://www.european-lotteries.org/>), and it works to defend the interests of its members especially within the EU and in front of the European Court of Justice.

Case organization: The Lottery¹

In the major Finnish gaming company (hereafter the Lottery)², the situation is very much like that of the other state-licensed lotteries around the world: international connections are new in the Lottery's nearly 70-year-old history. The Lottery is now an

¹ In compliance with a non-disclosure agreement signed by the Lottery and the authors of the present paper, no Lottery material (including the annual reports) mentioned in this paper is included in the references list.

² The first author of the present article has had the privilege of following the internationalization process since 1998, first as an assistant for international affairs, working for the Lottery, and since 2005 as an outsourced translator and communications consultant working with some of the staff involved in international affairs on a daily basis.

active member of both WLA and EL; however, until the early 2000s, although already recognized as a part of the business operations of the Lottery, international relations were strongly centralized and taken care of mostly by the CEO alone, and a very small number of assisting personnel. Business trips abroad were regarded as rewards that were only earned as a result of hard work and a highly bureaucratic application process, subject to approval by the CEO. Moreover, the Lottery's overall organizational structure used to be rather rigid, with a large part of the staff entering the organization in their youth and continuing to work there for the rest of their working lives³. It was not until a profound organizational change and the appointment of the new CEO in 2001 that the international affairs were made part of the Lottery's core activities on a wider scale, to cover the entire organization: an International Team representing the Lottery's different core functions was established. Since then, the international relations have been further organized and made more systematic by, e.g., creating a strategy for international activities and making available a special section on international communication on the Lottery's intranet. Yet, due to its long traditions and the legislative basis as a non-profit, state-controlled organization, the Lottery's business activities still remain domestic and it is clearly not as internationalized as many other present-day Finnish (profit-making) companies, where English may even be used as a workplace lingua franca (cf. Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta, 2005; Varttala & Vesala-Varttala, 2008).

Currently, the Lottery's international relations entail principally cooperation with the two umbrella organizations and their members (i.e. other state lotteries). Contacts are also maintained with other relevant stakeholders, e.g. members of the European Parliament and representatives of the supplier industry. As in most other state lotteries, the pressure to defend the current monopoly status and, thus, the need for strategic cooperation has increased quickly in the past few years (the Lottery, too, has been confronted with several lawsuits and seen its previously practically uncontroversial monopoly status being questioned).

In fact, the Lottery has recently redefined its vision for the future: it aims to be the leading Lottery of the world by 2013 *in any context*, including a situation where the state lotteries' exclusive rights might be abolished. The Lottery is, therefore, currently

³ In 2002, the share of employees having worked for the Lottery for over ten years was 58%, whereas the respective (still relatively high) rate at the end of 2007 was 44%.

increasingly focusing on its role as an actor on the general entertainment market rather than limiting itself to being just a national game provider. Nevertheless, the state lotteries in Europe and even worldwide, currently share the position and primary goal that gaming should be organized in accordance with national legislation even in the future, and this is the goal they are prepared to defend on all fronts. In these circumstances, international communication has become increasingly important.

Communicating lottery ideology through discourse

As discussed above, the Lottery's and the umbrella organizations' international activities centre on working in the interest of regulated gaming operators and joining the forces of lotteries worldwide in this objective: defending the *lottery ideology*. Accomplishing this mission requires effective communication between the cooperating parties.

At its simplest, ideology has been defined very broadly as a 'worldview' or a 'mindset' concerning the way how things are or should be. A more critical stand towards the concept has been assumed in Critical Discourse Analysis, which generally sees ideology as an important means of establishing and maintaining unequal power relations (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). Fairclough (1995), one of the key theorists of CDA altogether rejects the 'neutral' definitions of ideology as 'virtually synonymous with worldview', and advocates the view of ideology as being based on asymmetrical power relations, ideologies representing instruments of domination. He claims that if the concept of ideology is used, it should be used critically.

A rather more subtle and general definition is suggested by van Dijk (1998, p.8), who bases his view on social cognition theory and sees ideology as *the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group*. Although general, van Dijk's definition is by no means neutral; he foregrounds *group* and *action*, claiming that a group's ideology serves its interests. Yet, in contrast to the definitions centring on asymmetrical power relations, van Dijk does not see ideologies necessarily as instruments of domination (1998, p.11), but points out that they may also work to promote a group's

internal cohesion or entail competition between equally powerful groups (ibid.). Leaving aside the possible unequal power relations that may be involved in the lottery ideology at this stage, we will be focusing on the communication of the Lottery's aims and interests that could be expected to require strong internal cohesion from the lottery community. Therefore, van Dijk's approach to ideology serves the purposes of this paper.

By way of simplification, it could be considered that, in the case of state lotteries and their international activities, van Dijk's *group* is the worldwide (and the regional, in this case European) lottery community, *group* being defined by van Dijk as "more or less permanent, more or less organized and institutionalized, and reproduced by recruiting members on the basis of identification on a specific, more or less permanent set of properties, shared activities and or goals, norms and values, resources, and a specific position (often of competition or conflict) in relation to other groups." (1998, p.146). (The umbrella organization WLA's 'group status' is spelled out clearly, e.g., in the association's membership criteria, see <http://www.world-lotteries.org/wla/howtojoin.php>.) Referring to van Dijk's definition of ideology, we could further say, rather broadly, that the *social representations* include the shared beliefs and aims of the lottery community, e.g., defence of the exclusive rights system, responsible gaming operations and raising funds for the public good (for an example of a document of the ideology written out at the official, organizational level, see "Communication of the social role of lotteries" https://www.european-lotteries.org/communication/social_role.php).

Above we suggested that a core concern in state lotteries' international activities is the successful communication of the lottery ideology to their stakeholders. Ideology is communicated through *discourse*, which van Dijk (2004, p.7) sees as necessary for the *reproduction of ideologies*. Understood this way, the notion of *discourse* covers both text and talk (and even the non-verbal elements that may be related especially to spoken discourse). Further, discourse is seen here not only as structures but also – and most importantly – as *action* and *interaction*; van Dijk (2004, p.3) argues: "Discursive language use consists not only of ordered series of words, clauses, sentences and

propositions, but also of *sequences* of mutually related acts.” Thus, e.g., the writing of daily emails to international colleagues, talking to them on the phone or face-to-face at various lottery conventions and congresses, are all seen as *discursive acts* fundamentally working towards the common (ideology-based) goal. In sum, discourse is regarded in this paper as the action and interaction necessary for the reproduction and accomplishment of the lottery ideology.

The analysis of discourse as action and interaction, foregrounding intentionality and purposefulness, is closely associated with the notion of *genre*. Fairclough (2003, p.17) defines genre succinctly as “a way of acting and interacting linguistically”, thus identifying the notion with what was said above about discourse. Bhatia (2004, p.22) proposes a genre-based view of discourse, where “genre essentially refers to language use in a conventionalized communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communicative goals of a disciplinary or social institution, which give rise to stable cultural forms by imposing constraints on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discoursal resources.” In other words, genres, elements of discourse, serve to accomplish *communicative goals* which, in turn, make discursive language use subject to given requirements; the aims and objectives – the ideology – of the lottery community are reproduced as discourse and manifested in the professional genres exploited by the *discourse community*, i.e. the international lottery sector.

In the analysis of the Lottery’s international communication in this paper, we are going to explore the role of different workplace genres (e.g., emails, reports, invitation letters – for a more detailed account of the genres, see the following section) in the Lottery, looking at how they are exploited by the Lottery’s staff in international contexts. On the basis of the results of two questionnaire surveys, we are also going to discuss the link between *generic competence* (i.e. the capacity to exploit genres) and communicative success. *Generic competence* is cited by Bhatia (1999) as one of three prerequisites for successful communication, the other two being *grammatical competence* and *sociolinguistic competence*. He concludes that “Of all three, it is the grammatical competence which seems to be the least problematic for successful communication, in that it is still possible for people to be able to communicate effectively with a relatively

less than desirable grammatical accuracy (Bhatia 1999, p.317).” Further, Bhatia (ibid.) argues that it is especially generic competence, which ensures pragmatic success in communicative tasks embedded within specialized settings. In the lottery context, we could follow Bhatia’s ideas by claiming that to succeed in the various tasks assigned to the employees in the international lottery settings, the Lottery’s employees need to possess generic competence; they should be able to use the various genres of the sector professionally and skilfully. This would be in line with what was suggested above about discourse reproducing ideologies and about the success of lottery communication depending on the discursive reproduction of the lottery ideology.

Analysing lottery discourse and genres: context

The theoretical basis we are thus proposing here is that to succeed in its communicative goal within the international context, the Lottery needs to communicate its ideology to its stakeholders through discursal resources, a significant part of which is the use of professional genres and the way they are exploited to attain the communicative goal. A central concern in discourse and genre analysis is the *situational context* in which the communicative events take place. For example Bhatia (1993), in his seven-step model for genre analysis, cites ‘refining the situational and contextual analysis’ as one of the significant steps of investigation. Weiss and Wodak (2003), see discourse as *social practice*, foregrounding the situational, institutional and social settings that affect discourse and are, in turn, affected by discourse. Context and *context models* are also central in van Dijk’s (1997; 1998) social discourse analysis, where text and talk are defined as *situated*.

In order to explore the status and management of our case organization’s international communication within its other activities, and to focus on the requirements of communicative success from the employee perspective, the following section seeks to find out about the Lottery’s situational context. We chart the communicative events that take place within the Lottery’s international relations, explore the use of the different genres, and investigate the staff’s views of language and communication in general.

We acknowledge that *international* communication at the Lottery is only part of the total organizational and interpersonal communicative endeavours through which the lottery ideology is communicated. As became obvious above, a large part of communication takes place domestically, with the Finnish stakeholders, and in Finnish. In addition, the on-going, rapid changes in communication technology, and the disappearance of all kinds of borders – geographic or other – have made the distinction between domestic vs. international communication somewhat blurred. In this paper, however, our focus is on instances of international communication where the Finnish employees interact with stakeholder representatives of other countries in the English language.

Methodology

Survey data

To explore the situational context, genre repertoire and perceptions of communicative competence at two particular phases of the Lottery's internationalization process, two questionnaire surveys were conducted at two years' intervals. The first survey, carried out in October 2005, was comprehensive, with a total of 50 questions designed to establish the overall context and situation. The questions could be divided into four major categories: 1) basic questions establishing the respondents' background (gender, age, education, years of employment in the Lottery and in the current post); 2) questions relating to the use of foreign languages and various genres at work; 3) questions on the respondents' own perceptions about their language skills and proficiency; and 4) questions aiming to find out about the respondents attitudes towards the notion of language in general.

A follow-up survey was carried out between December 2007 and January 2008. Although the first survey was tested by the pilot group, the results of the actual first survey gave reason to cut down the number of questions to 33. The results of the first survey showed that the degree to which foreign languages other than English were used in the Lottery was marginal. Thus, the second survey focused on the use of English, whereas the questions relating to other foreign languages were omitted. The basic

categorization of the questions into four groups, however, was retained the same as in the first survey.

The surveys were administered by the Lottery's own IT staff, using a questionnaire tool for which the Lottery had acquired a licence. The format was thus previously known to the staff, which made it easier to reply. The questionnaires included both multiple-choice and open questions. The Lottery's Personnel Services helped in planning the timing of the surveys, and the questionnaires were sent to the entire staff. Both questionnaires were provided with accompanying messages from the Lottery's own representatives (Vice President, Strategy and Planning for the first survey, and Development Specialist, Corporate Planning for the second survey), encouraging the staff to answer. The response rates of both surveys were satisfactory, especially considering the strongly domestic background of the Lottery: in 2005, 47% (183 people of a total of 389) of the staff answered, whereas in 2007, 46% (124 out of 301) responded. Actually, in 2007, the questionnaire was sent to a total of 330 employees (the entire staff), but 29 were on job alternation or maternity leaves at the time of the survey and could not therefore be reached.

Findings and discussion

Respondents

The respondents to the 2005 survey represented all the levels of the Lottery's organization, ranging from employees of the Ticket Delivery and Packaging Unit to the operative management. Of the respondents, 51% (52% in 2007) were female and 49% (48% in 2007) male employees. This, in fact, means that men were slightly more eager to participate, their proportion of the entire staff being just 42% in 2005 (45% in 2007). The age distribution of the respondents also approximately corresponded to the overall distribution in the Lottery. However, there was a slight bias towards younger employees; this probably has to do with the fact that the older generation was not engaged in international activities to the same degree as the younger employees and therefore did not, perhaps, feel that the survey concerned them.

The employees to answer the questionnaire were generally well-educated, as many as 67% of them having a college, polytechnic or university background. The most striking difference between the Lottery's actual situation and the respondents was found in the years of employment in the Lottery: while over a half of the personnel had been working for the Lottery for over ten years, such employees represented just 39% of the respondents. In contrast, employees having worked for the Lottery for fewer than five years totalled 45% of the respondents (41% in 2007) (vs. 36% of the entire personnel). This, too, would seem to indicate that the more recently recruited employees felt more concerned about the survey and, thus, about international communication in general than the employees having worked for the Lottery for a longer period. The recent organizational changes were also clearly visible in the results: as many as 71% (66% in 2007) of the respondents reported that they had held the position they had within the Lottery at the time of the survey for 0-5 years. Just fifteen percent (twelve percent in 2007) had been in the same position for over ten years.

Use of English and genre repertoire

The 2005 survey showed, as could be expected, that English is the language of international communication in the Lottery (Figure 1). While just eighteen percent of the respondents said they did not use English at work at all, as many as 65% of the respondents used English at least monthly. Further, 22% of the respondents said they used English at work daily and 20% weekly (i.e. 42% used English regularly; 51% in 2007). Thus, almost half of the respondents were, in fact, dealing with international relations and communication (in English) regularly in their work – bearing in mind the Lottery's domestic background, the share is considerable. The language that was used the second most often was Swedish, which did not, however, attain the degree of usage of English even closely. As for the other two foreign languages covered by the survey (French and German), their use was merely marginal.

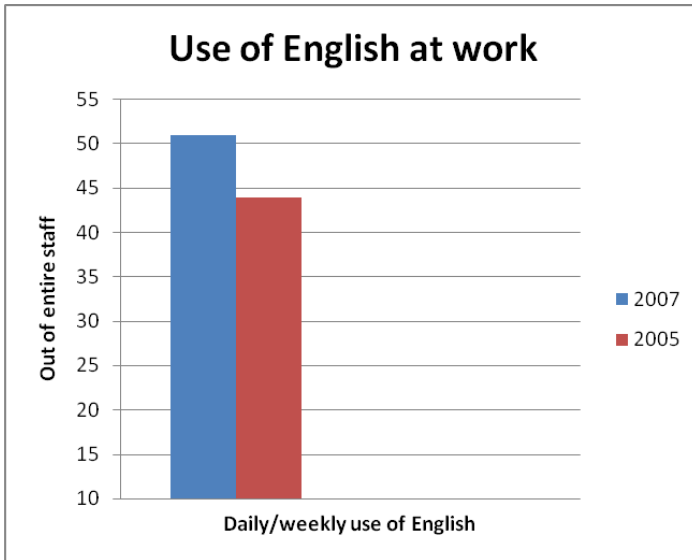


Figure 1. Use of English at work

The dominance of English as the language of international communication and the small shares of other foreign languages used are in line with other studies investigating international communication in Finnish (for-profit) organizations (Louhiala-Salminen 2002; Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta 2005). The 2007 survey confirmed the trend; a further increase had taken place in the use of English for communication during the two years. In 2007, as many as 81% of the respondents reported that they wrote emails in English at work (54% in 2005); 53% regularly, i.e. daily, weekly, or monthly (42% in 2005); see Figure 2.

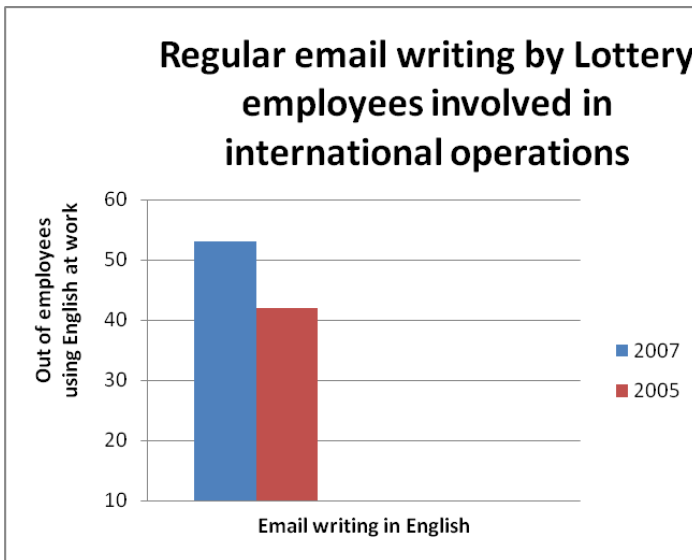


Figure 2. Regular email writing by Lottery employees involved in international operations.

Oral communications had also increased considerably: 81% of the respondents (61% in 2005) had telephone conversations in English, 31% regularly (26% in 2005). Even the face-to-face situations where English was used had increased: 12% of the respondents hosted regular visits by foreign colleagues to the Lottery in English (vs. 8% in 2005). Also, the number of meetings where English was used as a working language (especially with the system supplier) had increased somewhat, with 7% of the respondents citing such meetings among the situations where they used English orally (5% in 2005).

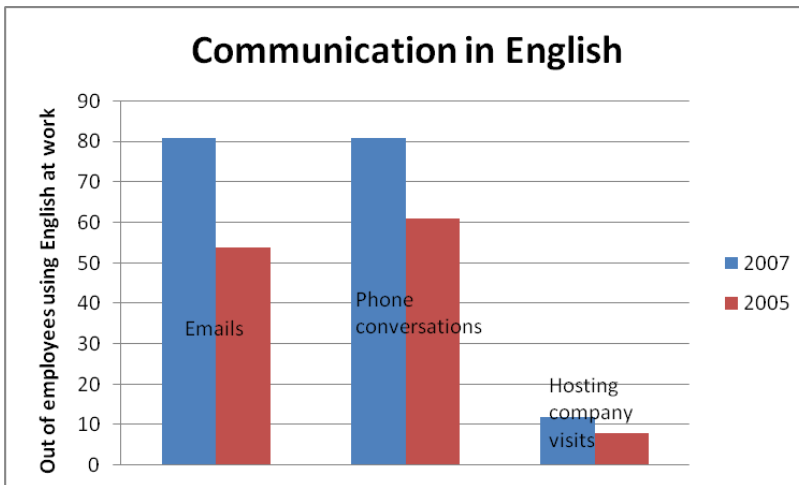


Figure 3. Communication in English by Lottery staff involved in international operations.

The survey results indicated that communications take place more often in written than in spoken form: in 2005, 40% of the respondents said they used English more often in writing than in speech; 21% of them said they used English as often in writing as in speech, whereas just 23% said they used English more often in speech than in writing. The 2007 figures were approximately the same. Emails seemed to be the overwhelmingly most frequent form of written communications. Beyond the ten genres proposed in the survey (i.e. emails, invitations to meetings, enrolment documents in international meetings, communications, meeting agendas, minutes, memoranda, reports, plans, presentations and manuals), the group 'others', elicited by an open question, yielded the following new categories that were repeated in several (at least five) answers (>2% of the respondents): technical or IT documentations, and summaries of news from the lottery world. Among the situations where English was used orally at work, the most frequent were telephone conversations with international colleagues (in 2005, 61% of the respondents; 26% regularly) and answering queries on the phone (in 2005, 49% of the respondents; but just 12% regularly). Face-to-face situations where English was used seemed to be rarer and centred mostly on hosting international visits to the Lottery. Certain (technological) employees (5% of the respondents) also had regular meetings with the game system suppliers, where English was used as the working language (the system supplier being American).

Interestingly, both surveys showed a clear gender distinction in the use of English at work: while in 2005, 45% of the male respondents said they used English daily or weekly, just 24% of women did so. Of the female respondents, 51% said they used English rarely or not at all, whereas the respective figure for men was just 17%. In 2007, while 56% of the male respondents said they wrote emails to foreign colleagues regularly, just 29% of the female respondents did so. Also, the male respondents regularly answered queries on the phone (39% regularly) and talked to foreign colleagues on the phone in English (39% regularly, whereas the corresponding rates for the female respondents were just 18% (phone queries) and 14% (phone conversations). Thus, the distinction found in the 2005 survey was still there, having perhaps grown even clearer. The international relations of the Lottery would seem to be strongly male-dominated. The accuracy of this finding was confirmed by the Lottery's Manager of International Affairs in an interview in October 2009 (personal communication, 18 October 2009). According to her, the employees active in the lottery's international operations were still predominantly men in 2009. She said that the same was even more accurate in the worldwide lottery circles: most lottery executives – i.e. the people who were actively engaged in international lottery cooperation in general – were men, although more and more women executives were gradually entering the field (especially in North America and Eastern Europe). Also, the composition of the Lottery's International Team was in harmony with the survey results: the majority of the International Team's members were men in 2005. However, according to the Manager of International Affairs (personal communication, 18 October 2009), the International Team had already been dissolved by the time the 2007 survey was made: it was considered to no longer serve its purpose, as the Lottery's international function already covered the entire organization, and cooperation with international colleagues had become a natural part of the Lottery's specialist employees' everyday routines.

The writing processes for written international communications in the Lottery were mostly independent: the respondents reported that they wrote the texts most often both on their own initiative and by themselves, without consulting fellow employees. This, of course, varied somewhat according to the genres in question. As could be expected,

emails were written independently most often (in 2005, in 77% of the cases on the writer's own initiative and 75% without asking fellow employees' advice or opinions), whereas the more formal and official documents, such as minutes, plans, and manuals were written more often following the orders or requests from superiors or colleagues, or assigned to the employees in various meetings. They were also more frequently checked by fellow employees. The respondents seemed to consult a language professional or a translator only rarely, but they would rather write their texts directly in English. In 2005, up to 54% of the respondents said they never consulted a translator or another language expert whilst writing texts in English. There had been some change on this point by the 2007 survey, when the respective share was 44%. Further, 70% of the respondents (69% in 2007) said they did most of their writing in English without following ready-made patterns, templates or forms. This could indicate that for those who were actively involved in the Lottery's international communications, English had become a working tool, which was a natural part of their communications with foreign colleagues, where no strict models and rules were needed (cf. Louhiala-Salminen 1999). The single group of texts that was submitted most often to a translator was that of presentations to be given in front of international audiences; as many as 30% of the respondents said they asked a translator to check their presentations. However, even in this group as many as 26% said they wrote their presentations independently from the beginning to the end, without consulting anyone.

Respondents' perceptions about communication, language and competence

To investigate the requirements for communicative success in the Lottery employees' international communication, we also focused on the Lottery staff's conceptions of language and communication. As argued by Fairclough (1992), in the use of a (foreign) language, there is a connection between 'awareness' and 'competence'. Clark et al. (1988; as cited in Fairclough, 1992) drew the following model of language learning:

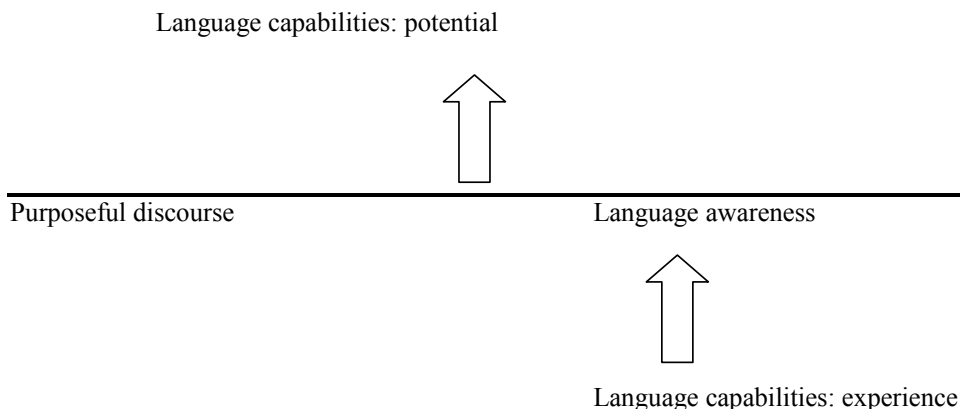


Figure 4: Enablers for language learning (Clark et al. 1988, as cited in Fairclough, 1992, p. 16).

Fairclough (1992) advocates a critical stance to language awareness and argues that critical language awareness should be built from the existing language capabilities and experience of the person communicating. He further argues that the existing body of knowledge (previous experience) can be made explicit and used for discussion and reflection, so that social causes for experiences (e.g. of constraint) can be explored. Critical awareness should, at the same time, be constantly linked to purposeful discourse, to allow the communicator to decide whether to conform or not to conform to the 'rules' of the specific situation.

To chart the employees' previous 'language experience', we first inquired about their perceptions of texts. They were asked to describe, with one word, what they thought a good text was like. As many as 31% of the respondents gave the answer 'clear'; 19% answered 'understandable', and 10% answered 'to the point'. The other answers included adjectives like "interesting", "brief", "fluent" and "easy to read". The major points made thus focused on clarity, comprehensibility, and different structural features. These findings are in line with those of previous studies on official and professional language (cf., e.g. Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, in press; Heikkinen, Hiidenmaa & Tiililä, 2000).

Second, the respondents were asked to rate their English language competence on the scale “cannot speak English at all – poor – adequate – satisfactory – good – excellent”. In 2005, as many as 42% of the respondents said their competence was either good or excellent, whereas just 2% said they could not speak English at all and 11% said they had poor skills in English. By 2007, the share of respondents rating their skills as good and excellent had increased to 46%, whereas the share of those who rated their skills as poor had fallen to 6% (and about 2% still said they could not speak English at all). The gender and time of employment distributions that were found in connection with the questions on involvement in international communication above applied here, too: men regarded their language skills as better than women, and the employees who had worked for the Lottery and in the same position for a shorter period considered their skills better than those who had worked for the Lottery and in the same position for a longer period.

Although most of the international communications were said to take place in writing, a majority of the respondents (67% in 2005; 59% in 2007) said they had better oral than written skills in English. When asked whether they had a better command of the English grammar or vocabulary, the majority (83% in 2005; 74% in 2007) of the respondents opted for vocabulary (cf. Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2007). This was also reflected in the answers to the question of what the respondents found the most difficult whilst writing in English: in 2005, as many as 57% said it was orthographical correctness and grammar – the other options being “layout; choosing the correct tone or style; taking into account the various characteristics of texts or differences between them; taking into account the various characteristics of languages or differences between them; taking into account the readers; and the writing process as a whole”. In the 2007 survey, “orthographical correctness and grammar” was still the most frequent answer to the question of what was the most difficult part of writing, but its share had decreased somewhat, down to 51%. The second most frequent answer in the 2005 survey was “taking into account the various characteristics of languages or differences between them”, which was considered the most difficult by 35% of the respondents. Interestingly, in the 2007 survey, it was only the third most popular option (30% of the answers), whereas the option “choosing the correct tone or style” (38%; as compared with 27% in 2005) was the second most frequent answer. This could perhaps be

interpreted as an indication of a gradual trend towards a new communicative situation where English is seen as a communicative working tool rather than a foreign language, and a shift of focus from the requirement of the knowledge of the code towards a knowledge of genres and the manipulation of generic conventions to achieve different goals (cf. Bhatia,

http://eca.state.gov/education/engteaching/pubs/BR/functionalsec4_10.htm.)

Of course, the fact that more employees rated their English skills as good or excellent in 2007 (see above in this section), also explains the change: having sufficient knowledge of the code, the staff can better reach critical language awareness and focus more easily on matters such as the tone and style – and use the language as a working tool in their everyday professional communication.

When contrasted against the answers to the initial question of what the respondents considered a good text was like, citing the orthographical and grammatical matters as the most difficult part of writing could be regarded as somewhat surprising. None of the respondents had, in fact, answered to the initial question that the core feature of a good text would be grammatical correctness (although it might, of course, be considered part of the overall clarity and comprehensibility).

Many recent studies (see e.g. van Dijk, 1998) have shown that it is through discourse that workplace action is accomplished. Most of the work is, in fact, done through and with talk and text, reading and writing emails and numerous other documents, or speaking about them in various meetings and groups. To test this argument, we asked the survey participants to estimate how much of their working time consists of writing and reading texts in general, and how much of their working time consists of writing and reading texts in English in particular. From the point of view of our preliminary assumption about the significance of discourse, the estimates obtained were strikingly small, especially in the first survey: up to 60% of the respondents said they spent less than 25% of their working time reading texts. However, by the 2007 survey, their share had already fallen to 44%; the majority of the respondents saying that reading texts represented between 25% and 50% of their working time. The question of how much time the employees spent on writing texts showed a similar trend: as many as 58% said

they spent less than 25% of their working time writing texts in 2005, but by 2007, their share had clearly decreased, being 47%. Up to 47% of the respondents in the 2007 survey spent between 25% and 50% of their working time writing (whereas just 36% had done so in 2005). Also, the share of employees saying they spent less than 25% of their working time in meetings and working groups had fallen from 60% in 2005 to 53% in 2007. There was even a very slight change in the answers to the question of how much of their working time the respondents spent discussing language and texts: while in 2005 up to 95% said they spent less than 25% of their time on doing so, the respective percentage was 92% in 2007. These results could be interpreted in at least two ways: first, they would seem to indicate that, even the Lottery is growing into a workplace where the daily work is accomplished through discourse. Second, the results might also indicate, just as the results on the problems of the writing process above – that the Lottery's employees have become more aware of the communicative nature of their everyday work.

The above figures concerned reading and writing in general; now let us look at the figures concerning reading and writing in English. As many as 80% of the respondents said they spent less than 25% of their working time reading English texts in 2005 and 93% said they spent less than 25% writing English texts. In 2007, the respective figures were 69% and 94%. How should these results be interpreted? Above, we saw that English was used at work regularly (daily or weekly) by as many as 44% (51% in 2007) of the employees who used English in their work in general and that 33% (42% in 2007) wrote texts in English regularly (daily or weekly). We also saw that working with the international affairs was distributed rather comprehensively over the entire organization and, according to the Manager of International Affairs, it was on continuous increase. Further, the official communications seem to boast broad-based cooperation with various organizations abroad, including frequent visits from foreign lotteries to the Lottery. We would venture a suggestion that it is here where the employees' critical language awareness is put to test: on the one hand, the writing and reading processes they are faced with every day might be so automatic and, in a sense so unconscious, that

they no longer see them as the work they are doing.⁴ On the other hand, there might exist a perception that action and interaction, the work actually accomplished, is something strictly separate from the language (perhaps especially in the case of a foreign language) which is used to accomplish it (which may be seen as a mere set of grammatical rules and spelling instructions). This has also been reflected in the Lottery's organization chart, where 'Communication' is – as it were – separated from the other activities into its own special unit (which, of, course is a commonplace practice), as well as certain documents related to the Lottery's international activities, where items such as "participating in international seminars and conventions"; "hosting international visits", "benchmarking", have been paralleled with "communication". In other words, communication has often been considered, as it were, an element separate from the "actual work", although, in a more communicative approach (like the one advocated by the "Does Business Know How? project (see Introduction), it could be seen as an all-encompassing umbrella concept under which all the other activities in the list actually belong to and depend on. The foregrounding of grammatical correctness in the answers to the above question of what was found difficult in text production could be interpreted to display the same phenomenon: seeing 'language' as something separate from 'work' and even 'communication'. However, to investigate these perhaps corner-cutting conclusions in detail, a more in-depth study, including respondent interviews and analysis of the Lottery's text flow, would be necessary.

To analyze the respondents' language awareness and attitudes further, we asked them to evaluate seven pairs of statements, from each of which the respondents were asked to choose the statement that best described the way they experienced writing in English at work. It was interesting to note, e.g., that as many as 87% (83% in 2007) of the respondents regarded writing in English as 'fun', rather than 'dull'; 80% (82% in 2007) regarded it as 'free' rather than 'controlled'; and 63% (65% in 2007) regarded it as 'creative' rather than 'norm-bound'. Out of the pair 'difficult' – 'easy', 51% (36% in 2007) opted for 'difficult' and 49% 'easy'; 55% thought writing was 'painstaking'

⁴ Similar findings have been made in previous research into workplace language, e.g., the study carried out in Stora Enso, where some of the respondents answered a similar question by explaining that instead of using their working time for reading, writing, and meetings, they used it for 'arbete', i.e. 'work' (Louhiala-Salminen, 2002).

rather than ‘effortless’; and 65% said their writing processes were ‘slow’ rather than ‘fast’. In sum, it would seem that the Lottery’s staff felt motivated and at ease whilst writing in English, although they did not always experience it as an easy task. Writing without prefixed patterns and norms seemed to add to the fun of the writing processes. We would suggest that the overall positive tone in the answers to this set of questions had to do with the fact that in 2005 international communication was still a fairly new phenomenon in the Lottery. This could also explain the lack of patterns and writing instructions. It could also be possible that the writing in English had, in fact, become such a natural working tool in the international connections (as was suggested above) that it did not require checking one’s texts against ready-made patterns. Further, the new media (email communication, the Internet) probably also had an effect on the staff’s attitudes, allowing freer, less formal and less normative communication.

Conclusion

In the present article we have looked at communication processes, practices and perceptions in an organization that has recently started its internationalization process. The setting differs from previous studies focusing on communication in the context of internationalization where the aim of the organization is usually to expand the operations across borders and thus be better equipped for global competition. Our study explores language use and international communication in a situation where internationalization means primarily collaboration with actors from other countries against more internationalization of the business. The findings show that in the present-day, globally operating business environment, it is possible for an old, domestic, traditional organization to develop distinctive awareness and an ability to combine the old ideological basis with the new communicative requirements of the increasingly international setting.

In spite of the different goal for internationalization – the defensive purpose – the everyday communicative practices in our case organization seem to be similar to what other studies have shown from companies involved in international operations (see e.g. Louhiala-Salminen et al, 2005; Rogerson-Revell, 2007, Kankaanranta & Louhiala-

Salminen, 2007). However, one further interpretation would seem to emerge from these results: seeing ideology as *the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group* (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 8), it is of utmost importance that the members of the group whose task it is to communicate the ideology have a positive attitude towards the task and share the set of values they are supposed to convey. The Lottery's employees rated the various tasks and aspects involved in international communication as fun, free and creative. The fact that the writing processes in the Lottery proved to be rather independent, and the employees most often wrote their emails on their own behalf could also be interpreted to reflect a free and motivated overall stance towards international communication. In fact, we would dare to suggest that this is why the lottery has managed communication successfully even in the new international environment: the old seemingly rigid structures, and the family-like workplace setting of the old days, may not be an altogether negative basis to build the process of internationalization on, especially defensive internationalization (see above). The old basis may even constitute the necessary prerequisites for the staff's sense of solidarity and pursuit of a common goal, and it may promote working for the Lottery's objectives in a family-like Lottery spirit - perhaps even in the spirit of the wider worldwide lottery community. Measured against the Lottery's values: - working for the common good, reliably, responsibly, and creatively - it would seem that the results of our survey are well in line with the company's objectives. According to the Lottery's annual reports, the Lottery has, in fact, focused on the communication of the business strategy and the improvement of work enjoyment for the past few years. A staff survey made in 2007 showed that the Lottery's staff felt their tasks and job descriptions were better in line with the company's overall business strategy than before.

In sum, it would seem that the extremely rapid process of internationalization and the communication of the lottery ideology have been managed well by engaging, as we have seen, more and more staff in the international activities and reducing the old rigid and bureaucratic patterns through well-planned organizational changes, yet building on the well tried and tested old lottery traditions of working for the good causes, and in compliance with the principles of social responsibility. While CSR is a fairly newly introduced concept in ordinary business around the world, it has constituted the

backbone of state lotteries' operations and, thus, state lottery communication for decades. It is this set of values – this ideology – that the Lottery must be able to preserve and communicate in order to achieve communicative success.

On the basis of our findings, it definitely seems that the Lottery has managed to choose the right path to a successful process of (defensive) internationalization and communicative success. However, this survey study has to be regarded as the first step into a more in-depth analysis of communicating the ideology of national gaming organizations. Future studies need to investigate the particular genres used and the entire genre repertoire. For this purpose, it is necessary to study text and talk in detail and, through interviews and observation, let even the voice of the communicators be heard.

References

- Bhatia, V. (1993). *Analysing Genre: Language Use in Professional Settings*. London and New York: Longman.
- Bhatia, V. (1999). Integrating products, processes, purposes and participants in professional writing. In *Writing: Texts, Processes and Practices*. Edited by Christopher N. Candlin and Ken Hyland. London, Longman, pp. 21-39.
- Bhatia, V. (2004). *Worlds of Written Discourse - a Genre-based View*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Bhatia, V., (n.d.) What Research Tells Us/ Applied Genre Analysis and ESP.
Retrieved October 17, 2009 from
http://eca.state.gov/education/engteaching/pubs/BR/functionalsec4_10.htm
- Charles, M. (2007). Language matters in global communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44(3), pp. 260-282.

- Fairclough, N. (Ed.) (1992). *Critical Language Awareness*. London and New York: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Boston: Addison Wesley.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analyzing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*. London: Routledge
- Heikkinen, V., Hiidenmaa, P., Tiililä, U. (2000). *Teksti työnä, virka kielenä*. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- Kankaanranta, A. & Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2007). Focus on teaching: Business Communication in BELF. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 70(1): 55-59.
- Kankaanranta, A. & Louhiala-Salminen, L. (in press). "English? – Oh, it's just work!": A study of BELF users' perceptions. *English for Specific Purposes*.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. (1999). *From Business Correspondence to Message Exchange: The Notion of Genre in Business Communication*. Overview of PhD Dissertation. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, Centre for applied language studies.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2002). *Communication and language use in merged corporations: Cases Stora Enso and Nordea*, Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics Working Papers W-330.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., Charles, M. & Kankaanranta, A. (2005). English as a lingua franca in Nordic corporate mergers: Two case companies, *English for Specific Purposes. Special issue: English as a lingua franca international business contexts*, C. Nickerson (ed.), 24(4): 401-421
- van Dijk Teun (2004). Discourse, knowledge and ideology. In Martin Pütz, JoAnne Neff & Teun A. van Dijk (Eds.), *Communicating Ideologies. Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Language, Discourse and Social Practice*. (pp. 5-38). Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang.
- van Dijk, Teun (1998). *Ideology*. London: Sage.
- van Dijk, Teun (Ed.). (1997). *Discourse as Social Interaction..* London: Sage.

- Weiss, G. & Wodak, R. (Ed.). (2003). *Critical Discourse Analysis. Theory and Interdisciplinarity*. London: Palgrave/MacMillan
- Rogerson-Revell, P. (2007) Using English for International Business: a European case study. *English for Specific Purposes* 26, 1, 103-120.
- Varttala, T. & Vesala-Varttala, T. (2008) English as the Corporate Lingua Franca – Challenges for Finnish BBA Education. Paper presented at the ELF Forum, 6-8 March 2008. University of Helsinki.

A REVIEW OF THEORY OF RAPPORT MANAGEMENT

Yeonkwon Jung

Associate Professor

School of English Language and Communication

Kansai Gaidai University, Japan

yeonkwon@hotmail.com

Abstract

This paper overviews the theory of rapport management as a framework for the analysis of language use. It proposes an important function for rapport management in the research work on politeness with particular reference to its broader scope than facework. Two additional components in rapport management, sociality rights and obligations, and interactional goals, are expected to explain some exceptional politeness phenomena counter to major research work on strategic politeness. Given the relative and relational nature of (im)politeness, this paper will claim that subsequent discourse is of importance in politeness studies. Besides the perceptual or judgmental issue of rapport management, the paper will also provide a preliminary idea for creating a model of rapport management to deal with its management process.

Key Words: rapport management; (im)politeness; relational work; subsequent discourse; components of rapport

Introduction

In the last few decades, Brown and Levinson's (1987) seminal work on politeness has served as the cure-all function to politeness phenomena. Brown and Levinson's (1987) face model of politeness focuses on individual identity. They claim that face is the key motivating force for politeness. It is composed of two aspects, negative face and positive face. Negative face is a want not to be impeded by others and positive face is a want to be desired or approved of by others.

However, this conceptualization of face has been challenged by some East Asian scholars (Matsumoto 1988; Ide 1989; Mao 1994) because Brown & Levinson (1987) are not much concerned about social identity, which is highly appreciated in East Asia. Matsumoto (1988) and Gu (1990) argue that face in Eastern cultures is not a matter of autonomy or imposition but rather a matter of harmony and disharmony. This argument proposes that we need a more balanced or integrated framework between negative and positive face wants. On the other hand, Brown & Levinson's framework has been challenged by approaches that highlight social norms and the evaluative character of judgments on politeness (Watts 2003; Locher and Watts 2005). This argument proposes that politeness should be seen as *reciprocal* or *relational* work.

Given these arguments, this paper also challenges Brown and Levinson's absolute or automatic approach to politeness that certain illocutionary acts, such as requests, offering, giving advice and compliments, are inherently face-threatening acts, so that people must choose appropriate linguistic strategies to lessen their face-threats to the opposite party and thus be polite. This challenge is motivated from the following interview data collected for a communication project, titled "Does Business Know How?" (see Charles, 2007), coordinated by the Helsinki School of Economics (<http://www.aka.fi/Liike2>).

"Korean employees are direct. Whenever they need, they call us to discuss business

matters. And they always double-check on each stage of a business job. Phone calls might be disturbing our job. However, to make a clear each stage of a job can make business more successful at last, because it minimizes miscommunication between the two.” [Interview with a manager in a Finnish-based business organization]

This interview implies that perception of politeness can be interpreted differently by people from different cultures. It suggests us that we need something more than Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness to explain the subject’s perception of *(im)politeness*. This study claims that no linguistic structure is inherently polite or impolite (Fraser and Nolan 1981), because politeness needs to be judged or evaluated depending on contexts or components. This claim becomes a strong motivation to have a particular interest in Spencer-Oatey’s (2005; 2008) theory of rapport management for politeness studies.

This paper overviews the theory of rapport management as a framework for the analysis of language use. It proposes an important function for rapport management in the research work on politeness with particular reference to its broader scope than facework. Two components in rapport management, sociality rights and obligations, and interactional goals, are expected to explain some exceptional politeness phenomena counter to major research work on strategic politeness (Lakoff 1973, Leech 1983, and Brown & Levinson 1987). Their “absolute” or “automatic” approach to politeness is relevant to a self-oriented perspective. Social appropriateness, however, is also related to hearer-orientation in that the hearer’s expectations about politeness need to be met for communication success. Furthermore, since face entails claims on the evaluations of others, it needs to be analyzed as an interactional phenomenon (Spencer-Oatey 2007). In this respect, this paper will claim that subsequent discourse is of importance in

politeness studies. Besides discussing the *perceptual* or *judgmental* issue of rapport management, it will also provide a preliminary idea for creating a model of rapport management to deal with its *management process*.

The paper is organized in the following way. After reviewing the theory of rapport management (three components of rapport, in particular), it suggests further implications for future research, including the provision of a possible model of rapport management process. First let us provide a description of rapport management.

Rapport management

Rapport management is related to one of the key functions of all languages, the management of social relations (i.e. the relative harmony and smoothness of relations between people.). It is related to harmonious/conflictual interpersonal relations. That is, rapport management is the management of harmony-disharmony between people in interaction. It is important to note that rapport management not only focuses on the negotiation of harmonious relations. Spencer-Oatey (2005) uses the term (im)politeness as an umbrella term for all kinds of lexemes indexing evaluative meaning with positive, negative or neutral connotations. This claim may also go along well with relational work (Locher 2004; Locher and Watts 2005), in that it does not only refer to linguistic politeness, but is meant to cover the entire spectrum of interpersonal linguistic behavior. Face management and rapport management have something in common, but are also different. Rapport management focuses on interpersonal relations rather than the individual performing facework. Face focuses on concerns for self,

whereas rapport management emphasizes interrelationship in terms of a balance between self and other. Therefore, it is essential that people need a balance between their own conditions and their interlocutor's face condition, for successful rapport management.

Also the scope of rapport management is broader. It comprises three components: the management of face; the management of sociality rights and obligations; the management of interactional goals (see figure 1 adapted from Spencer-Oatey (2008: 14)).

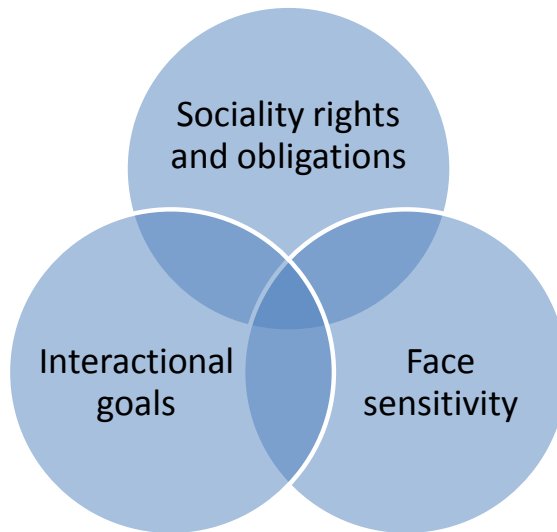


Figure 1. Bases of rapport

A modification from an original figure has been made on the placement of sociality rights and obligations of the figure. This is because while Spencer-Oatey (2005) stresses that all three components influence judgments on rapport management, she claims that sociality rights and obligations primarily based on behavioral expectancies affect the judgment of rapport the most. The other two elements, face sensitivity and interactional goals, are at the basis of judgments on rapport management more generally.

The key to the theory of rapport management is concerned with how people *perceive* and *judge* rapport. People make dynamic judgments about whether their rapport has been enhanced, maintained, or damaged between their interactions, based on these three components. Therefore, Spencer-Oatey maintains that a pre-requisite for maintaining positive rapport is for the participants to perceive and be sensitive to the components

that they each make. Relational conflict emerges if the participants' expectations over each of the components are not properly handled. Interpersonal intent or motivation about rapport makes people hold different types of rapport orientations towards each other as follows (Spencer-Oatey 2005: 96):

1. Rapport enhancement orientation: people want to improve the harmony or rapport of the relationship.
2. Rapport maintenance orientation: people want to keep the current level of rapport.
3. Rapport neglect orientation: people have little or a lack of concern for the quality of relationship. This sometimes happens in a transactional-situation.
4. Rapport challenge orientation: people want to challenge or impair the harmony of the relationship.

When people hold a rapport enhancement orientation, they want to enhance the harmony of the relationship. When people hold a rapport-maintenance orientation, they want to maintain the current quality or level of relationship or rapport in order to minimize face threats. When people hold a rapport-neglect orientation, they have little or no concern for the quality of relationship between interlocutors. This may happen when their attention is focused on transactional (i.e. task-oriented) matters, or more on their own face sensitivities, sociality rights and obligations, and/or interactional goals. When people hold a rapport-challenge orientation, they want to challenge the harmony of the relationship. Obviously, it worsens the rapport between interlocutors.

Face and face sensitivity

Face is concerned with people's sense of worth, dignity, honor, reputation, respect, competence and so forth (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi 1998). Goffman (1967: 5) defines face as the positive social value a person effectively claims during a particular contact and an image of self delineated by specific social attributes. The management of face is the management of face sensitivity. Face sensitivity is most frequently affected by the positive social values that people associate with their various self-aspects. In other words, people claim face for various self-aspects and the details of their face claims and its sensitivities will depend on the specific interactional context.

Spencer-Oatey (2005: 103) conceptualizes identity face for Goffman's face. Identity face is situation-specific face sensitivity so that it is saved or lost in specific interactional encounters. She maintains that claims for identity face depend on social values in that they are involved with various self-aspects. She links the linguistic analysis with work on self-aspects and positive social values carried out in social psychology (Schwartz 1992). Psychological theories of identity distinguish between individual and collective identities. Individual identity refers to self-definition as a unique individual, whereas collective identity refers to self-definition as a group member. Following this claim, Spencer-Oatey (2005: 99) develops the aspects of identity into two superordinate principles: the equity principle and the association principle.

The equity principle is a value that people are entitled to personal consideration from

others and to be treated equally. This principle helps to uphold people's individual construals of self. It has two components: cost-benefit considerations (the principle that people should not be disadvantaged and the belief that costs and benefits should be kept in reciprocal balance) and autonomy-imposition (the belief that people should not be imposed on).

In contrast, the association principle is a value that people are entitled to an association with others. It has three components: involvement (the principle that people have involvement with others), empathy (the belief that people should share appropriate concerns and feelings with others), and respect (the belief that people should show proper amounts of respectfulness for others). This classification supports Lim and Bowers' (1991) extension of Brown and Levinson's concept of positive face. According to them, positive face compounds two different human face needs: the need to be included and the need to be respected. Therefore, they distinguish between three types of human face needs: the want to be included or *fellowship face*, the want that one's abilities are respected or *competence face*, and the want not to be imposed on or *autonomy face*.

An independent self-construal and a collective self-construal are independently distinctive in different communicative situations. However, the two are very much interconnected; Scollon & Scollon (2001) claim that both of the aspects are intrinsic to face, and an appropriate balance between the two needs is to be made or maintained. Therefore, identity needs to be regarded as incorporating individual construals of the self and collective construals of the self (Markus & Kitayama 1991; Ting-Toomey &

Kurogi 1998).

Now let us move on to the underlying conceptions of sociality rights and obligations, which provide insights into why people experience face threats.

Sociality rights and obligations

People's judgments on behavior appropriateness are based fundamentally on their expectations. People tend to develop social or behavioral expectations with their perceived sociality rights and obligations. In this respect, social rights and obligations involve the management of social or behavioral expectancies. Spencer-Oatey (2008: 13, emphasis in the original) defines social expectancies as "fundamental social *entitlement* that a person effectively claims for him/herself in his/her interactions with others". Unless the social or behavior expectations are fulfilled, interactional rapport can be affected. That is, if the other's behavior negatively violates the party's expectations, it sparks negative emotional responses and a behavioral response. When people threaten our sociality rights and obligations, they disturb our sense of social entitlement.

The participants' behavioral conventions and expectations are very much often derived from normative behavior. Normative behaviors are unmarked behaviors in a given society and they have a social indexing function (Watts 2003). They are typically contextually based and vary according to a wide range of contextual variables. Local people in the society use the behaviors to decide which behavior is allowable or which one is not. Out-group members are unlikely to know such behavioral knowledge as

normative behaviors. Accordingly, these sociality rights and obligations become a standard to make a clear distinction between in-group and out-group members in a given society. Spencer-Oatey (2005: 97) makes a distinction between 'prescribed behavior' and 'proscribed behavior' in order to explain people's norms or values about behaviors. Prescribed behavior is behavior that people are obliged to produce because it is a legal or social obligation. In contrast, proscribed behavior is behavior that is prohibited legally or socially. Watts (2003) and Kasper (1990) respectively use the labels 'non-politic'/'impolite' and 'rude' for the omission of prescribed behavior and the pursuit of proscribed behavior. Besides prescribed and proscribed behaviors, there is a neutral behavior named 'permitted behavior', behavior that is allowed but not obligatory. Despite its non-obligatory feature, some permitted behavior is expected to be produced obligatorily. Otherwise, it is regarded as 'negatively eventful (Goffman 1967), impolite, or rude.

Consequently, the key to understanding face enhancing/threatening is to be primarily aware of the participants' behavioral conventions and expectations derived from cultural norms. Cultural differences can affect how local people manage rapport during interaction. Spencer-Oatey (2008: 43) claims that cultural differences occur in all aspects of rapport management. Some of the aspects are 'contextual assessment norms', 'sociopragmatic principles', and 'pragmalinguistic conventions'.

Contextual assessment norms mean that people may assess contextual factors (e.g. power; distance) differently from culture to culture. For example, when assessing a role relationship such as employer-employee, people from different cultural groups may

have different expectations regarding the typical degree of power and distance, and/or rights and obligations associated with the role relationships.

Sociopragmatic principles mean that people from different cultures may apply different principles for rapport management in given contexts. For example, modesty is concerned with self-effacement, and people often develop strong views as to whether people should be self-effacing in given contexts.

Pragmalinguistic conventions mean that people from different cultures may have different conventions for choosing strategies and interpreting their use in given contexts. For example, two cultural groups may agree that a disagreement is necessary in given contexts, but have different conventions for making it.

Interactional goals

People have goals during communicative interaction, and the goals can affect rapport management judgments. Interactional goals are goals in interaction that participants may have (i.e. transactional and/or relational). Although a distinction can be made between transactional (i.e. task-oriented) and relational goals (Brown and Yule 1983), these two types of goals are interconnected. This is because transactional goals can be achieved based on the proper management of relational goals. Since any failure to achieve the goals can cause annoyance or anger, people can efficiently affect the perception of rapport. In particular, when people fail to pursue our relational goals, we are very likely to be annoyed by them. Of course, an exception can be made. If a transactional goal is urgent and highly important, people make allowances

for behavior that is perceived to be inappropriate in normal circumstances. Furthermore, a violation of expectations can rather be a case to achieve relational and/or transactional goals, so that it becomes face-enhancing. There are times when a face-threat can be appropriate (Terkourafi 2008). That is, unmarked rudeness may be acceptable depending on the case. ‘Mock impoliteness’ (Culpeper 1996) or ‘sanctioned aggressive facework’ (Watts 2003) refers to “impolite behaviours that are not truly impolite but reflect the shared knowledge and values of group, and which have the effect and intention of reinforcing solidarity among group members” (Schnurr, Meredith & Holmes 2008: 212). In this relative aspect of politeness and impoliteness, politeness theory needs to incorporate impoliteness (Culpeper 1996, 2005).

Discussion

This paper overviews the theory of rapport management as a framework for the analysis of language use. It includes further implications.

First, face is something that people claim for themselves, and face-threat or face-enhancement occurs when no balance is made between an attribute claimed and an attribute perceived as being ascribed by others. During interaction, people dynamically decide how to manage and assess conditions and reactions verbally and nonverbally. For the proper perception or judgment of politeness, therefore, ‘post–event comments’ (e.g. subsequent discourse) are both important and enlightening (Culpeper 2005; Spencer-Oatey 2007). In other words, defining face-threatening as a perlocutionary effect is of importance. Since rapport management (i.e. rapport-threat or

rapport-enhancement) is highly subjective in evaluations, people's interpretations of speech acts tend to be varied. For example, requests are inherently perceived as face-threatening. However, not all requests threaten our sense of equity rights (our entitlement to considerate treatment). They are not necessarily face-threatening from the perspective of rapport management. That is, if someone requests us something, we feel interrupted or imposed on. On different occasions, however, we may feel honored if someone asks us for help, because it shows interest or trust in our work abilities and thereby the recognition of close intimacy. Therefore, requests can be *giving* face behaviors and therefore they enhance rapport. This claim on post-event comments gives us fruitful insights on *relational* aspects of face, which is the key to the theory of rapport management. It also suggests us which type of data we need for politeness studies (Spencer-Oatey 2007).

Second, Spencer-Oatey has a particular interest in the *perceptions* and *judgments* of rapport management, not the process. However, as Watts (2003: 160, emphasis original) maintains, a social model of politeness needs to

“offer ways in which we as researchers can show when and perhaps why individual users of language in socio-communicative verbal interaction *classify* utterances as polite”

and it must allow us to

“account for why individuals agree or disagree on what is and what is not ‘(im)polite’ language.”

The remark to some extent suggests that besides perceptions and judgments of rapport, we also need to deal with its management process by creating a model of rapport management. Let me expand this argument.

Conflict management is one of two key aspects of rapport management. The key to effective conflict management is to achieve the benefits of *differentiation* (e.g. clear understanding of differences, acceptance of other's positions as 'legitimate', interpreting behavior in terms of its causes) and to make a transition to *integration* (Fisher & Ury 1981; Pruitt & Carnevale 1993). Therefore, benefits tend to play an important role in creating rapport. A differentiation phase precedes an integration phase. In *differentiation*, parties raise conflict issues and spend time and energy clarifying positions, pursuing the reasons behind the positions, and acknowledging their differences. The process of (positive) acknowledgment of their differences (i.e. *negotiation*, *concession*, or *compromise*) is of crucial importance to make a process to integration. And then parties begin to acknowledge common ground and move to solutions (i.e. rapport-enhancement/maintenance). Otherwise, inflexibility, developing into conflict escalation or avoidance (i.e. rapport-threat: rapport neglect or challenge), begins (see figure 2).

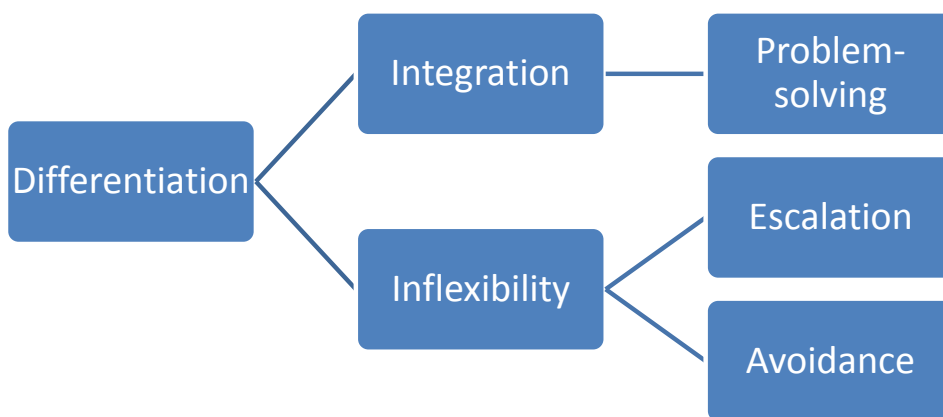


Figure 2. Two-phase model of conflict management

This two-phase model of conflict management seems useful in creating a model of rapport management to show how people manage rapport. Components concerning what counts as integration and inflexibility (i.e. face sensitivities; sociality rights and obligations; interactional goals) are negotiated among the working groups who form distinct communities of practice (Schnurr, Meredith & Holmes 2008).

Third, much cross-cultural pragmatic research is needed to focus on identifying the pragmalinguistic norms associated with the performance of different speech acts in different language/cultural groups, and to determine the extent to which the rapport management issues that occur in authentic interactions can be explained with reference to three key components of rapport (Spencer-Oatey 2005). For example, workplaces typically develop their own distinctive ways of expressing (im)politeness, and members of different workplaces tend to differ substantially in the ways in which they do

politeness, as well as the ways in which they are impolite.

On the other hand, research needs to be conducted across a wide range of domains for a rich understanding of rapport management. Different domains make different interpretations between face-threatening acts and speech acts in Brown & Levinson's (1987) politeness theory and rapport management (Spencer-Oatey 2008). As Brown & Levinson's model deals solely with 'illocutionary politeness', a substantial amount of research work on politeness has mainly focused on the illocutionary domain (the rapport-threatening and rapport-enhancing implications of performing speech acts). However, Spencer-Oatey & Xing (2004) discuss politeness far beyond the domain of illocutionary politeness. They suggest that all the following interrelated domains play crucial roles in the management of rapport.

1. Discourse domain: This domain concerns the discourse content and discourse structure of an interchange (e.g. topic choice and topic management; the organization and sequencing of information).
2. Participation domain: This domain concerns the procedural aspects of an interchange (e.g. turn-taking; the inclusion/exclusion of people present; the (non-)use of listener responses).
3. Stylistic domain: This domain concerns the stylistic aspects of an interchange (e.g. choice of tone; choice of genre-appropriate syntax and choice of genre-appropriate terms of address or use of honorifics)
4. Non-verbal domain: This domain concerns the non-verbal aspects of an interchange (e.g. body movements).

For example, within the discourse domain, phatic talk in the opening and closing sections of telephone conversations can be investigated. Korean speakers use a greater amount of phatic talk than Finns do. In Korean-Finnish telephone conversations, therefore, the use of phatic talk can lead to negative evaluations of the other speaker. Also within the participation domain, turn-taking across cultures can be examined. Overlaps and the frequencies with which each interlocutor attempts to take a turn can be focused on.

Concluding remarks

Politeness phenomena are complex and they need to be studied from multiple perspectives, which incorporate the numerous components included in the theory of rapport management. As argued in the rapport management framework, the components will clarify the relational feature of politeness.

References

- Brown, P. and S. Levinson. (1987). *Politeness: some universals in language use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, G. and G. Yule. (1983) *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Charles, M. (2007) Language matters in global communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44(3), pp. 260-282.
- Culpeper, J. (1996) Towards an anatomy of impoliteness. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 25(3), pp. 349-367.
- Culpeper, J. (2005) Impoliteness and *The Weakest Link*. *Journal of Politeness Research*, 1(1), pp. 35-72.
- Fisher, R. and W. Ury. (1981) *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Fraser, B. and W. Nolan. (1981) The association of deference with linguistic form. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 27(2), pp. 93-109.
- Goffman, E. (1967) *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Gu, Y. (1990) Politeness phenomena in modern Chinese. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14, pp. 237-257.
- Ide, S. (1989) Formal forms and discernment: two neglected aspects of universals of linguistic politeness. *Multilingua*, 8(2/3), pp. 223-248.
- Kasper, G. (1990) Linguistic politeness: Current research issue. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14(2), pp. 193-218.

- Lakoff, R. (1973) The logic of politeness, or minding your p's and q's. *Chicago Linguistics Society*, 9, pp. 292-305.
- Leech, G. (1983) *Principles of Pragmatics*. New York: Longman.
- Lim, T-S. and J. W. Bowers. (1991) Facework, Solidarity, approbation and tact. *Human Communication Research*, 17(3), pp. 415-450.
- Locher, M. (2004) *Power and Politeness in Action: Disagreements in Oral Communication*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Locher, M. and R. Watts (2005) Politeness theory and relational work. *Journal of Politeness Research*, 1(1), pp. 9-33.
- Mao, L.R. (1994) Beyond politeness theory: 'face' revisited and renewed. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 21, pp. 451-486.
- Markus, H.R. and S. Kitayama. (1991) Culture and the self: implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98, pp. 224-253.
- Matsumoto, Y. (1988) Reexamination of the universality of face: politeness phenomena in Japanese. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 12(4), pp. 403-426.
- Pruitt, D.G. and P.J. Carnevale. (1993) *Negotiation in social conflict*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Schnurr, S., M. Meredith., and J. Holmes. (2008) Impoliteness as a means of contesting power relations in the workplace. In D. Bousfield and M. Locher (eds). *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*. (pp. 211-229). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Scollon, R. & S. Scollon. (2001). *Intercultural communication: A Discourse Approach* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. (2005) (Im)politeness, face and perceptions of rapport: Unpackaging

- their bases and interrelationships. *Journal of Politeness Research*, 1(1), pp. 95-119.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. (2007) Theories of identity and the analysis of face. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39, pp. 639-656.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. (2008) Face, (Im)politeness and Rapport. In H. Spencer-Oatey (ed.), *Culturally Speaking: Culture, Communication and Politeness Theory* (2nd ed.), (pp. 11-47). London: Continuum.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. and J. Xing (2004) Rapport management problems in Chinese-British business interactions: a case study. In J. House and J. Rehbein (eds.) *Multilingual Communication* (pp. 197-221). Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Terkourafi, M. (2008) Toward a unified theory of politeness, impoliteness, and rudeness. In D. Bousfield and M. Locher (eds). *Impoliteness in Language: Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice*. (pp. 45-74). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Ting-Toomey, S. and A. Kurogi, (1998) Facework competence in intercultural conflict; an updated face-negotiation theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 22(2), pp. 187-225.
- Watts, R. (2003) *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

ELECTRONIC COMMERCE – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Päivö Laine

Head of Programme in International Business Management
Seinäjäski University of Applied Sciences, Finland

paivo.laine@seamk.fi

Abstract

Electronic commerce, more specifically business-to-consumer e-commerce, is increasing its popularity alongside with more developed online shopping facilities and faster connections. Electronic stores have adopted fairly established structures, but to be able to meet the challenges of competition they need to focus on marketing communication and learn to make use of the latest trends in online communication, such as the proliferation of social media. Hypertextuality, virtuality and use of multimedia are key features in web communication, and interaction between e-store and web user is a basic element in online shopping. E-commerce websites are virtual stores constructed on the web, and in the most genuine form of e-commerce the merchandise is also virtual. The hypertextual structure of the web provides a nonlinear framework for electronic stores and allows users to choose their paths through the website. Web-based tools offer buyers and sellers a much wider range of opportunities for interaction than traditional media. Cost-effective access to the international marketplace provides an opportunity for businesses of all sizes to go international, but at the same time knowledge of varying communicative behaviours and consideration of intercultural differences is required.

Key words: computer-mediated communication, electronic commerce, interactivity, hypertext, website design

Emergence of electronic commerce and online shopping

The fast development of communication technology has affected commerce and retail business providing new ways of conveying both product information and merchandise from sellers to buyers. *Electronic commerce* or *e-commerce* refers to the process of buying, selling or exchanging products, services and information via computer networks, primarily on the internet (Turban & King 2003, p. 3). The term *electronic business* or *e-business* is usually seen to encompass in a broad sense all internal processes of a business and communication and contacts with its interest groups. The terms e-commerce and e-business are often used interchangeably and in this paper e-commerce is used covering all aspects of online business, not only the completion of a business transaction between business partners.

Even if electronic commerce has not revolutionised our shopping behaviours as dramatically as was expected in the wildest forecasts ten or fifteen years ago, the internet plays a vital role in today's business transactions. This is not only true for business-to-business trade but also for everyday consumer trade. In a number of lines of business, such as travel and tourism or admission ticket bookings for theatre performances, concerts and sports events, online purchasing is an especially popular way of shopping. According to Statistics Finland, in spring 2008 60 % of all customers in the travel business had made purchases online, and 47 % of all admission ticket buyers had made reservations online (Tilastokeskus 2008). In 2009, the third most important use (after email and personal banking) of the internet among Finnish internet users was looking for information about goods and services with 86 % of all internet users, while 37 % of the users had used the Internet to make purchases online (Tilastokeskus 2009). U.S. statistics for 2007 show an annual growth of 18.4 per cent in business-to-consumer e-commerce. However, the share of e-commerce sales of total retail sales was as modest as 3.2 per cent (U.S. Census Bureau 2009). Young people seem to be the most active online shoppers. For example, in Europe in 2007 the percentage of individuals who had ordered goods or services online was significantly higher in the age group of 16 to 24-year olds than the average percentage in all age groups (European Commission, Eurostat 2007).

Types and structure of electronic stores

Electronic commerce is often categorised by the nature of the transaction or the relationship among participants (Turban & King 2003, p. 7). The most commonly used categorisations are (1) business-to-business e-commerce where all participants are businesses or other organisations, (2) business-to-consumer e-commerce which includes retailing from businesses to individual shoppers and (3) consumer-to-consumer e-commerce where consumers sell directly to other consumers. In volume, most e-commerce is business-to-business e-commerce (93 percent in the U.S. in 2007 according to U.S. Census Bureau), which is often automated to a high degree. The focus of this discussion is on business-to-consumer e-commerce, which corresponds to traditional retailing.

E-commerce can also be categorised on the basis of the degree of digitisation. Turban and King (2003, p. 4) point out that digitisation may concern (1) the product or service sold, (2) the shopping process and/or (3) the delivery agent. In traditional commerce all three dimensions are physical while electronic commerce in its purest forms manifests a digital implementation of all aspects. For example, buying an e-book on Amazon.com is an example of pure electronic commerce because the product, process and delivery agent are all digital.

The website of the company providing sales over the internet constitutes the online electronic store. In fact, online business consists of many other communicative elements in addition to the e-store website itself. Before the customer enters the e-store, he/she must have the information necessary for finding the website and willingness to go there. It is essential for a company to appear high on the hit list of search engines. It is also important to include the company URL in all advertising irrespective of the medium. Electronic information can be provided on the general web pages of the company. Banner advertising on the internet is another important way of attracting customers to e-store pages.

The basic structure of e-commerce websites is quite established and has not changed much during the last few years. In a study (Laine 2004), based on the analysis of a

number of British, American and Finnish electronic stores, the basic structure shown in Figure 1 could be identified.

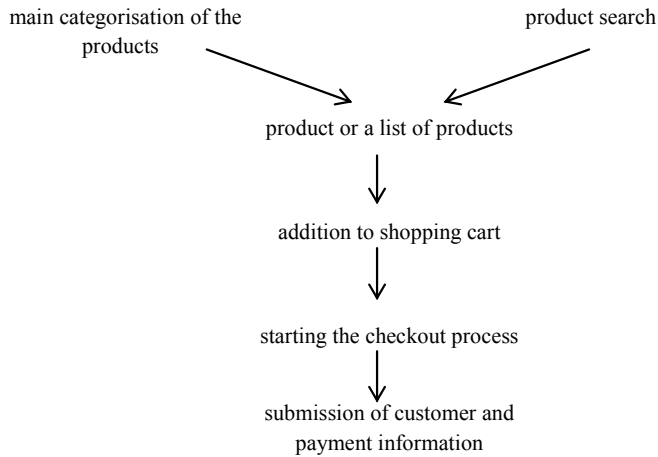


Figure 1. Online store structure (Laine 2004, p. 70).

Although each stage of the process may be divided into a number of substages that require user interaction, the general structure remains the same and constitutes a virtual counterpart of a visit to a traditional store. As shown in Figure 1, product search or categorisation pages are followed by adding to shopping cart phase, which leads to the checkout process where the customer submits the necessary information for payment and delivery. This represents a sequential structure that in pragmatics is often referred to as a script. Schank and Abelson (1977) define scripts as mechanisms that people have developed to deal with sequences of events that frequently occur in a specific order forming large conceptual units. The existence of a script in our cognition makes it possible for us to infer a great deal of information that has not been explicitly communicated. A standard shopping procedure can be completed without resorting to much linguistically coded communication. Usability studies have shown that deviations from the standard structure of a website hamper navigating and may lead to the user clicking away from the page.

Virtuality by means of digital technology

An e-commerce website can be seen as a virtual representation of a traditional brick-and-mortar store. Spiller and Lohse (1998) present analogies between retail stores, mail-order catalogues and online stores. For example, the hierarchical levels of an online catalogue correspond to the number of floors in the store, and the home page represents store window displays or covers of a paper catalogue. The consistence of the analogies may vary but spatial metaphors are strongly present: customers are asked to “go to checkout”, “return to the store” or “add a product to shopping cart”.

The virtual online store is created by means of digital technology. An electronic store may contain supportive material of different kinds that complements the central shopping process. Eroglu, Machleit and Davis (1999) divide the shopping environment on an e-commerce website into high task-relevant and low task-relevant environments. The high task-relevant content is specifically related to the shopping goals including product descriptions, terms of sale and delivery, product reviews etc. Low task-relevant content is not directly related to the completion of the shopping procedure but it adds to the creation of a favourable shopping atmosphere. These atmospheric elements are mainly non-textual: colours, pictures, icons, sounds etc. While at the current stage of technological development the online environment does not allow touching, smelling or tasting, it gives an opportunity of eliminating the limitations of time and space (Eroglu & al. 1999). It is challenging for an online store designer to provide the atmospheric elements alongside with all the relevant functional elements on a limited computer screen.

Interaction between e-store and customer

The web is not only a medium for information and one-way communication; it provides an opportunity for genuine interaction between buyer and seller. Feldman (1997) defines interaction as users' capability to influence their access to information and control the outcomes of using the system. In interaction between customer and electronic store, the choices the customer can make have to a high degree been

predetermined by the website designer. However, an e-store website usually offers a large number of alternatives to navigate through the store, find information and complete the shopping procedure.

Interactivity is the feature that provides opportunities of communication not possible in traditional mail order business, for example. Bonime and Pohlmann (1998, p. 11), writers of a book guiding those who write for interactive media, describe interactivity as the property of any medium that responds dynamically to user control. In web communication the modes of action that are at the user's disposal for interaction are primarily pointing, clicking, dragging and dropping, and keying in information. By means of a mouse or other input device the user can for example enlarge a product picture, see the product from different angles or in different colours. In the author's analysis of the interactive language of online shopping the interactive functions have been categorised as (1) viewing, (2) navigating or going to a page, (3) searching, (4) selecting items and (5) submitting information (Laine 2004).

Several studies have shown that user involvement is positively related to attitude toward websites (see McMillan, Hwang & Lee 2003). User perception is a key element in the analysis of the concept of interactivity emphasising the experience of the human user in the process of interaction (Kioussis 2002). Perceived interactivity, which is based on strong user involvement, may bring about a more positive attitude toward a website than the actual number of interactive features of the site might suggest (McMillan, Hwang & Lee 2003, p. 406). In other words, a simple structure with a few relevant interactive features may produce a better result than a technologically advanced website with a large number of complex online tools.

The interactive features of the internet allow the e-store to provide elements that strengthen customers' sense of community. For example, on the website of Martha Stewart (www.marthastewart.com) customers can submit their own pictures, participate in different contests, follow blogs, see or put advertisements on a notice board or give donations to charities. Customer reviews constitute another communicative element that proliferates in electronic shopping. Customers are invited and encouraged to state their opinions concerning a product or service. Electronic stores publish both positive and

negative views, which undoubtedly contributes to the trust in the store and its merchandise if the feedback is in balance.

Hyperlinks as guides and structural elements

The hypertextual structure of the World Wide Web is the basis of the networked linking, which allows user navigation through the immense resources of the web. Hyperlinks have two roles in hypertext: navigational and representational. A hyperlink helps a user to navigate the web, and at the same time it describes the relation between web pages (Garzotto, Paolini & Schwabe 1997, p. 9). Hyperlinks are communicatively important; they are salient items with a different colour, font, underlining or animation, which are supposed to draw users' attention on a web page. Hyperlinks provide the structure for a website; on an electronic store clicking on a hyperlink or button leads the user from one stage to another in the shopping procedure.

Hypertext can be defined as a system in which text contains embedded interactive structure operations and has its own discourse structure. Jim Rosenberg (1996) calls the lowest level of hypertext activity, such as following a link, an *acteme*. Multiple actemes cohere into a higher-level unit that Rosenberg calls an *episode*. Episodes in contiguous hypertext activity form a *session*. A complete online shopping session can be seen to consist of at least two episodes: product search and order entry. The user may quit after the product search phase and, for example, decide to make a purchase in a physical store. Interactive operations or actemes include link followings when searching for a product through the categorisation system or by using a website-internal search facility and button clickings for adding a product to a virtual cart or submitting order information.

Hypertext allows the text to be enriched by multimedia tools. The multimedial character of the World Wide Web refers to its capacity of the integrated use of text, pictures, graphics, video and sound. Text-based information forms the basis of web content at the present time, but in online buying and selling, pictures and audio and video clips are

used extensively, for example, in describing and promoting merchandise. Usability studies have shown, though, that over-use of animation and other special effects may distract and confuse, and thereby obstruct communication rather than assist it.

New forms of communication

The web is a cost-effective medium for businesses to communicate about their products and services. Online advertising, which can be defined as commercial messages on rented places on other companies' websites, has an increasingly important role in marketing today. Graphic images called banners which contain a link to the company website or e-store are used to attract web users' attention. Keyword buying is a type of targeted online advertising in which specific keywords on a search engine trigger ads that appear in connection with the search results (Pelsmacker, Geuens & Van Der Bergh 2007: 498). The more relevant the advertised product is to the search results, the more effective advertising is bound to be (Yus 2005).

What makes the web a superior tool for consumers for information search is the fact that it makes comparing products and prices quite easy. Firstly, clicking through a number of online stores on the basis of the results of keyword search on a search engine is quite an easy task although it may be time consuming. Secondly, there are specific online services for comparing products and services.

The rapid rise of Web 2.0 and social media also has consequences for e-commerce communication. This new development facilitates social information sharing and interaction on the web. It is manifested, for example, in forums, blogs, wikis, podcasts and instant messaging. To be successful in an environment where the use of social media flourishes, an e-commerce business needs an understanding of the opportunities that the new forms of communication offer and the knowledge and skills to make a full use of them.

What also gives electronic commerce an advantage in comparison with the more traditional forms of buying and selling is the opportunity of storing and retrieving a practically unlimited amount of information and carrying an enormous range of

products. Information search has become very fast and the hyperlinked nature of the World Wide Web allows users to access a product using different search criteria. Unlike in Aristotle's system, things can be likened to several other things at the same time without restricting them to a single category (Weinberger 2000, p. 121).

The fact that such a large amount of product information is freely at customers' disposal has improved their strategic position and made buyer-seller relations more equal (Cecez-Kecmanovic & Janson 2004). Emancipation of this kind can be seen, for example, in car sales, where (mainly male) sales persons have traditionally held an authority position.

E-commerce and going global

The World Wide Web offers even small and medium-sized enterprises a cost-effective way of entering the international market. Like all web content, e-commerce pages were predominantly published in English in the early days of development. In many respects English is the lingua franca of business - often referred to as International Business English -, and a lot of online commerce is conducted using the practically oriented language that the researchers from the Helsinki School of Economics have started to call business English lingua franca (or BELF) with an emphasis on communication skills in the globalised business community (Charles 2007). However, publishing the website in English is not a sufficient measure for effective sales and marketing in the retail trade of consumer goods. An electronic store website should be in the customer's language and many country-specific and cultural factors should be taken into consideration when creating the store.

Website globalisation can be seen to consist of two complementary processes: website *internationalisation* and website *localisation* (Singh & Pereira 2005, p. 6–7). Internationalisation must precede localisation as it refers to the process of building a website so that it can be easily localised (Yunker 2003, p. 29). In the internationalisation process a website is given a modular structure, in which elements that will need to be modified or changed during localization are isolated. Consequently, for the purposes of

a localised site the complete structure of the website does not need to be recreated. Two sublevels can be discerned in localisation: 1) the surface level on which the conventions of the target audience are met concerning translation, dates, measurements, currency, etc. and 2) the cultural level on which factors concerning aesthetics, colours, images, functionality and communication, etc. are taken into consideration (Sun 2001).

E-commerce websites and company websites in general vary to the extent of which globalisation has been taken into consideration. A five-step classification of website globalisation introduced by Singh and Pereira (2005) is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Classification of website globalisation.

Category		Description
1	Standardised websites	provide the same web content for domestic and international users
2	Semi-localised websites	provide contact information about foreign subsidiaries, but no content in the target language
3	Localised websites	provide country-specific websites with translation of the relevant sections into the target language
4	Highly localised websites	provide country-specific URLs with translation into the target language, localised country-specific information (time, date, post code, number formats etc.)
5	Culturally customised websites	provide full localisation and cultural adaptation

Singh and Pereira's definition of culture is based on the themes of patterned thinking and shared value system in accordance with Hofstede. The above classification shows a continuum at the one end of which there are websites with the same web content in the same language for domestic and international users. The other end of the scale represents country-specific websites that can easily be found on the home page of the parent company. The content has been published in the language(s) of the target country and the necessary country-specific adjustments have been implemented. Using this

classification, Singh and Boughton (2005) examined the measure of web globalization of 870 U.S. and international companies and found out that more than half of the target companies fell in the non-localized categories and none of the websites could be categorised as culturally customised.

As cultural customisation requires specialised knowledge and resources, creating a website to meet these requirements will probably be an overwhelming task for a small or medium-sized company. A solution would be to concentrate on a particular target area and its focus on its specific features. Cooperation networks and entrepreneur organisations are also useful aids when a company plans to start international e-commerce operations.

Publishing a fully localised e-commerce website is not a sufficient measure to conquer the international market. The company must also have resources to deal with customer contacts, for example telephone calls and emails, that come from the target area. Web communication is thus closely linked with business communication in other media.

Conclusion

Increased online shopping changes people's communication behaviour. At least for the time being, online shopping is primarily a solitary process: an individual person is interacting with a store on his or her personal computer. Maybe the advent of the digital interactive television with a large screen will change the situation. Opportunities of sharing offered by social media will also increase customer-to-customer interaction. In the long run, technological development may also allow us to make use of all human senses so that online selling is not based on visual stimulus as heavily as it is at the moment.

Online resources can provide an excellent source of information for customers. On the company website the company and its products can be presented, and the company can inform about its novelties, campaigns, new stores etc. A modern customer wants to be well informed and also have an opportunity of comparing products and prices. The

World Wide Web is a source of an enormous amount of information, and the key issue for an electronic store is its capability of being found by customers and helping them to find the products they are looking for.

An electronic store should not be pleased with using the web as an information channel only; instead, real communication between e-store and web user would profit both parties. The web is not only a medium for information and one-way communication; it provides an opportunity for genuine interaction between buyer and seller. When real interaction is reached, the web user becomes involved in the process, mutual trust increases and a favourable atmosphere for doing business is created. In addition, advanced electronic stores know how to make use of the community creation features of the web.

After all, a functional website constitutes the basis of a thriving electronic store. In order to survive in competition, an electronic store must offer communicatively effective web pages, which are clear and easy to use, and at the same time intriguing and attractive. The effectiveness of an electronic store can be measured by the ratio showing how many visitors it can convert into customers. The popularity of the web as a source of information makes it an incomparably important channel of disseminating company and product information.

References

- Bonime, A. & Pohlmann, K. C. (1998). *Writing for new media: The essential guide to writing for interactive media, CD-ROMs, and the Web*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Cecez-Kecmanovic, D. & Janson, M. (2004). The emancipatory politics of eCommerce. *Proceedings of the Americas Conference on Information Systems, New York, 2004, August*.

- Charles, M. (2007). Language matters in global communication: Article based on ORA lecture, October 2006. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44(3), 260–282.
- De Pelsmacker, P., Geuens, M. & Van den Bergh, J. (2007). *Marketing communications: A European perspective*. Harlow, England: Prentice Hall.
- Eroglu, S.A., Machleit, K. A. & Davis, L. M. (2001). Atmospheric qualities of online retailing: A conceptual model and implication. *Journal of Business Research*. 54, 177–184.
- European Commission, Eurostat (2007). *Information society statistics*. Retrieved September 2, 2008, from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1996,45323734&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&screen=welcomeref&open=/popul/isoc/isoc_ec&language=en&product=EU_MAIN_TREE&root=EU_MAIN_TREE&scrollto=267
- Garzotto, F., Paolini, P. & Schwabe, D. (1997). A Model-Based Approach to Hypertext Application Design. *ACM Transactions on Information Systems*, 11:1, 1–26.
- Kiousis, S. (2002). Interactivity: a concept explication. *New Media & Society*, 4(3): 355–383.
- McMillan, S.J., Hwang, J.-S. & Lee, G (2003). Effects of structural and perceptual factors on attitudes towards the website. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 2003, December, 400–409.
- Rosenberg, J.(1996). The Structure of Hypertext Activity. In *Hypertext '96 Proceedings*, 22–30. Ed. David Stotts. Washington, USA: ACM Press.
- Schank, R. & Abelson, R. (1977). *Scripts, Plans, Goals and Understanding: An Inquiry into Human Knowledge Structures*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Singh, N. & Boughton, P. D. (2005) Measuring Website Globalization : A Cross-Sectional Country and Industry Level Analysis. *Journal of Website Promotion*, Vol. 1 (3) 2005. Available: <http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JWP>.
- Singh, N. & Pereira, A. (2005) *The Culturally Customized Web Site: Customizing Web Sites for the Global Marketplace*. Burlington, Massachusetts & Oxford, UK: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.

- Sun, H. (2001) *Building a Culturally-Competent Corporate Web Site: An Exploratory Study of Cultural Markers in Multilingual Web Design*. In **SIGDOC '01: Proceedings of the 19th Annual International Conference on Computer Documentation**, 95–102. Eds. Mary J. Northrop and Scott Tilley. New York: ACM Press.
- Spiller P. & Lohse, G. L. (1998). A Classification of Internet Retail Stores. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 2(2), 29–56.
- Tilastokeskus, Statistics Finland (2008, August 25). *Tieto- ja viestintätekniikan käyttö 2008*. Retrieved October 1, 2009, from http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2008/sutivi_2008_2008-08-25_kuv_002.html
- Tilastokeskus, Statistics Finland (2009, September 8). *Tieto- ja viestintätekniikan käyttö 2009*. Retrieved October 1, 2009, from http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2009/sutivi_2009_2009-09-08_tau_001.html
- Turban, E. & King, D. (2003). *Introduction to E-Commerce*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Weinberger, D. (2000). Hyperlinked Organization. In R. Levine, C. Locke, D. Searls & D. Weinberger (Eds.) *The Cluetrain Manifesto: The end of business as usual* (pp. 115–159) Cambridge, Massachusetts: Perseus Publishing.
- U.S. Census Bureau, E-Stats (2009, May 28). *E-Commerce 2007*. Retrieved October 1, 2009, from <http://www.census.gov/econ/estats/2007/2007reportfinal.pdf>
- Yunker, J. (2003) *Beyond borders: Web globalization strategies*. Berkeley, California: New Riders Publishing.
- Yus, F. (2005). In search of cognitively relevant internet banners. *Image & Narrative: Online Magazine of the Visual Narrative, Issue 11 May 2005*. Available at http://www.imageandnarrative.be/worldmusicb_advertising/yus.htm

COMMUNICATING STRATEGY THROUGH CORPORATE INTRANET NEWS

Sari Lehmuskallio

IBC Doctoral Student

Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

slehmuskallio@hotmail.com

Abstract

Corporate intranets are commonly considered useful tools for introducing and implementing corporate strategy. The current study, however, revealed that although corporate intranet news articles published during one calendar year by three large multinationals also included strategy communication, only approximately 10 percent of the articles actually included the words “strategy” or “strategic”. Although it is not suggested that the rest, nearly 90 percent were not strategy-related, it is pointed out that the exclusion of these distinct words may make it difficult for intranet users to link the issues covered in the news to corporate strategy and to recognize the issues as important ingredients affecting the company’s success. Further analysis of strategy communication revealed that although the words “strategy” and “strategic” are often used within intranet news texts that aim at clarifying some aspect(s) of the corporate strategy, communication about strategy-related matters frequently treats the corporate strategy as common knowledge among the employees. Additionally, “strategy” or “strategic” were used in news texts in which the link to corporate strategy was unclear or non-existent from the perspective of the researcher. These findings suggest that there is room for improvement in the clarity and unambiguousness of strategy communication within intranets in multinational companies.

Keywords: intranet, internal communication, strategy, strategic, multinationals

Introduction

Intranets are often referred to as valuable management tools reaching all company employees around the world simultaneously despite geographic distances or time differences. Because of their potential to reach employees fast with new and timely information, corporate intranets are often considered strategic communication and management tools (see, e.g. Kuivalahti & Luukkonen, 2003).

In spite of the fact that companies, practitioners, and researchers refer to their intranets as “strategic tools” (e.g., Kuivalahti & Luukkonen, 2003), not much research can be found to reveal what exactly is meant by the word “strategic” in the context of corporate intranets. It is unclear whether “strategic” is used to refer to the intranet’s instrumental role in helping the organization achieve its competitive or other strategic objectives (Clarke, 1994), intranet’s role as a channel for strategy communication (Hämäläinen & Maula, 2004), intranet’s overall significance or importance to the company (Alvesson, 2002), or from a slightly different perspective, the existence of clear intentions and purposes that companies have for their intranets (Smith, 2005).

The present author’s recent study (Lehmuskallio, 2008) showed that like many researchers and practitioners, also most intranet editors in large multinationals consider their company intranets strategic communications channels useful for introducing and implementing strategy within a corporation. Many of these intranet editors also commonly agree that if an issue has a clear connection to company business and its goals, the issue is more likely to be published as corporate intranet news. The study, however, also revealed that there are many intranet editors gathering corporate intranet news in an unorganized manner and publishing only those matters that they spontaneously happen to hear about, instead of carefully selecting issues to publish by weighing their strategic value (Lehmuskallio, 2008).

According to Smith (2005) strategic communication is intentional communication by an organization. The communication has a purpose and a plan, in which alternatives are considered and decisions are justified. Strategic communication is often either

informational or persuasive, and its common purpose is to build understanding and support for ideas and causes, services and products (p. 3). The fact that many intranet editors do not gather information in an organized manner but rather select items for publication from among those issues they happen to spontaneously hear about does not seem to support developing the intranet's strategic role.

In an attempt to assess whether or not corporate intranets in large multinational companies do play a strategic role and aim at helping the organization achieve its competitive or other strategic objectives, the current study explores how multinationals use their corporate intranet news for strategy communication. According to Hämäläinen and Maula (2004), strategy communication consists of three parts (p. 28, 41):

- 1) Communicating about *strategy content*; this is usually done during strategy creation and development as well as implementation, it aims at informing the organization about the strategy and creating a common understanding of it.
- 2) Communicating about *strategy process*; consists of communicating about a) strategy creation, development and implementation practices, processes and systems, as well as about b) the related roles, responsibilities and schedules.
- 3) Communication that *supports strategy implementation*; consists of everyday work communication through which members of the organization are supported in their work tasks and every day activities are aligned with strategy; also communication about the strategy-based changes in the organizational structure, processes and working practices as well as the collection of initiatives and feedback from the employees.

Hämäläinen and Maula (2004) point out that strategy communication increases employee commitment and can help employees in their daily work (p. 41). According to Theaker (2001, p. 132), employees' awareness of organizational operations, problems, goals, and development increases the organization's effectiveness and helps it to create a positive working environment. Juholin (1999) notes that communication, and information about the company's plans and changes (i.e. strategy communication) are significant factors also from the work satisfaction perspective. Mantere et al. (2003, p.

50) suggest that strategy alone may motivate employees because through strategy employees feel they work towards a common good and do something that has significance. Hämäläinen and Maula (2004) add that strategy communication eases the coordination of operations and even increases the ability to innovate (p. 31).

The value of strategy communication to a company's productivity and success seems indisputable. But do companies use their corporate intranets for strategy communication? And if they do, how do they communicate about the strategy or strategy-related matters through corporate intranet news texts? The current study aims to find answers to these relevant questions.

Research Aims

The current study explores corporate news texts published on corporate intranets in large multinational companies from the perspective of strategy communication. Based on the findings of previous studies, the news coverage is *not* expected to show a clear focus on strategy communication (which would be considered a characteristic of an intranet that is used primarily as a *management channel*). Instead, corporate intranet news articles are expected to cover a wide variety of issues spontaneously gathered and commonly considered newsworthy in a corporate setting (which are considered to be characteristics of an intranet used as a *corporate-wide news channel*, as described in Table 1 below).

Naturally, corporate intranet news articles may reflect characteristics of both roles. The intranet may function as a management tool harnessed for strategy communication as well as function as a company-wide mass medium covering various company issues from varying perspectives. It is, therefore, expected that the analysis of intranet news texts reveals support for the intranet's *hybrid role* combining characteristics of both ends of the continuum. Consequently, the most interesting question that emerges is: how, and to what degree, do the news texts reflect the characteristics of the two different functions or roles? A method aiming at offering the tools for answering this question is introduced next.

Table 1: Assessing the primary role of corporate intranet.

Corporate wide news channel	Hybrid	Management channel
<p>←</p> <p>Characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of news; no strict focus on strategy communication • Topics selected for publication by assessing general newsworthiness, not strategic value. • May include business related news, but also news on issues not directly linked to company business • News originating from various locations and units 	<p>Characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy communication as well as coverage of various other topics, even issues not directly linked to company business 	<p>→</p> <p>Characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear focus on strategy communication and guidance to employees • Mainly or only business -related news • Coverage may be biased towards headquarters, may also reflect a "top-down" feel

Method

In order to assess whether corporate intranets are primarily channels for strategy communication or channels of corporate-wide news – or a combination of both – a content analysis including both qualitative and quantitative examination of various features of news article texts was conducted (see e.g., Holsti, 1969; Neuendorf, 2002). The features analyzed will be introduced later in the Method section (see “Other areas of analysis”).

The data for the content analysis, authentic intranet news article texts published in English, was gathered from three large multinational companies headquartered in Finland:

Company 1: Metal industry

The first company is a stock exchange listed company representing the metal industry in Finland. It is headquartered in Helsinki, Finland, and during the year 2008 it had nearly 15 000 employees in 26 countries across Europe.

Company 2: Oil and energy

The second company is also a stock exchange listed company, headquartered in Espoo, Finland. During 2008, this company from the oil and energy sector employed approximately 5 200 employees of which three-fourths worked in Finland. The rest worked mostly in the Scandinavian countries, the Baltic region, as well as in Northern European and Central European countries.

Company 3: Power solutions

The third company represents the power solutions industry and is also a stock exchange listed company headquartered in Helsinki, Finland. In 2008, the company employed nearly 19 000 persons around the world.

These companies were chosen from among the largest multinationals in Finland, all of them within Finland's top-20 largest companies based on company revenues in 2008. All of the chosen companies employ both white collar workers working primarily in the office environment, as well as blue collar workers working in factories or other types of production units. All three companies have operations and full-time employees in several countries. Their corporate intranet news is offered in English. At least two of the three companies also offer their corporate news in Finnish, but the specific information about the various language versions was not gathered because it was considered not to be within the scope of the current study.

For a researcher getting access to corporate intranet contents is not an easy task. Thus the target companies of this study were chosen because the author was familiar with the companies, their intranets, and the corporate communications personnel through previous cooperation. The author was allowed to access the internal news texts consisting of internal and partly company confidential information. Due to the confidential nature of the internal news published on the intranet, the names, specific details of the actual companies, and specific examples of texts cannot be revealed in this study

Data

For the analysis, all intranet news articles published during one whole calendar year (August 1st 2007 to July 31st 2008, total of 659 news articles) were collected from each company with the help of corporate communications team members. A full calendar year was chosen as the time frame of analysis in order to avoid any bias caused by the financial reporting calendar of these listed companies, the annual strategy process or, for example, the holiday seasons that could have skewed the results. The news articles from one calendar year were expected to provide a comprehensive look at all the major issues and matters that happened during that specific year of each company. These articles were considered to represent especially the issues that the company management and its corporate communications team in each company consider important and newsworthy. These articles were also considered to be a reflection of corporate reality, and in turn, to construct reality for all employees who would be exposed to the corporate news and the messages they consist of.

The intranet news articles chosen for the analysis were published in English. In all of these companies, English was either the official company language or one of several official languages (along with Finnish). These corporate news articles (and not, for example, news from local or regional intranets) were chosen in order to allow analysis of corporate issues that were published to inform all company employees around the world, and not just some specific employee groups. As Charles (2007) points out, however, “the ability to operate in the official corporate language, and/or the language of management/headquarters, gives individuals access to corporate level information” (p. 272). Thus, the use of English in corporate communication may make it difficult for some to access the corporate information, such as strategy communication enhancing productivity and employee motivation. Additionally, it must be noted that in these companies white collar workers have much easier and more convenient access to the corporate intranet news than some of the blue collar workers who might not have any direct access to the corporate intranet during a normal working day. Thus the corporate news could reflect the fact that news texts are mostly created by white collar workers to

other white collar workers. This issue, however, was not in the scope of the current study and not analyzed further.

Analysis

The analysis was conducted in two phases:

In *Phase 1*, a variety of features of news texts were analyzed of a small sample of 120 articles (18 % of all the news). These 120 articles (40 from each company) were chosen by selecting 10 published articles from each quarter. In other words, the first 10 articles published each month were chosen from August 2007, November 2007, February 2008, and May 2008. If during a specific month less than 10 articles were published, the first articles from the next month were included in the analysis.

Of these 120 articles the following issues were analyzed (see the Code sheet in the Appendix for further information):

- date of publishing
- title and dominant topic of the article
- organization that the news article was mainly about or targeted to
- geographic location that the article was mainly about or targeted to
- business relation or other focus of the news
- prominent tone of the article (good, neutral, bad)
- inclusion of words “strategy” or “strategic”
- whether the text stated facts or offered also further information about the issue
- whether the news consisted mostly of proactive (forward looking statements) or reactive statements (backward looking statements)
- article length.

In *Phase 2*, all intranet news articles published by the three target companies during one full calendar year (a total of 659 texts) were analyzed in an effort to explore the frequency, characteristics, and contexts of strategy communication. In order to gain a basic understanding of the strategy of each company and in order to analyze strategy

communication the annual reports from the year 2008 of each company were used as basic points of reference.

Defining strategy communication

During the early stages of the analysis in Phase 2, it was noted that it was nearly impossible to determine unambiguously whether or not a news article could be categorized as strategy communication. Strategy-related texts on annual reports introduced company operations and goals in a very broad manner. This made identifying strategy related communication quite complicated and highly subjective. Thus for the purpose of the current study, strategy communication was very tightly defined: only those news articles containing the words “strategy” or “strategic” were considered to consist of strategy communication and included in the analysis. However, those articles that only listed, for example, a title or a unit name consisting of the word “strategy” or “strategic” (e.g. “Chief Strategy Officer” or “Marketing Planning and Strategies”) were *not* categorized as strategy communication.

Results

In Phase 1 of the analysis, various characteristics of a small sample of 120 news article texts (40 from each company) were analyzed in order to get a rich overall picture of the news articles published on the three corporate intranets.

General characteristics of corporate intranet news

The analysis showed that companies published fairly long news articles on their corporate intranet. Nearly 37 percent of the articles were 250 words or longer (nearly 3 times the length of this paragraph). Some of the longest articles were approximately 600-700 words, and the clearly longest was a 5 500 word long annual financial statement document. The shortest news articles were approximately 30-40 words long, often consisting of brief announcements of service breaks of corporate IT services or other IT related issues.

The analysis revealed that the majority of the articles (nearly 66 percent) not only stated the facts of the issue covered but also offered reasoning or further explanation in order to create a more thorough understanding of the issue. The news topics were also covered from various angles, and various people had been interviewed and quoted in the articles.

The *dominant topic of the news article* was excluded from the quantitative analysis due to the fact that most news articles, especially the longer ones, seemed to consist of several main issues and topics but also because there were dozens and dozens of various topics covered, such as news on quarterly or annual results, shares and option schemes, mergers and acquisitions, partnerships and cooperation, IT and IS matters (e.g. service breaks and news about intranet), organizational structure and its changes (downsizing, restructuring, etc.), company offices, buildings and locations, environmental or other corporate sustainability matters (charity matters, sponsoring, community outreach, etc.), products, services and solutions (also internal ones), various employee matters (appointments, wellbeing, work safety, accidents, injuries, strikes, etc.), awards, events, sales successes, major deals or orders and new customers, various guidelines, working practices and instructions to employees, among several others.

Although the actual news topics or their frequency were not calculated, it became clear that the topics covered in the corporate intranet news articles vary significantly and most likely reflect the richness of corporate life in these large multinational companies.

Additionally, the *prominent tone of the article* – whether the news article consisted of good, bad or neutral news – was surprisingly difficult to determine, as well. Although prizes and awards are clearly good news and accidents bad news, are disruptions or breaks in corporate services due to maintenance or development of IT services good, bad or neutral news? Are appointment news or mergers and acquisitions good or neutral news? Thus, the tone of news was also excluded from the analysis. Therefore, although the author's earlier study (Lehmuskallio, 2008) had suggested that companies prefer neutral over positive or negative news, this study could not prove it either right or

wrong due to the challenges described above. However, from a more qualitative perspective it was noted that companies did offer a variety of news, from exceptionally positive to negative news. And perhaps it was simply the neutrality of the expressions used that made it difficult to determine whether the tone of the news article was prominently positive, negative or just neutral.

Orientation of the news

Nearly all of the news articles (94 %) showed clear business relevance. The few articles that were not considered relevant from the business perspective included, for example, an article about recipes for food, delicacies or drinks. Additionally, there were several news articles in which the business relevance was not explicit. In other words, it was not clear how the information in these articles would be helpful or useful for the employees from the pure business perspective although they were about the company or its current or former employees.

Approximately half of the news articles (nearly 53 %) were about corporate-level or global matters, one fourth (nearly 26 %) was about regional or country specific matters, and only 15 percent primarily about specific business divisions. This finding was expected since the articles were collected from corporate intranets that are targeted and offered to all company employees. When looking at the regional focus more carefully, one quarter (25 %) was about issues happening in or affecting Finland. Obviously, all of the companies in the study were Finland-based but they are also stock exchange listed multinationals. Thus such relatively strong regional bias towards Finland was unexpected. However, as was expected and seems logical, approximately half of the articles (55 %) were written about corporate-level issues or issue that are global in nature.

Slightly more news articles consisted of “reactive communication”, offering information about something that had already happened (nearly 42 % of the articles) than “proactive communication” consisting of information about something that will happen (33 %). Thus, intranet news seem to be used for both reporting what has

happened in the past and for informing, preparing or warning employees about something that is about to happen.

Based on Phase 1 analysis, fewer than 10 percent of the 120 articles analyzed contained the words “strategy” or “strategic”. As the next section points out, this finding is in line with the findings in Phase 2 analysis of 659 corporate news articles revealing that companies communicated about strategy-related matters only in 5-19 percent of the articles.

Analysis of strategy communication

In Phase 2, all corporate news articles published on the corporate intranets during one calendar year (altogether 659 news texts) were analyzed to reveal the general frequency at which new news articles were published, and how often and in which contexts these articles could be characterized as strategy communication.

As Table 2 below shows, the number of news articles published by each company during one calendar year varied from approximately 100 intranet news articles up to nearly 300 articles a year, approximately one per each working day. The oil and energy company, the smallest based on the number of employees but largest based on revenue in 2008, published less than half of the articles than the two other companies each. This could be explained based on, for example, the scarcity of internal communications resources, the lack of a corporate-wide network of news gathering or writing resources devoted to intranet news, or simply a smaller number of newsworthy events taking place in a slightly smaller company.

However, nearly one-fifth (19 %) of the 98 corporate intranet news articles published by the oil and energy company and 12 percent by the metal industry company included the word “strategy” or “strategic”. The power solutions company seemed to publish news related to strategy or strategic much less often than the other two companies: only 5% of all intranet news articles included these words.

Table 2: “Strategy” and “strategic” in intranet news texts

Company	Number of news articles published	Avg. articles a month	How many times strategy or strategic mentioned in a year	Number of articles in which strategy or strategic mentioned	% of all articles including strategy or strategic	Strategy or strategic not mentioned	% of articles not including strategy or strategic
Metal industry	282*	24	44**	34	12	248	88
Oil and energy	98	8	30	19	19	79	81
Power solutions	279	23	22	14	5	265	95

* Not including project bulletins and newsletters.

** Titles and names of company units containing the word “strategy” or “strategic” were not included in the analysis.

Context of strategy communication

In order to better understand what the news articles containing the words “strategy” or “strategic” were about, the contexts in which these words appeared were analyzed qualitatively.

There were no significant differences in the ways in which the three companies communicated about their strategy or strategic matters. The words “strategy” and “strategic” were used within intranet news texts for

- a.) communication about strategy in order to clarify some of its aspect(s), and
- b.) communication about strategy while treating the content of strategy as common knowledge among the employees.

“Communication about strategy in order to clarify some of its aspect(s)” was clearly the most common way of writing about strategy or strategic matters. In these articles strategy was mentioned together with some information that explained or clarified it; for example, with information about what the strategy consisted of or how it was being

implemented. For example, a major cooperation agreement was covered in a news article after which it was explained that the agreement supported the company's growth strategy within that specific region of the world. Although no clear differences among companies could be identified, it seemed that the oil and energy company placed special emphasis on using the intranet news to educate its employees about the strategy and its contents, while the power solutions company and the metal industry company communicated slightly less frequently in this manner.

The following extracts are examples of how companies tied the strategy with some clarification of its contents:

- "...as part of our latest strategy..."
- "...to implement our strategy focusing on..."
- "...our strategic goal of becoming..."
- "...is a clear indication of our strategic intent."
- "Our strategy is based on..."
- "...this is in line with our strategy focusing on..."
- "...is an important part of our growth strategy"
- "...our strategic aim is to..."
- "...is a step in our strategy"
- "...support company strategy by..."
- "...plays a special role in company strategy"
- "... to boost for our strategy of becoming"
- "...to progress with our strategy"
- "...is a part of our strategy"
- "...successful realization of strategy requires..."
- "...strategic intent of becoming..."
- "In line with strategy..."

An analysis of the contexts of these extracts verified that they are examples of strategy communication. However, whole sentences cannot be shown here as they might disclose the identities of the three companies.

In the articles placed in the category “*communication about strategy as common knowledge*”, strategy or a matter labelled with the word “strategic” was mentioned without offering any extra information about what the strategy consisted of or how it was being implemented. Strategy or strategy process seemed to be considered common knowledge among the intranet users. It seemed to be unnecessary in the article to explain what the strategy actually consisted of or contained or how the issue covered was related to strategy.

The following extracts are examples of how strategy was referred to as common knowledge:

- “support the strategy”
- “our renewed strategy”
- “strategy update”
- “strengthening company values and strategy”
- “strategy development”
- “strategy process”
- “strategy presentation”
- “strategic investments”
- “strategic review”
- “strategic implementation”
- “strategic projects”
- “strategic targets”
- “strategic steps”
- “company’s strategic roadmap”
- “strategic alliance”
- “strategic raw materials”
- “strategic choice”
- “strategic development”
- “strategic progress”

The third way of communicating about strategy was using the word “*strategy*” and especially the word “*strategic*” in an unambiguous way that left the link to corporate strategy unclear. For example, “brand strategy”, “marketing strategy”, “sponsorship strategy”, and “Division x strategy” were mentioned in this manner without any further explanation or clarification of their links to corporate strategy. As literature on strategic management highlights (i.e. Rabin, J., Miller, G. & Hildreth W.B., 2000; Vancil & Lorange, 1975; Vancil, 1976, as well as White & Mazur, 1995, more specifically on strategic communications management) all business unit or function-specific strategies should be derived from the corporate strategy and crafted to support the achievement of common corporate goals. However, the news articles in the current study do not offer a link to the corporate strategy or clarify the “sub-strategy’s” relevance in relation to the corporate strategy. Instead, these links are just assumed, not actually found within the news texts. This finding highlights the need for improving the clarity and unambiguousness of strategy communication.

Discussion

The content analysis revealed that corporate news articles published on corporate intranets are almost entirely business-related showing relevance from a business perspective. This supports the findings of the author’s previous study (Lehmuskallio, 2008) suggesting that intranet editors consider a clear connection to company business and its goals one of the most important values affecting publication of corporate news. This is important because business relevance is often considered a necessary ingredient building up the intranet’s strategic function.

In the future it would, however, be interesting to analyze whether or not the current financial difficulties, constant processes of reorganizing and downsizing, and the global economic recession affect intranet news topics and possibly switch the focus from business, efficiency and productivity related hard news towards softer news topics. In the near future, there may be an increase in the number of news related to, for example, creating a sense of community within the organization.

There is a risk, however, related to shifting the focus towards softer news as the business focus and the clear business or strategic value of the intranet tend to act as prerequisites for getting the necessary resources for continuous intranet maintenance and development. Perhaps intranets should, as many of them in fact already do, offer their users separate sections for business and strategy related hard news and perhaps, for example, employee wellbeing and satisfaction related softer news. The “softer” sections may also include all the tools and services not needed necessarily for everyday work but that people otherwise value and find useful, such as internal discussion forums and other employee-generated content. However, as the current study was conducted on news articles published in 2007 and 2008, the economic downturn had not yet affected any of the intranet news contents.

Literature suggests (e.g., Lehmuskallio, 2008; Kuivalahti & Luukkonen, 2003) that intranets are, among their many other roles, used to improve the flow of information about all corporate-level matters and to introduce and implement the corporate strategy within the organization. The findings of the current study found strong support for the first purpose of the corporate intranet (reflecting the role as a corporate-wide news channel), but limited support for the role related to strategy communication (reflecting the role of a management channel). Based on the findings, it seems clear that the intranet offers information about various corporate matters. In fact, so many varying topics of news were identified that it was not considered worthwhile to categorize them for calculating the frequencies. An interesting detail was the fact that the intranet seemed to be used surprisingly frequently for IT related news or news on tools, such as news on service breaks, maintenance or improvement of certain corporate services etc. Thus, the intranet seems to be a useful tool for passing on brief practical announcements to employees around the world.

There were many more news articles about global and corporate level matters than regional, local or business division related ones. In fact, most of the articles reflected the global or corporate perspective. Thus variety in intranet news refers specifically to the various topics discussed instead of a wide coverage of organizations, regions or local

working sites. The slight bias towards news about Finland was not expected since all of the companies in the study were multinationals operating in various countries and regions. However, it can be understood that companies offer news generated from the country where the headquarters is located.

Although regional or local news are often published in local and regional intranet sites instead of the corporate intranet, it would add variety and perspectives to corporate news and create a truer reflection of corporate reality if more regional and local perspectives were included in corporate intranet news. This could also improve corporate community building and generate a better understanding of the company as consisting of varying, equally important parts.

The fact that companies published fairly long articles not only stating the facts but also offering further information about various matters suggests that intranets are used not only for informing but also for educating the employees about the issues that are considered worth knowing about. This is important from the perspective of strategy communication because strategy messages do not create the necessary support for strategy implementation unless these messages are understood and internalized. Also the fact that there was not only information about the events and issues from the past but also about issues yet to come suggests, that intranet news may play a significant strategic role in improving employee awareness and readiness for near future matters.

Kuivalahti and Luukkonen have argued (2003) that in the business world which is becoming increasingly international, intranets are the most important channels through which the corporate strategy flows to all parts of the organization (p. 49). They note that the intranet allows sharing the same exact contents and quality of strategy communication among all employees.

Although this study revealed that intranet news consisted of some strategy communication, and some of the articles even described or clarified the strategy content or the strategy implementation process, only 10 percent of news articles published within one calendar year actually were considered to consist of strategy communication.

This finding could be considered unexpected because previous studies (Lehmuskallio, 2008) have suggested that intranet editors seem to view the intranet as a tool for both introducing and implementing corporate strategy. The finding is, however, in line with the previous finding (Lehmuskallio, 2008) that in spite of their perceptions of the significant strategic role of the tool, in practice intranet editors rarely consider the strategic value of an issue as news criteria for intranet news.

Obviously, the fact that “strategy” and “strategic” do not appear more often in the news texts does not mean that the rest of the articles could not be strategy communication. It simply means that they were not explicitly labelled as such. The employees, who are not particularly familiar with the essence of corporate strategy, or who may struggle with the language used, may not be able to recognize that the articles may still discuss strategic matters even though they do not include any reference to strategy through the use of words “strategy” or “strategic”. When scanning through the published intranet news articles, such words could catch the employee’s eye and encourage the employee to pay more attention to the article and the issues that are covered.

Practitioners seem to debate whether employees really need to see information labelled as “strategy related” or “strategic” in order to understand that the matter is strategy-related and thus critically important and relevant to the company’s business and future success. It could be argued, however, that as business communications professionals still struggle to get the strategy communication through to all company employees, it might be helpful to label the news articles as strategy-related by using the words “strategy” or “strategic” in the news text. It would also be useful to include some further explanation about how the matter relates to company strategy and its strategic milestones and goals.

Finally, we could ask if intranets should be more focused on strategy communication. Although the current study did not assess how the employees view the corporate intranet news, the findings, however, suggest that strategy communication could be an area that needs special attention in all three companies involved in the study. Many of the news texts treated the content of strategy as common knowledge among the employees.

There were also news texts consisting of the words “strategy” or “strategic” in which the link to corporate strategy was unclear or non-existent from the perspective of the researcher. This finding suggests that there is room for improvement in the comprehensiveness, clarity and unambiguousness of strategy communication. As was pointed out earlier in the paper, more comprehensive and continuous strategy communication could, in addition to improving the employees’ understanding of the company’s goals and the means through which they can be reached, also increase employee motivation, satisfaction and effectiveness. Improving strategy communication in corporate intranets would, therefore, still be something worth considering in all companies.

References

- Alvesson, M. (2002). *Understanding Organizational Culture*. London: Sage.
- Charles, M. (2007). Language matters in global communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44(3), 260-282.
- Clarke, R. (1994). *The Path of Development of Strategic Information Systems Theory* [Electronic version. Retrieved October 25, 2009, from <http://www.anu.edu.au/people/Roger.Clarke/SOS/StratISTh.html>.]
- Holsti, O. R. (1969). *Content analysis for the social sciences and humanities*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- Hämäläinen, V. & Maula, H. (2004). *Strategiaviestintä*. Keuruu: Otavan Kirjapaino Oy.
- Juholin, E. (1999). *Paradise Lost or Regained? The Meanings and Perceptions of Organizational Communication of 1990’s Finnish Work Organizations*. Helsinki: Inforviestintä.
- Kuivalahti, T. & Luukkonen, J. (2003). *Intra*. Hämeenlinna: Karisto Oy.
- Lehmuskallio, S. (2006). The uses, roles, and contents of intranets in multinational companies in Finland. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 20(3), 288-324.
- Lehmuskallio, S. (2008). Intranet editors as corporate gatekeepers and agenda setters. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 13(1), 95-111.

- Mantere, S., Hämäläinen, V., Aaltonen, P., Ikävalko, H. & Teikari, V. (2003). *Organisaation strategian toteuttaminen – suunnitelmista käytäntöön*. Helsinki: Edita.
- Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, London: SAGE Publications, Inc
- Rabin, J., Miller, G. & Hildreth, W.B. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of Strategic Management* (2nd ed.). New York: Marcel Dekker.
- Smith, R. D. (2005). *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* (2nd ed.) Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Theaker, A. (Ed.). (2001). *The Public Relations Handbook*, London: Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Vancil, R. F., & Lorange, P. (1975). Strategic planning in diversified companies. *Harvard Business Review*, 53(1), 81-90.
- Vancil, R.F. (1976). Strategy formulations in complex organizations, *Sloan Management Review*, 17, 1-18.
- White, J. & Mazur, L. (1995). *Strategic Communications Management: Making Public Relations Work* Wokingham, England: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, The Economist Intelligence Unit.
- Smith, R. D. (2005). *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* (2nd ed.) Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Theaker, A. (Ed.). (2001). *The Public Relations Handbook*, London: Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.

Appendix 1: Code Sheet for Content Analysis

1. Company

1. Metal industry
2. Oil and energy
3. Power solutions

2. Article number: __ __ __ __

3. Day: __ __

4. Month: __ __

5. Year: __ __

6. Headline

7. Dominant topic

8. Business relation or focus

0. Other
1. Business relation
2. Cannot be determined

9. Dominant organization

(i.e. what part of the organization the news was about or targeted to)

1. HQ, corporate-wide and global matters
2. Business divisions
3. Regional or country specific (geographic)
4. Other or cannot be determined

10. Dominant location (i.e. the country the news was about or targeted to)

1. Global or cannot be determined/specified
2. Finland
3. Sweden

4. Other Scandinavian countries
5. USA
6. Other North American countries (Canada)
7. South America + Central America
8. Africa
9. Middle East (Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi-Arabia, others on Arabian peninsula)
10. China and other Asian countries (Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, etc.)
11. Russia
12. Other Post-Soviet countries (Georgia, Ukraine, etc.)
13. Former Eastern Block countries (excluding former Soviet Union countries)
14. Great Britain
15. France
16. Germany
17. Other Western Europe (other than Scandinavian countries or GB, France or Germany)
18. Other/General (country or region other than previously described. Also includes articles with no specific identifiable location)

11. Prominent tone of the news [excluded from the quantitative analysis]

1. Good news
2. Bad news
3. Neutral
4. Mix or cannot be determined

12. Strategy” or ”strategic” mentioned

0. No
1. Yes (even one reference is considered sufficient)
- 2.

13. Facts or reasoning

1. Facts only
2. Facts and reasoning
3. Other or cannot be determined

14. Proactive or reactive messages

1. Proactive (information about something that will happen)
2. Reactive (information about something that has happened in the past)
3. Combination
4. Unclear, cannot be determined

15. Article length (word count, including headline and captions)

1. Brief (79 words or less)
2. Short (80 to 149 words)
3. Medium length (150 to 249 words)
4. Long (250 words or more)

A CASE FOR COMBINING MEANING, CULTURE AND KNOWLEDGE: EXTENDING NONAKA'S THEORY OF THE KNOWLEDGE CREATING FIRM THROUGH PEIRCE'S SEMIOTICS

Miikka Lehtonen

D.Sc. Student

Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

External lecturer

Department of Language and Business Communication

Aarhus School of Business, University of Aarhus, Denmark

miikka.lehtonen@student.hse.fi

Constance Kampf

Associate Professor

Department of Language and Business Communication

Aarhus School of Business, Aarhus University, Denmark

cka@asb.dk

Abstract

During recent decades, knowledge management as a field of research has gained momentum. However, a communications approach to studying knowledge management has not received as much attention as it deserves. In this paper, we present a semiotic theory of knowledge creation that draws on the seminal work of Nonaka in knowledge management and Peirce's semiotics. In knowledge management literature, transmitted knowledge has been almost normatively equated with received knowledge, while in the field of international business communication this equation has never been taken for granted. Thus, inspired by the recent developments in the disciplines of international business communication and knowledge management the authors of this paper studied a Finnish-Indian IT-consulting team. Based on the research data, the semiotic theory of a knowledge-creating firm was formulated.

Keywords: international business communication, knowledge management, MNC, Nonaka, Peirce

Introduction

Knowledge management as a phenomenon is strongly communication driven – without communication, knowledge sharing between individuals cannot take place. Despite the pivotal role of communication in knowledge-related research, communication – especially international business communication – as a point of departure for knowledge-related studies has attracted less attention than what it deserves. However, the seminal work of Mirjaliisa Charles (Charles & Marschan-Piekkari 2002; Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta 2005) has paved the way for prominent research carried out in the field of international business communication by relating language choice and culture to workplace knowledge through communication processes.

Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005 coined the term BELF (Business English Lingua Franca) to describe English that is used inside multinational corporations (MNCs) and mainly amongst non-native English speakers. The notion of BELF has offered – and will continue to do so – numerous interesting starting points for studies dealing with multicultural contexts. It can be argued that without the notion of BELF, the combination of Peirce's semiotic theory and Nonaka's concept of the knowledge-creating firm, as discussed during the course of this paper, would not have adequate grounding in multicultural contextual and linguistic elements of knowledge.

Thus, the purpose of this paper is to describe a communication-driven framework to better understand knowledge communication in international and multicultural settings. Our framework is based on Nonaka (1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995) and Peirce (1986), while the inspirational source for our work comes from the pivotal work by Charles (Charles & Marschan-Piekkari 2002). With this discussion we attempt to shift international business communication from the margins to the centre of knowledge-related research.

We will begin our discussion by revisiting the development of Nonaka's theory of the Knowledge-Creating firm, to demonstrate how it has evolved over time through the work of a knowledge management discourse community focused on his work. Then we

will examine critiques of the theoretical concepts used to explain the features of knowledge communication in the theory of the Knowledge-Creating firm to open a space for a communications approach to knowledge grounded in semiotics and responding to the contextual and linguistic issues highlighted by Charles's visionary concept of BELF. Finally, we will lay groundwork enabling a semiotic approach to extend the theory of the Knowledge-Creating Firm.

Developing the Theory of the Knowledge-Creating Firm

Before *The Knowledge-Creating Company* (1995), Nonaka and Takeuchi had published several articles (Takeuchi & Nonaka 1986; Nonaka 1991; Nonaka 1994) leading to the formulation of organisational¹ knowledge creation theory. In the beginning, Nonaka (1991; 1994) proposed that knowledge creation consists of two dimensions, namely ontological and epistemological, which constantly affect each other. The epistemological dimension was further divided into tacit and explicit knowledge (Nonaka 1994; Leonard & Sensiper 1998; Polanyi 1998) while the ontological dimension refers to the interplay between individuals and/or organisation (Nonaka 1994). The two dimensions were then brought together to illustrate the spiral through which knowledge is constantly created, and thus the SECI model (Nonaka 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995) was formulated.

The model introduced above rests on the assumption that knowledge is created through conversion between tacit and explicit knowledge (Nonaka 1994). The first mode, socialisation, involves converting tacit knowledge between individuals while the second mode, externalisation, occurs when tacit knowledge is made explicit. While combination, the third mode, deals with combining new explicit knowledge with

¹ Nonaka and his associates sometimes use terms 'firm' and 'organisation' interchangeably although in the most current publications (Nonaka & Toyama 2005; they refer to firms rather than organisations. The shift towards firms is justified by Nonaka, Toyama & Konno's (2000) argument that companies achieve competitive advantages through knowledge.

existing explicit knowledge, internalisation - the fourth mode - converts explicit knowledge back to tacit knowledge.

SECI, Ba and Knowledge Assets: Three Knowledge Creation Elements

A few years later, Nonaka and his associates (Nonaka & Konno 1998; Nonaka et al. 2000; Nonaka & Toyama 2003; Nonaka & Toyama 2005) reformulated the knowledge creation theory, originally proposed by Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995), and currently it consists of three elements: the SECI process, *ba* and knowledge assets (Nonaka et al. 2000). While the two previous dimensions are still intact, Nonaka et al. (2000) introduced the three elements because despite the growing interest towards knowledge in organisations, we still have not understood the dynamics behind knowledge creation.

The SECI model has already been presented above but the two other elements, *ba* and knowledge assets, will now be covered. Nonaka and his associates base their conception of *ba* to that originally proposed by Shimizu (1995 in Nonaka & Konno 1998, p.40) and Nishida (1990 in Nonaka & Konno 1998 p.40). In short, *ba* is a “shared space for emerging relationships” (Nonaka & Konno 1998) and the space here can refer to either physical (e.g. office premises), virtual (e.g. online communities), mental space (such as ideas and ideals) or any combination formed from them. Nonaka et al. (2000) have identified a total of four types of *ba*, which are now discussed.

First, originating *ba* is a place for individuals to share experiences, opinions and feelings face-to-face (Nonaka & Konno 1998). Second, dialoguing *ba*, on the other hand, draws on individual mental models and these are converted to collective conceptualisations. The third type of *ba*, namely systemising *ba*, aims at sharing explicit knowledge to larger groups inside - and, to some extent, outside - the organisation. Fourth, through organisation handbooks and manuals individuals convert explicit knowledge to tacit in exercising *ba*.

In addition to the SECI model and *ba*, Nonaka et al. (2000) identified knowledge assets as crucial for managing knowledge effectively. Nonaka et al. (2000, p. 20) defined

knowledge assets as “firm-specific resources that are indispensable to create values for the firm”. These assets, then, form the basis for the knowledge-creating processes as inputs, outputs and moderating factors. Furthermore, Nonaka et al. (2000) propose that knowledge assets are further divided into the four following categories.

The first category, experiential knowledge assets, consists of explicit knowledge expressed as hands-on skills and emotional knowledge. Experiential knowledge is tacit in its nature and Nonaka et al. (2000) point out that it is difficult for competitors to imitate. Conceptual knowledge assets form the second category and they are explicit and communicated through symbols and visuals. Third, systemic knowledge assets contain systematised knowledge such as product specifications and employee manuals. The fourth, and last, category contains routine knowledge assets, which, as the concept suggests, contain tacit knowledge regarded as routines in a given organisation.

Nonaka et al. (2000) suggest that all of the knowledge asset categories presented above should be mapped in order to maximise their full organisation-specific potential. Nonaka & Toyama (2005) continue that knowledge assets do not only cover knowledge to use something that already exists, but also knowledge to create new knowledge. In fact, conceptual knowledge assets, for example, contain elements (e.g. product concepts and design) that require at least a certain level of minimum knowledge before they can be harnessed to create new knowledge.

Recent Developments in the Organisational Knowledge Creation Theory: New elements

During the recent years Nonaka and his associates (Nonaka & Konno 1998; Nonaka et al. 2000; Nonaka & Toyama 2003; Nonaka & Toyama 2005; Nonaka & Peltokorpi 2006) have further developed the organisational knowledge creation theory initially formulated by Nonaka and Takeuchi (Takeuchi & Nonaka 1986; Nonaka 1991; Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995) almost twenty years ago. In the articles published in 2003 and 2005, Nonaka & Toyama have taken the organisational knowledge creation theory to the next level by revisiting old concepts, such as the SECI model, as well as introducing completely new elements. The theory, named as the theory of the knowledge-creating

firm, now comprises a total of seven elements. The focus has shifted from regarding organisations as static entities in which knowledge conversion is practiced to seeing organisations as “an organic configuration of *ba* to create knowledge” (Nonaka & Toyama 2003, p.9). The novelty here is the notion that knowledge creation cannot be explained through earlier static theories of the organization, and therefore knowledge creation can be better understood by looking at individuals and organisations.

In addition to the SECI model, knowledge assets and *ba*, Nonaka and Toyama (2005) introduce three new components while redefining the first three. The components are as follows: knowledge vision, driving objective, dialogue & practice (i.e. the SECI model), *ba*, knowledge assets and ecosystem of knowledge.

The concept of *ba* becomes less compartmentalised—moving from four distinct types of *ba*—originating, dialoguing, combining, and systematizing—to a notion of *ba* as less specific and compartmentalized. In 2005, Nonaka & Toyama wrote that “*ba* is a foundation of knowledge-creating activity. It is where dialectical dialogues and practices take place to implement the vision and driving objectives of the firm.” In this sense, *ba* becomes akin to Wenger’s duality of participation and reification (1998), but instead of connecting practices with objects, it connects practices with interpersonal dialogue.

The concept of knowledge vision refers to the underlying existential assumptions that shape the organisation itself. By asking simple yet fundamental questions dealing with the organisation’s existence and agenda, the knowledge vision can be formulated. Through answering these questions the members of the organisation can become aware of the direction in which the knowledge vision is taking the organisation. The knowledge vision, however, is difficult to change because it rests on the very foundation of the organisation itself, its *raison d’être*. In conclusion, knowledge vision motivates knowledge creation by communicating what is considered as important and the direction of the organisation. (Nonaka & Toyama 2005, p.424.)

While knowledge vision deals with the question ‘what?’ the concept called “driving objective” is connected to the question ‘why?’. The driving objective is required to crystallise the knowledge vision, to make it tangible. In other words, knowledge vision can be seen as the goal, whereas the driving objective is the force that pushes the organisation towards the goal. (Nonaka & Toyama p.424-425.)

The last of the three new components, the ecosystem of knowledge, is the dynamic environment in which managerial and strategic decisions are made. Rather than being separate entities, organisations exist in larger environments; thus, decisions taken inside an organisation are never executed in a vacuum but in relation to the environment, which constantly affects organisational decisions and vice-versa. Before organisations can harness the ecosystems in which they reside, the interplay between organisations and their environments must be first understood. However, the metaphor of an ecosystem of knowledge implies that organisations need to be open to some extent to their connection to the environment for the interplay to function properly (Nonaka & Toyama, p.430-431).

Critiques of Nonaka’s Knowledge Conversion and Creation Theories

Gourlay (2003; 2006a; 2006b) has perhaps been one of the most productive critics of Nonaka & Takeuchi’s theory. He has claimed their theory contains two fatal flaws: the vague concept of tacit knowledge and the SECI model’s empirical validity (Gourlay 2006a; 2006b).

First, while not a direct critique to Nonaka & Takeuchi’s (1995) theory, Gourlay (2006b) argues that the concept of tacit knowledge contains contradictions, which actually make it an obstacle towards change rather than a change agent itself. Furthermore, Gourlay (2006b) doubts whether tacit knowledge actually can be converted into explicit knowledge due to Nonaka’s description of tacit knowledge as highly personal.

Gourlay (2006b) states that tacit knowledge is embedded in traditions, and traditions further refer to something conservative, but Takeuchi (1994), for example, never made a connection between tacit knowledge and tradition. In fact, according to Nonaka (1994, p.16), “tacit knowledge is deeply rooted in action, commitment and involvement in a specific context” which does not suggest any kind of connection between tacit knowledge and tradition. Thus, for Gourlay, it appears that tacit knowledge holds a conservative trait, whereas Nonaka posits it as dynamic in the connection to immediate involvement, commitment and action. This lack of consideration for tradition is problematic because it overlooks the signs, languages, and multicultural aspects of work life in a global society. However, on the other hand, Nonaka (2005) does describe knowledge as rooted in values. One key difference between values and tradition is that tradition is tied to objects as much as practice.

The limited cultural context in which the SECI model was developed and tested has also been discussed. Gourlay (2003; 2006a) pointed out that the SECI model still lacks some empirical evidence. Although the theoretical framework has been empirically tested, the locations have all been in Japan. For the SECI model to be understood as valid from a global or at least a multicultural perspective, it requires further validation in other contexts. In addition, Jorna (1998) states that Nonaka & Takeuchi’s (1995) theory lacks a semiotic framework, which would be essential in conveying “schemata, paradigms, beliefs and viewpoints that provide ‘perspectives’ that help individuals to perceive and define their world” (Nonaka 1994, p. 16). Furthermore, semiotic frameworks can be understood through BELF as existing in a multicultural context (Louhiala-Salminen et al. 2005), as well as a multilingual and multisemiotic context.

The critiques posed by Gourlay (2003; 2006a; 2006b) and Jorna (1998) are useful because they point to an opening for questioning the place of objects which affect and shape knowledge in different cultural contexts, as well as the need to acknowledge a connection between culture and knowledge.

In what can be interpreted as an indirect response to critiques, recently Nonaka (2008) claimed that knowledge should be regarded as a continuous flow, implying that tacit

and explicit forms of knowledge are distinct yet inseparable, and describing this interaction as knowledge being “created through the dynamic interaction between subjectivity and objectivity” as well as “through the synthesis of thinking and actions of individuals, who interact with each other within and beyond the organizational boundaries.” (Nonaka & Toyama 2005, p.1). Furthermore, he also states that since knowledge should be regarded as a constant flow, it is impossible to break knowledge down into smaller pieces and to study these separately. While the notion of seeing knowledge as a flow lacks empirical validation, it is mentioned here as a reply to Gourlay’s (2003; 2006a; 2006b) critique. By integrating Peirce’s work on semiotics into Nonaka and his associates’ theory of the knowledge-creating firm, we intend to answer the call for a more sound semiotic foundation in our extension of the model.

To conclude the discussion of Nonaka’s critiques and his response to them; Gourlay (2006b) has criticised the notion of every researcher having his/her own definition of tacit knowledge. However, we argue that attempts to characterise tacit knowledge without recognising the multiplicity of concepts embedded in the notion of knowledge would result in an incomplete picture (Kampf 2008). Therefore, the ability to see tacit knowledge from multiple angles helps us to study how people actually share tacit knowledge with each other from multiple perspectives.

Extending the Theory of the Knowledge-Creating Firm: Semiotic Dimension

Critics (Jorna 1998) to the theory of the knowledge-creating firm have claimed that it lacks a semiotic dimension, which eventually leads to only partial understanding of knowledge creation and sharing. By combining the work of Nonaka and his associates (1991, 1994, 2008; Nonaka et al. 2000; Nonaka & Toyama 2005) with Peirce’s elements of meaning (1931-1958 in Fiske 1990, p.42) this paper attempts to extend Nonaka and his associates’ theoretical framework through a semiotic basis for the knowledge-creating firm. This extension works to integrate the duality between participation and reification seen in Wenger (1998) with the duality between participation and dialogue found in a later version of the theory. (Nonaka and Toyama, 2005). The Peircean notion of object can be understood as mapping to Wenger’s

construct of reification. Objects can thus be seen as reifications of practices in organisational contexts - i.e. genres, forms, reports, presentation slides, charts, etc.

In contrast to the process school of communication (Fiske 1990, p. 2), Peirce's work is closely connected to the semiotic school, which "is concerned with how messages, or texts, interact with people in order to produce meanings". By introducing semiotics to extend the theory of the knowledge-creating firm we are able to better understand how and why knowledge sharing takes place. The SECI model, for example, (Nonaka et al. 2000) is based on the assumption that individuals have the potential to understand each other completely in terms of tacit knowledge. The problem here, however, arises from the differences between individual identities (Jameson 2007); without any common ground, there is a danger that tacit knowledge is misunderstood by the receiver and this can create frictions or even flaws in the knowledge creation spiral. In the following paragraphs, Peirce's elements of meaning are presented and integrated with Nonaka's knowledge creation theory.

According to Peirce (1931-1958 in Fiske 1990, 41-42) meaning is constructed in a triangular form between the sign, the object and the interpretant (Figure 1).

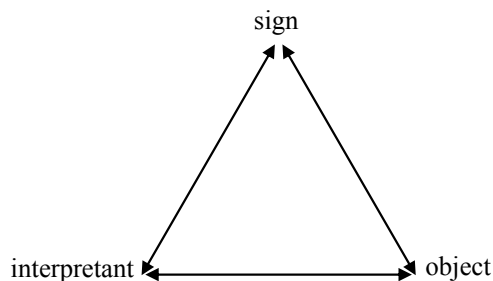


Figure 1. Peirce's elements of meaning (adapted from Fiske 1990, p. 42).

The double-ended arrows highlight the relation between the three elements: if one element is missing from the equation, the end result (i.e. 'meaning') is inadequate. According to Peirce (in Fiske 1990, p. 42) "a sign refers to something other than itself" where 'other' is called an object. The interpretant, then, interprets sign-object duality

and completes the triangular relation. The object can be understood as a physical representation of Nonaka’s objectivity, which interacts with the subjectivity of the interpretant. Consider the following example that illustrates the relation between the three elements mentioned above: the word ‘Enron’ (a sign) can refer to an object of which the interpretant has his/her individual conceptions and experiences. For some, ‘Enron’ can refer to morally dubious activity while for others it might hold warm memories of colleagues and work. How, then, does this help us understand knowledge creation and sharing? The following figure attempts to show how cultural identity corresponds to the semiotic theory of the knowledge-creating firm.

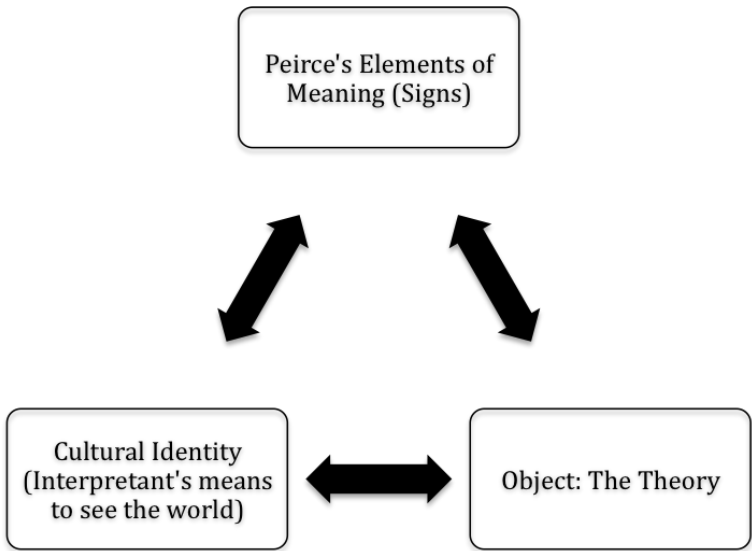


Figure 2. A semiotic approach to the theory of the knowledge-creating firm

Figure 2 presents the theory of the Knowledge Creating Firm as an object affected by the cultural identity of interpretants and understood through signs as Peirce’s elements of meaning. Two notions arising from the figure above need to be addressed. First, knowledge in the theory of the knowledge-creating firm focuses on the shared context, yet at the same time allows for multicultural spaces in which individuals possess unique cultural identities and systems to produce and interpret meanings. Second, the inclusion of the interpretant’s cultural identity implies that individuals need not have identical

mindsets but they are required to understand that their mindset and cultural identity may differ from that of others (Beamer 1995).

By combining the cultural identity of the interpretant with the signs represented by Peirce's elements of meaning, and the theory of the Knowledge Creating Company as our object of analysis, we have attempted to create a synthesis of Nonaka and his associates' theoretical framework, Peirce's work on semiotics and the concept of cultural identity, thus making a more relevant tool to analyse knowledge communication in multinational contexts (MNC) where individuals constantly face multiple cultural identities and systems of meaning in their daily work. In the beginning of this section, this combination was named as a semiotic extension to the theory of the knowledge-creating firm.

To illustrate how the suggested extension to Nonaka and his associates' work can help us study knowledge communication in MNC contexts, consider the following example from a previous study that looked into knowledge sharing practices in a Finnish-Indian IT-consulting team (Lehtonen, 2009). As some of the respondents in this study stated, Finns and Indians react differently to open-ended project specifications. Whereas Finns were able to start working with incomplete specifications, their Indian counterparts wanted to reach an agreement on specifications before any work was started. Project specifications as sources for documented knowledge had different meanings to Finnish and Indian team members. Even though they were operating with the same object, (i.e. 'project specification') the team members had different meanings for the project specification document (i.e. sign in Peirce's theory). Bearing the diversity of meanings in mind, Nonaka and his associates' theoretical framework is extended in the following section through the semiotic dimension.

Nonaka and His Associates' Theoretical Framework Extended

In the beginning of this paper, the theoretical framework was titled the knowledge-creation theory (Nonaka 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995) but as Nonaka and his associates (Nonaka et al. 2000; Nonaka & Toyama 2003; Nonaka & Toyama 2005;

Nonaka & Peltokorpi 2006) further developed the theory, it became known as the theory of the knowledge-creating firm. This shift was seen as necessary to better understand the dynamics behind knowledge-creation. What started as a notion of two dimensions, namely tacit and explicit, of knowledge soon evolved into a theory that attempts to explain why companies exist and how competitive advantages are created.

While critics have claimed that the theory of the knowledge creating firm lacks empirical validity, and that the duality of tacit and explicit knowledge is hard to study, Nonaka and his associates' seminal work in the field of knowledge management helps us to better see how people share and create knowledge. However, the theoretical framework does not reveal why people share knowledge nor can it be regarded as the only theory of knowledge-creation. Choo (1998), for example, in the *Knowing Organisation*, extends the SECI model into a knowing cycle, which he then synthesizes with Weick's concept of sensemaking and a decision model for organizations. Nevertheless, credit has to be given to Nonaka and his associates for developing the theory of the knowledge-creating firm and this paper aims at contributing to this same flow of knowledge by extending it in a cross-cultural and communicative direction through synthesis with semiotics and the addition of objects and cultural identity as crucial elements in understanding the connection between practice and knowledge.

Two limitations to Nonaka et al.'s model – namely cultural context and dimensions of knowledge – offer an opportunity for extending the model through a synthesis with Peirce's semiotic theory. First, Nonaka & Takeuchi's (1995) theory of organisational knowledge creation has not been tested outside Japanese organisation context. This, however, is not an ultimate limitation but it nevertheless has to be acknowledged because their conception of knowledge is, as they put it, somewhat distinct from the dualistic Western conceptualisation of knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995). Thus, the theory may be linked to signs for knowledge which, seen through an interpretant rooted in a Japanese cultural identity, are readily identifiable in the object of the Theory of the Knowledge Creating company. In order to approach other possibilities for knowledge creation rooted in multicultural and multilingual contexts, we suggest that using Peirce's elements of meaning as building blocks for knowledge creation is a

fruitful direction of study for at least two particular reasons. First, following the notion of individuals transcending their personal boundaries (Nonaka & Konno 1998; Nonaka et al. 2000), we may argue that this is not possible if communicated knowledge remains to be equated with received knowledge. Second, if we adopt the approach that every individual has his/her own cultural identity, then it follows that the way we – as individuals – interpret our surroundings tends to vary from individual to individual. This, as argued, should be seen as an advantage in organisations, not as a weakness. Offering multiple viewpoints to knowledge creation, then, can shift our understanding of knowledge as static and one-sided to culturally diverse knowledge.

Second, Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) have defined knowledge as involving two dimensions, tacit and explicit. Using Plato as their base, they regard knowledge as “a justified, true belief” (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995), however, this excludes a rhetorical basis for situational knowledge—focused on Aristotle’s notion of the enthymeme, a form of reasoning in which the premises are suppressed or tacit. Thus, the process of knowing tacitly may be understood as a form of cultural logic. Given the emphasis on *ba*, which can be understood as dynamic context which surrounds practice and dialogue, a Peircean perspective on the relation between interpretant, sign and object offers a direction for understanding tacit knowledge in terms of emergence from the signs and objects present in both cultural and multicultural contexts, as well as multilingual contexts using BELF. Knowledge and culture are similar in that they are complex concepts riddled with paradoxes and approachable from many divergent paradigms. Knowledge can be defined through its objectives, but still Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) chose to define knowledge at least in some way. Thus, what is understood as knowledge can vary across cultures, even as it varies across languages with “knowledge” in English translating as both “connaissance” and “savoir” in French. Here the *connaissance* implies familiarity, where as *savoir* implies the action of knowing. Thus, extra attention should be paid to definitions and origins of knowledge as a concept when studying knowledge communication in MNCs.

Conclusion – possible future directions

The extension to the theory of the Knowledge Creating Company we have presented synthesises Nonaka's work with Peirce's semiotics, offering a place to include notions of cultural identity, meaning and objects in our understanding of knowledge communication processes. This combination can be utilised to study instances of knowledge communication, the connection between meaning and knowledge, as well as the role, which culture plays in communicating knowledge in MNCs. Furthermore, communication events, meaning and culture are all areas of interest closely related to international business communication. This being the case, we, as authors of this paper, hope to see international business communication as a field gain momentum in the discourse around knowledge communication and knowledge management through studies dealing with MNCs, knowledge and communication.

References

- Beamer, L. (1995) A Schemata Model for Intercultural Encounters and Case Study: The Emperor and the Envoy. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 32(2), 141-161.
- Charles, M. & Marschan-Piekkari, R. (2002) Language Training for Enhanced Horizontal Communication: A Challenge for MNCs. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 65(2), 9-29.
- Choo, C. W. (1998) *The knowing organization: how organizations use information to construct meaning, create knowledge and make decisions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Digester, P. (1992) The Fourth Face of Power. *The Journal of Politics*, 54(4), 977-1007.
- Fiske, J. (1990) *Introduction to Communication Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Gourlay, S. (2003) The SECI model of knowledge creation: some empirical shortcomings. In McGrath, F. & Remenyi, D. (Eds.) *Fourth European Conference on Knowledge Management*. Oxford, England.
- Gourlay, S. (2006a) Conceptualizing Knowledge Creation: A Critique of Nonaka's Theory. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43(7), 1415-1436.
- Gourlay, S. (2006b) Towards conceptual clarity for 'tacit knowledge': a review of empirical studies. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice*, 4(1), 60-69.

- Jameson, D. A. (2007) Reconceptualizing Cultural Identity and Its Role in Intercultural Business Communication, *Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 44(3), 199-235.
- Jorna, R. (1998) Managing Knowledge. *Semiotic Review of Books*, 9(2), 5-8.
- Kampf, Constance (2008) From culture to cultural attitudes, knowledge communication practices and innovation. *Proceedings of the Cultural Attitudes Towards Communication and Technology 2008 conference in Nimes, France. June 22-26, 2008*. Perth: Murdoch University Press.
- Lehtonen, M. (2009) *Nonaka's knowledge creation theory revisited: a semiotic analysis of communicating knowledge in a geographically dispersed team*. Master's thesis, Helsinki School of Economics.
- Leonard, D. & Sensiper, S. (1998) The Role of Tacit Knowledge in Group Innovation. *California Management Review*, 40(3), 112-132.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., Charles, M. & Kankaanranta, A. (2005) English as a lingua franca in Nordic corporate mergers: Two case companies, *English for Specific Purposes*, 24(4), 401-421.
- Mäkelä, K.; Kalla, H. K. & Piekkari, R. (2007) Interpersonal similarity as a driver of knowledge sharing within multinational corporations. *International Business Review*, 16(1), 1-22.
- Nishida, K. (1990) *An Inquiry into the Good*. (Abe, M. & Ives, C., Trans). New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Nonaka, I. (1991) The Knowledge-Creating Company. *Harvard Business Review*, 69(6), 96-104.
- Nonaka, I. (1994) A Dynamic Theory of Knowledge Creation. *Organization Science*, 5(1), 14-37.
- Nonaka, I. (2008) Managing Flow: A Process-view of Knowledge-based Firm. *Paper presented at the annual CKIR Workshop in Helsinki, Finland. August 27-29, 2008*.
- Nonaka, I. & Konno, N. (1998) The Concept of "Ba": Building a Foundation for Knowledge Creation. *California Management Review*, 40(3), 40-54.
- Nonaka, I. & Peltokorpi, V. (2006) Objectivity and Subjectivity in Knowledge Management: A Review of 20 Top Articles. *Knowledge and Process Management*, 13(2), 73-82.

- Nonaka, I. & Takeuchi, H. (1995) *The Knowledge-Creating Company*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nonaka, I. & Toyama, R. (2003) The knowledge-creation theory revisited: knowledge creation as a synthesizing process. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice*, 1(1), 2-10.
- Nonaka, I. & Toyama, R. (2005) The theory of the knowledge-creating firm: subjectivity, objectivity and synthesis. *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 14(3), 419-436.
- Nonaka, I., Toyama, R. & Konno N. (2000) SECI, Ba and Leadership: A Unified Model of Dynamic Knowledge Creation, *Long Range Planning*, 33(1), 5-34.
- Paloheimo, H. & Wiberg, M. (1997) *Politiikan perusteet*. Porvoo: WSOY.
- Peirce, C. S. (1931-1958) *Collected Papers*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Peirce, C. S. (1986) *Philosophical Writings of Peirce*. New York: Dover Publications.
- Polanyi, M. (1998) *Personal knowledge: towards a post-critical philosophy*. London: Routledge.
- Shimizu, H. (1995) Ba-principle: New Logic for the Real-Time Emergence of Information. *Holonics*, 5(1), 67-79.
- Takeuchi, H. & Nonaka, I. (1986) The new new product development game. *Harvard Business Review*, 64(1), 137-146.
- Weick, K. E. (1995) *Sensemaking in organizations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of Practice*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE MULTILINGUAL WORKPLACE

Catherine Nickerson

Professor

Gulf School of Business

Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

catherine.nickerson@gmail.com

Abstract

An inescapable characteristic of the ascent of international business communication is that much workplace discourse is now multilingual in nature. For many regions of the world, including Europe, the Indian sub-continent, the wider Asian-Pacific region, and the Gulf, local languages now frequently co-exist alongside other languages, with the obvious dominance of English used both as a *lingua franca* and as an international business language. In this chapter, I will discuss the different interactions that take place within the broad framework of international business communication across the globe. I will discuss a recent investigation I carried out within a multilingual workplace and I will speculate on what is happening within the interactions that take place in such workplaces and the different factors that may play a role in determining the success or failure of the communication.

Key words: BELF, International Business English, workplace discourse, India, ESL

An important aspect of the ascent of international business communication is that much workplace discourse is now multilingual in nature. For many regions of the world, including Europe, the Indian sub-continent, the wider Asian-Pacific region, and the Gulf, local languages now frequently co-exist alongside other languages, with the obvious dominance of English used both as a *lingua franca* and as an international business language. Although this has been a well-documented fact of life for many years for large numbers of speakers of English as a second language in countries such as India, Malaysia and Singapore, often for intra-national communication, the increasing “flatness” of the world has now led to multilingual workplaces across the globe in regions where the need to communicate effectively across national borders has been a relatively recent phenomenon. In the course of the past two decades, researchers have therefore become increasingly interested in the consequences of the co-existence of different languages in workplace discourse. A great deal of useful work has been done to understand the consequences of the ascent of international business communication, most notably in the European context in the body of work by Mirjaliisa Charles, in whose honour this volume has been written (e.g. Lampi, 1986, 1990; Charles, 1995, 1996; Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002; Louhiala-Salminen, Charles & Kankaanranta, 2005). Much still remains, however, to uncover the challenges that people face in completing their work-related tasks in the twenty first century global village.

In this chapter, I will first discuss the different interactions that take place within the broad framework of international business communication across the globe. I will speculate on what is happening within these interactions and the different factors that may play a role in determining the success or failure of the communication. In the second part of the chapter I will report on an investigation of a multilingual workplace in India that I recently carried out, which provides an illuminating example of international business communication where English dominates as a business language, i.e. the linguistic context is BELF, *Business English as a lingua franca* (Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005) or IBE, *International Business English*. I will discuss the challenges faced on a daily basis by the people I interviewed and I will go on to discuss the implications of these for teaching and training purposes in the future.

What is international business communication?

If we look at the interactions that take place under the broad umbrella of international business communication, we can distinguish between interactions in which a given language is used as a *lingua franca*, and interactions where the language used functions as an international business language. In the case of English, for instance, *lingua franca* interactions would refer to situations in which there are no native-speakers of English present in the interaction, i.e. English is being used as a *lingua franca* and it is a second or foreign language for all those involved. These are the types of interactions that Louhiala-Salminen et al., (2005) have investigated and described as *BELF* (Business English as Lingua Franca) interactions, e.g. interactions between Swedes and Finns that take place in English within a multinational corporation. In addition to BELF interactions, there are many situations in which English is used, where it also includes native speakers of English. I have referred to this as *IBE* (International Business English), and I have suggested that IBE interactions also include those interactions between any speakers that are not using the same variety of English, regardless of whether they are first, second or foreign language speakers, e.g. a business meeting that involves Dutch (EFL) speakers, Canadian (native) speakers of English, and Indian (ESL) speakers would be conducted in IBE. I have therefore suggested that BELF is a special type of interaction in English, which does not involve native speakers of English, whereas IBE refers to encounters in English that include native speakers as well as speakers of English as a second or foreign language, and which may also therefore include BELF interactions (see Nickerson, forthcoming, for a detailed discussion on this).

Figure 1 below shows a categorization of Business English (BE) according to the speakers involved in each type of interaction; the innermost circle includes native speakers of the same variety of BE (NS1 + NS1), e.g. British speakers of English + British speakers of English, the second circle includes ESL speakers of the same variety of BE (ESL1 + ESL1) where English is being used as a BELF, e.g. Indian speakers of English + Indian speakers of English, the third circle includes native speakers of different varieties of BE (NS1 + NS2), e.g. British speakers of English + US speakers of English, the fourth circle includes ESL and/or EFL speakers who do not share the same variety of BE where English is again being used as a BELF, e.g. Swedish speakers of

English + Finnish speakers of English, and the fifth and final circle refers to interactions between NS, ESL and/or EFL speakers, where English is being used as an IBE, e.g. a British speaker, an Indian speaker of English and a Japanese speaker of English. In Nickerson (forthcoming) I explain that “I have ordered them in this way, to try to capture the increase in complexity in the interaction from the inside to the outside of the five BE circles, as a consequence of the increase in number of the different varieties of BE that are being used, as well as in the increase in the number of the different national cultures that each group of speakers represents”. In the context of International Business Communication, it seems plausible that a similar categorization could also be applied to languages other than English, e.g. French, Dutch, Spanish, Arabic, etc., again increasing in complexity as the different varieties of any given language increases as well as the number of different national cultures included within each interaction. If a speaker of French from France is in interaction with a speaker of French from Canada, for instance, then the interaction would fall into the third circle, with both linguistic and cultural differences. Likewise, if a speaker of Dutch from the Netherlands is in interaction with a speaker of Dutch from Belgium. Work on international business communication that has focused on interactions in languages other than English, such as that by Poncini on multilingual business meetings (Poncini, 2004) and by Vandermeeren on foreign language use in companies in Germany, France, the Netherlands, Portugal and Hungary (Vandermeeren, 1999), would suggest IBC interactions take place frequently that cluster around the fourth or fifth circles. In Poncini’s work, the business meetings she analysed were characterised by clusters of speakers who created a feeling of solidarity by using shared languages such as French and Italian as *lingua francae* for part of the meeting in a similar way to BELF. In Vandermeeren’s work, there are numerous instances of French and German being used by foreign language speakers as an international business language (in a similar way to IBE), particularly in the negotiation phase of a business deal. It may be necessary to adapt the nature and order of the different interactions depending on the language involved.

International business communication is characterized by complexity. It often takes place in English, but other languages are also used in business with similar challenges for the speakers involved. Speakers are dealing with both linguistic and cultural differences in varying degrees regardless of which language they choose to speak,

although English may certainly hold a unique position in this respect, in that as Louhiala-Salminen *et al.*, (2005) have commented for BELF, ‘... it can be seen to be a conduit of its speaker’s communication culture’ (2005: 417), and has largely become disassociated from the Anglo-Saxon cultures in which it originated. In the next section I will go on to discuss the communication that took place in a multilingual office setting in Bangalore in India, and I will identify some of the rhetorical challenges that were being met on a minute to minute basis.

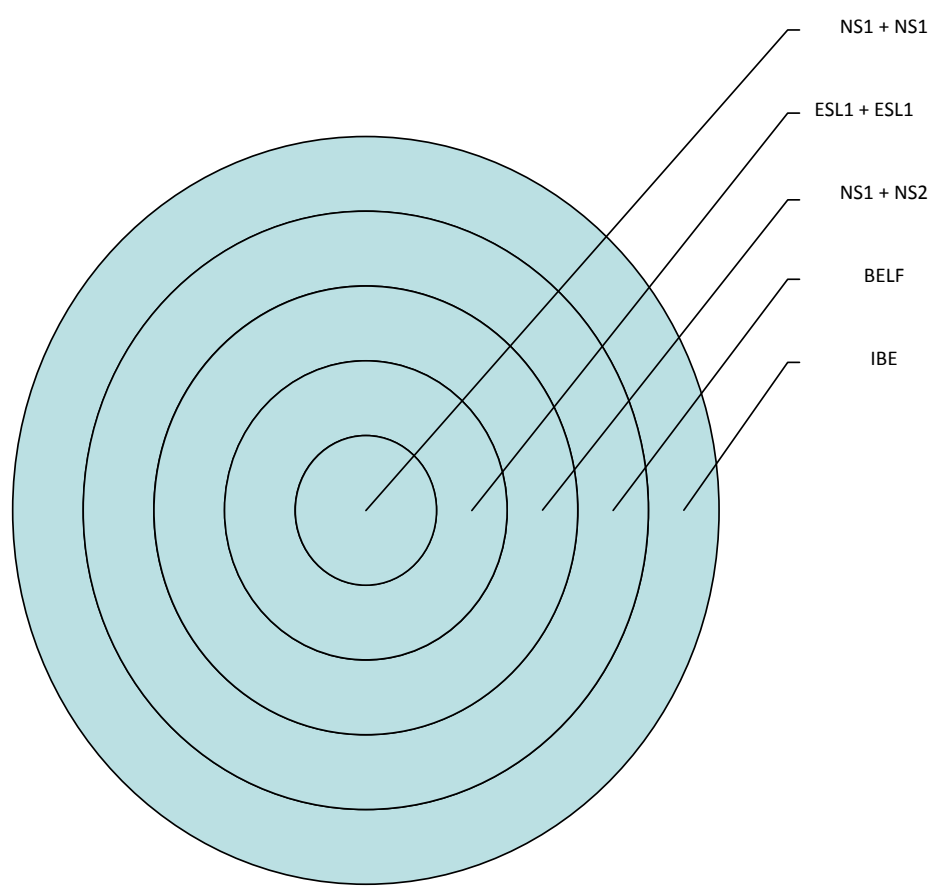


Figure 1: A Categorisation of BE Interactions in Global Business
(adapted from Nickerson, forthcoming).

Multilingual Ltd

In the spring of 2009 I was asked to provide a needs analysis for the Bangalore office of a multinational corporation that provides high level support services to customers across the globe. I will refer to it here as Multilingual Ltd¹. The corporation was about to implement a language policy in which communication could take place between the support services staff and customers based anywhere else in the world, and it wanted to provide appropriate training for the employees involved. I carried out a series of interviews and focus group discussions with key people at the corporation, which revealed a number of the rhetorical challenges that my informants had to meet, including communicating effectively on technical and business topics, understanding the customers' communication culture, and writing under pressure in a structured and succinct way. In addition, in contrast to several recent studies (e.g. Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002; Rogerson-Revell, 2007, 2008), almost all of those interviewed reported that they had most difficulties communicating with customers who do not speak English as a first language, and generally not with those for whom English was a first language. The study identified several areas in which the corporation could usefully focus its training efforts, as well as suggesting a number of ways in which studies like this can be used to increase our understanding of multilingual work contexts. In the discussion that follows I will first give brief details about the study and the questions that I asked, and I will then go on to place my informants' responses in the context of international business communication.

Multilingual Ltd. is the Bangalore office of a major multinational corporation with offices around the globe. The Bangalore office is primarily concerned with the IT sector, as are many such similar offices in Bangalore, and the people I interviewed were software engineers and managers, most of whom had been promoted internally. I collected the data over a period of four days in June 2009 on-site, and I carried out 8 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) of approximately one hour each at all levels within the organization, together with 8 interviews with middle and senior management, which

¹ I am very grateful to all those employees at Multilingual Ltd., who participated in the interviews and focus group discussions. I am also grateful to the two members of the language and cultural training support team for their insights into the communication that takes place at Multilingual Ltd.

again lasted for around one hour each. The FGDs and Interviews were structured around a series of questions relating to i) the process of writing, ii) the communicative genres used within the organization, iii) the areas that the respondents thought might constitute threats to the effectiveness of the communication and therefore business, and iv) any suggestions for training in the future. In addition, during the course of the four day visit, I also talked a length with two members of the support team who work full time for Multilingual Ltd. providing language and cultural training on both a compulsory and ad hoc basis. The FGDs and interviews were relatively informal, the informants were very willing to participate and I took notes directly on a laptop as we spoke rather than recording the interactions. By the end of the second day I was able to identify a number of key areas, which returned in all of the discussions I held, and I then focused specifically on these in the remaining discussions and interviews.

The communication that took place at Multilingual Ltd. was characterised by a number of different variables all of which have direct relevance for our understanding of international business communication. In the first instance, all the people I interviewed (with the exception of one member of the communication support team) were Indian nationals, and spoke English as a second (and sometimes third) language. The general language context in India has been well documented elsewhere (e.g. Kachru, 1985), and my informants confirmed these previous findings, in that although English was almost always used to the exclusion of other languages for work purposes at Multilingual Ltd., other languages such as Hindi and other regional languages were commonly used within the office as a means of communication between the Multilingual Ltd. employees based in Bangalore. English was used on occasion internally between Indian speakers of English who did not share a common Indian language, e.g. a speaker originating in the South of India may be able to speak Hindi, but may be more comfortable in English, such that a North Indian (where Hindi is widely spoken) and a South Indian may opt for English in order to level the playing field. In addition, it was also used in interactions with customers based in different parts of the world, and then always at a virtual distance either via email or the telephone in the form of a tele-conference, sometimes with multiple participants at both ends. This would suggest that the Multilingual Ltd. employees were constantly shifting between ESL with their compatriots (where necessary), BELF with other speakers of English as a second or foreign language not originating from India, and finally IBE in situations where they were dealing with

individuals or groups of individuals that also included native speakers of English. In other words, they were constantly moving across the different levels of complexity that I have presented in Figure 1. The informants identified a number of different ways in which this affected their communication. The most important of these were as follows:

1. **Use of Different Media:** The informants were aware that there is a distinction between cultures in their preference for a particular medium of communication in customer interactions. For instance, they reported that while US contacts prefer the telephone as a means of communication, UK and Australian contacts prefer email.
2. **Directness and Conflict:** Almost all of the people I interviewed reported that they knew that the communication originating in Multilingual Ltd. could sometimes be too direct to be effective in customer interactions. In addition, they also felt that there were difficulties in expressing what can best be described as different language functions, e.g. a suggestion produced by an Indian English speaker may not always sound like a suggestion to a US English speaker. On the other hand, there was widespread agreement – expressed in all the interviews and FGDs that I conducted – that many people at Multilingual Ltd. avoid dealing with conflict, and that this frequently has a corresponding negative effect on customer relationships, as the cultural background of the customer may mean that he or she would prefer to hear bad news directly. Most also attributed this to an Indian cultural tendency to avoid conflict at all times.
3. **Importance of Writing:** Many of the informants talked about the importance of writing, specifically email documentation. This was because of the global nature of the support services provided by Multilingual Ltd. and the need to provide a record of all customer interactions to keep other employees (and the customers) informed on a twenty four hour basis. Clarifying information, structuring information and summarising information succinctly, were all mentioned as important skills in documenting and therefore effectively dealing with global customer correspondence.
4. **Impact of the Pan-English Initiative:** At the time that the study took place, the multinational corporation to which Multilingual Ltd. belongs, was about to introduce what I will refer to here as the Pan-English Initiative (PEI). What this meant was that Multilingual Ltd. employees would then no longer be specialised – or *ring-fenced* in corporate terms – in providing customer support to one particular world region. The implementation of PEI meant that they would provide support to any customer, based anywhere in the world, for the duration of their shift. In other words, rather than

specialising in one area of Figure 1, Multilingual Ltd. employees would then be expected to move across the different types of interactions, regardless of the linguistic or cultural background of the customers concerned. Numerous informants mentioned PEI along with an awareness of cultural differences between customers in terms of media preferences, visual and textual preferences, and the different levels of English language proficiency that exist across their customer base that would lead to additional challenges. Many informants reported that they had the most difficulties with non-English speaking contacts, i.e. EFL speakers rather than native speakers of English as has been previously reported (e.g. Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002; Rogerson-Revell, 2007; 2008), and that this would be of particular consequence once the PEI had come into operation towards the end of 2009. Many also acknowledged that they needed to distinguish between the British English that is generally taught in schools in India and the multinational's own in-house variety of English which was American rather than British English.

Although the informants did talk about language challenges, particularly in communicating with customers who spoke English as a foreign language, their main concern was with developing an awareness of the customers' general communication culture and then learning to adjust their own communication in order to provide effective customer support. Decisions as to which medium to use, how to deal with conflict, how to structure information and how to contextualise information, were all driven by the business culture of the customer concerned, far beyond language proficiency and whether or not both parties could produce a grammatically correct utterance. The introduction of the PEI will mean that they will need to understand more about those cultural needs across the customer base around the world and it will therefore increase the complexity of their work-related tasks within the broad framework of international business communication.

Conclusion

Much of what I found at Multilingual Ltd. resonates with Louhiala-Salminen et al.'s contention that English is no longer associated any given Anglo-Saxon culture, unless of course one of the interactants happens to be a native speaker of English from one of the Anglo-Saxon regions, such as the US, UK, Australia or Canada. The employees at Multilingual Ltd. do business in English, but they are aware of the fact that they need to

adapt their communication to the cultural needs of their customers within the context of customer service support. In order to provide appropriate training for business people or students about to enter the business arena, we need to focus on two things. Firstly, we need to channel our research efforts in the future to increase our understanding of the role that culture plays in determining our preferred ways of communicating in business. And secondly, we need to continue to raise our students' awareness of the need to understand their business counterparts' language and cultural background, and the ways in which this may impact the communication that takes place between them.

References

- Charles, M. (1995). Organizational power in business negotiations. In K. Ehlich & J. Wagner (Eds.), *The discourse of international negotiations*. (pp. 151-174), Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Charles, M. (1996). Business negotiations: Interdependence between discourse and the business relationship. *English for Specific Purposes*, 15(1), 19-36.
- Charles, M. & Marschan-Piekkari, R. (2002). Language training for enhanced horizontal communication: A challenge for MNCs. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 65(2), 9-29.
- Kachru, B.B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the Outer Circle. In R. Quirk & H. Widdowson, (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (pp. 11-30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lampi, M. (1986). *Linguistic components of strategy in business negotiations*. Helsinki School of Economics, Studies B-85, Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics.
- Lampi, M. (1990). *Business negotiations: Linguistic strategies and the company agenda*. ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 338016 [Microfiche]. Washington DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., Charles, M. & Kankaanranta, A. (2005). English as a lingua franca in Nordic corporate mergers: Two case companies. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24(4), 401-421.
- Nickerson, C. (forthcoming). The Englishes of business. In T.A. Kirkpatrick (Ed.), *The handbook of world Englishes*. London & New York: Routledge.

- Poncini, G. (2004). *Discursive strategies in multicultural business meetings*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Rogerson-Revell, P (2007). Using English for international business: A European case study. *English for Specific Purposes* 26(1), 103-120.
- Rogerson-Revell, P. (2008). Participation and performance in international business meetings. *English for Specific Purposes* 27(3), 338-360.
- Vandermeeren, S. (1999). English as a lingua franca in written corporate communication: Findings from a European survey. In F. Bargiela-Chiappini & C. Nickerson, (Eds.), *Writing business: Genres, media and discourses* (pp. 273-292). Harlow: Longman.

A DIALOGIC APPROACH TO MEETING INTERACTION IN AN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Tuija Nikko

Director

Department of Languages and Communication

Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

tuija.nikko@hse.fi

Abstract

This article identifies and presents the theoretical premises and the main findings of a study in international business communication recently conducted at the Helsinki School of Economics. The study builds on and aims to expand the existing knowledge of workplace meeting interactions in a cross-border corporate environment. On the one hand, it explores the interactional and contextual premises for how understanding may be achieved in such interactions. On the other hand, it examines how orientation to the institutional dimensions is displayed in these interactions. Drawing on its dialogical premises, the study focuses on the practices through which the participants manage to achieve successful outcomes in their joint interaction.

Key Words: meeting interaction, dialogical approach, interactional practice, international business communication, conversation analysis

This article is based on my *lectio praecursoria* at the Helsinki School of Economics (HSE) in August 2009, in the connection of the public defense of my doctoral dissertation (Nikko, 2009). The study was conducted as part of a research project on internal communication of merged Finnish-Swedish corporations. The project was carried out at HSE in 2000-2003; it was funded by the Academy of Finland and led by professors Mirjalisa Charles and Helena Kangasharju.

I will start by discussing the three goals and driving forces that have motivated my research work. I will then introduce my data, after which I will proceed to some findings from my study. Finally, I will suggest some practical implications of my results.

Motivations of the study

One of the motivations of my research is to learn more about the dialogical premises of how people understand each other in face-to-face interaction. Another one is to gain deeper understanding of interaction in workplace meetings. The third driving force is my long-term interest in interactions between Finns and Swedes (Nikko, 1991; 1995; 2007).

Dialogism as opposed to monologism

Within interpersonal communication, the dominant approach to language, communication and cognition has by tradition been monologicistic rather than dialogistic (e.g. Linell, 1998). While the former views communication basically from the perspective of the individual agent, the latter stresses aspects of interaction, contexts and joint construction of meaning in situ. Hence, in the monologically oriented studies, the analytic focus is directed to the individual's actions and internal processes rather than to what is collectively accomplished through talk-in-interaction. The dialogical stance, by contrast, portrays sense-making in face-to-face encounters as an intrinsically

social and collective process, i.e. as basically an interactional affair (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995). Consequently, listeners are not just recipients but active co-authors of meaning.

According to Linell (1998), the constituent theories of monologism comprise (1) the information processing model of cognition (e.g. Johnson-Laird, 1983), (2) the transfer model of communication (e.g. Shannon & Weaver, 1949), and (3) the code model of language (e.g. Saussure, 1916). According to this stance, cognition is seen to precede communication, and ideas ('thoughts') are represented and transmitted as such through language in communication. Language is regarded as an external code, ancillary to cognition. Hence, cognition is the only fundamental phenomenon. In contrast, the foundation of the dialogical approach is comprised by dynamic, dialogical conceptions of language, cognition and communication. Instead of considering that meanings are "out there", a key role in meaning construction is assigned to situated interactions and practices.

A particular aspect of the present study is that communication is conducted through English as a lingua franca (ELF), that is, a shared language which is not the first language of any of the speakers (or business English as a lingua franca, BELF, in an international business context, see Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005; Louhiala-Salminen & Charles, 2006). By tradition, the predominant monological studies have seen lingua franca talk as a forum for inevitable problems and misunderstandings. When understanding is studied from a dialogical perspective, however, the focus is directed to how the participants together manage to achieve successful outcomes (e.g. Gardner & Wagner, 2004). Hence, the participants are considered communicators in their own right, not learners or trouble-makers or speakers of a deficient form of language. This is my perspective.

Workplace meeting interactions

As to my second motivation, workplace meetings, researchers have tended to find them far less interesting than, for example, negotiations. Then again, a dominant orientation to meetings in the literature has been prescriptive. A prescriptive orientation is based on

the assumption that meetings are ineffective and wasteful, and attempts need to be made to improve them. The dialogical approaches, however, stress the importance of encounters such as meetings, as dialogism assigns a key role to situated interaction in meaning construction. Increasingly, in studies of both organizational communication and social interaction, meetings are regarded as the essence of organizational life (e.g. Boden, 1994; Cooren, 2007).

A frequent methodology used to investigate the details of workplace interaction is conversation analysis (CA) (see Asmuß & Svennevig, 2009). Studying meeting interaction from the CA perspective helps to understand how orderly and meaningful communication is achieved as a joint effort by the participants. Moreover, CA argues that institutional talk is centrally and actively involved in the accomplishment of the “institutional” nature of the institutions themselves (Drew & Heritage, 1992). Meetings can thus be seen as the sites where organizations and institutions are actually “talked into being” (Heritage, 1984), or locally constituted through talk. Consequently, within the dialogical or interactional framework, meetings are not just seen as a prerequisite to organized activity, but rather as the form that generates and maintains the organization as an entity (Weick, 1995).

Since the early 1990s, most studies of institutional interaction have focused on dyadic lay-professional encounters such as medical consultations, job interviews, news interviews, and courtroom interrogations (see Arminen, 2005). Only recently, obviously for reasons stated above, microanalytical studies of workplace interaction involving talk in interprofessional multiperson settings, such as organizational meetings, is gaining ground (e.g. Asmuß & Svennevig, 2009; Kangasharju, 2002). The current study focuses on this emerging area by investigating, from a CA perspective, a less explored aspect of workplace meetings, namely shared understanding as displayed by the participants.

Finnish-Swedish interactions

The data for the current study comprise authentic internal meetings, videorecorded in recently merged Finnish-Swedish corporations. They are encounters of regular teams

consisting of both Finnish and Swedish members. There are meetings of permanent teams such as management teams, and less permanent project groups. The number overall purpose of the meetings is usually sharing information or solving joint problems.

Swedish has by tradition been the common language of encounters between Finns and Swedes, due to the status of Swedish as the second national language of Finland. However, as a consequence of globalization and a rapid integration of the economies of the two countries, English has increasingly gained ground in the business contacts between Finns and Swedes (see Charles, 2007). English is usually chosen as the corporate language of merged Finnish-Swedish corporations. Hence, the numerous cross-border mergers have not only reorganized the corporate field of the two countries but also introduced a new forum for Finnish-Swedish contacts where the common language is *lingua franca* English. Not surprisingly, the linguistic aspects of Finnish-Swedish mergers have attracted the interest of researchers of both management and international business communication (e.g. Charles, 2007; Fredriksson et al., 2006; Kankaanranta, 2005; Kuronen et al., 2005; Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005; Sääntti, 2001; Söderberg & Vaara, 2003). The present study approaches the topic from a less investigated microanalytical angle.

Findings of the study

The findings of the study extend and elaborate on existing knowledge about workplace meetings. I want to start the discussion of my findings with some rather general observations concerning the shared understanding of the meeting participants. Firstly, it is quite clear that interaction in the studied meetings is fluent in the sense that participants do not seem to be in any doubt about what is going on. Shared understandings function as an important resource in the creation of joint meanings. These shared understandings comprise shared meeting routines, written agendas, and shared knowledge about topics under discussion. For example, when the chair announces a new topic, there is usually no discussion of what is meant, who should be in charge of introducing the topic and how that should be done.

A second general observation is that the participants speak from the position of their professional identities. They do not portray themselves, or each other, as in any way deficient language users, but as representatives of their specific expertise, communicating in their own right. Consequently, they do not discuss the difficulty of finding a suitable word, or what somebody means with an utterance. A third general aspect of especially the meetings of permanent teams is that a lot of attention is paid to the creation of a positive atmosphere and team spirit. Humorous sequences are conjointly constructed especially before the actual meeting talk begins, and also in connection with problematic or sensitive topics. Such a humorous sequence, ending up in joint laughter, contributes to a feeling of shared understanding, and makes it easy to continue the interaction.

More specifically, the findings of the study display how shared understanding is locally constructed by the participants in meeting interactions. Participants demonstrate shared understanding in various ways. Firstly, they do it through relevant recipient reactions to each other's initiatives such as answers to questions. Secondly, they do it through the use of various types of interactional devices. These include recipient reactions such as *aha, yeah, I see*, increments through which a participant adds something to a co-participant's turn, collaborative completions in which a co-participant completes the utterance of the speaker, evaluations or comments like *very well, excellent*. Thirdly, shared understanding is constructed through practices used for checking understanding. These include requests for confirming or clarifying understanding. How shared understanding is in practice co-constructed in meeting interaction has not been systematically analyzed before. My study now fills this gap.

I had a closer look at some interactional practices. One of these was the use of what is referred to as collaborative completions (Sacks, 1992). This practice has been studied in everyday conversation but not systematically in an institutional context like meetings. An interesting finding was that the use of this practice revealed tendencies that suggest activity specific orientations, in other words, practices that are specific for meeting interactions. First, my data revealed that there is a clear difference in the ways in which

collaborative completions were used in a meeting of a management team and in a meeting of a project team. Based on the findings of my study I suggest that the difference displays a different orientation to the hierarchical status of the participants in the two types of meetings. It would seem that it is not deemed appropriate to complete another participants' utterance in a management meeting, while this kind of completion seems to be common practice in a project meeting, at a lower hierarchical level.

The analysis also suggests certain other activity-specific functions of collaborative completions, namely displaying expertise, or orientation to urgency, and, more specifically, it is also used as a practice for prompting conjointly constructed humorous sequences. All in all, the analysis reveals that collaborative completion is a multi-functional interactional resource in meeting interactions.

The second interactional practice I studied more closely was code-switching in the meetings. That refers to the alternating use of English, Finnish and Swedish. The main finding was that while multilingualism seems to be an available resource for participants in pre- and postmeeting talk, language choice is not a negotiable issue in actual meeting talk. The use of other languages than English is marked as accountable, and it is restricted to single words. Code-switching may be used as a resource for solving word search problems, or as a resource for referring to shared conceptual knowledge, such as "samarbetskommitté" in Swedish.

Practical implications of the study

My results encourage business communication trainers and teachers of lingua franca or foreign language communication to focus on the dynamic use of interactional practices rather than focusing on the performance of individual participants, as is often the case. Language testing, traditionally, is an area that focuses on individual performance rather than joint construction of talk-in-interaction. For business practitioners it would be useful to become aware of the ways how, for example, organizational roles and expertise are created through microlevel practices in dialogue with others.

Finally, I want to finish by reminding us all of the fact that Finnish-Swedish relations are of specific interest this year. 2009 marks the 200th anniversary of the separation of Finland from Sweden. The official events commemorating the anniversary have continued throughout the year. For more than 600 years, until 1809, Sweden and Finland formed one kingdom. In 1809 Sweden lost Finland to Russia in the Napoleonic wars. Today, both countries speak of a rich common history and close cooperation. According to a statement by Carl Bildt, the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs earlier this year, “Today – 200 years after 1809 – Finland is closer to us than any other country in terms of politics and economy, and as human beings”. The current study demonstrates, for its small part, how this cooperation keeps on being constructed and consolidated in contemporary society. (Helsingin Sanomat, International Edition 16.1.2009)

References

- Arminen, I. (2005). *Institutional interaction. Studies of talk at work*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Asmuß, B. & Svennevig, J. (2009). Meeting talk: An introduction. *Journal of Business Communication* 46 (1), 3-22.
- Boden, D. (1994). *The business of talk: Organization in action*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Charles, M. (2007). Language matters in global communication. *Journal of Business Communication* 44 (3), 260-282.
- Cooren, F. (Ed.) (2007). *Interacting and organizing. Analysis of a management meeting*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Drew, P. & Heritage, J. (Eds.) (1992). *Talk at work. Interactions in institutional settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fredriksson, R., Barner-Rasmussen, W. & Piekkari, R. (2006). The multinational corporation as a multilingual organization. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal* 11 (4), 406-423.
- Gardner, R. & Wagner, J. (Eds.) (2004). *Second language conversations*. London: Continuum.
- Helsingin Sanomat, International Edition (2009). *Swedish PM says Finland and Sweden do not need to apologise to each other over common history*. 16.1.2009.

- Heritage, J. (1984). *Garfinkel and ethnomethodology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Jacoby, S., & Ochs, E. (1995). Co-construction: An introduction. *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 28 (3), 171-183.
- Johnson-Laird, P. (1983). *Mental models*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kangasharju, H. (2002). Alignment in disagreement. Forming oppositional alliances in committee meetings. *Journal of Pragmatics* 34 (10-11), 1447-1471.
- Kankaanranta, A. (2005). "Hej Seppo, could you pls comment on this!" *Internal email communication in lingua franca English in a multinational company*. Centre for Applied Language Studies. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Kuronen, M.-L., Tienari, J. & Vaara, E. (2005). The merger storm recognizes no borders: An analysis of media rhetoric on a business manoeuvre. *Organization* 12 (2), 245-273.
- Linell, P. (1998). *Approaching dialogue. Talk, interaction and contexts in dialogical perspectives*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L., Charles, M. & Kankaanranta, A. (2005). English as a lingua franca in Nordic corporate mergers: Two case companies. *English for Specific Purposes* 24 (4), 401-421.
- Louhiala-Salminen, L. & Charles, M. (2006). English as the lingua franca of international business communication: Whose English? What English? In J.C. Palmer-Silveira, M.F. Ruiz-Garrido & I. Fortanet-Gomez (Eds.), *Intercultural and international business communication* (pp. 27-54). Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang.
- Nikko, T. (1991). *Kognitiivinen lähestymistapa vieraan kielen ymmärtämiseen. Ymmärtäminen natiivin ja vieraan kielen puhujan puhelinkeskustelussa* [Cognitive approach to foreign language understanding: Understanding in telephone conversations between native speakers and non-native speakers]. Publications of the Language Centre for Finnish Universities 41. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Nikko, T. (1995). *Interkulturell förståelse i Mittnorden* [Intercultural understanding in Mittnorden area]. Research Reports from the Language Centre for Finnish Universities, n:o 2. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Nikko, T. (2007). Skapandet av betydelser på sammanträden vid finsk-svenska fusionerade företag [Joint meaning creation in company-internal face-to-face meetings of Finnish-Swedish companies]. In O. Kangas, & H. Kangasharju. *Ordens*

- makt och maktens ord* [Power of words and words of power] (pp. 378-415). Publications of the Research Programme "Interaction across the Gulf of Bothnia", volume 4. Helsinki: Svenska Litteratursällskapet.
- Nikko, T. (2009). *Dialogic construction of understanding in cross-border corporate meetings*. Acta Universitatis Oeconomicae Helsingiensis A-351. Helsinki: Helsinki School of Economics.
- Sacks, H. (1992). *Lectures on conversation*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Säntti, R. (2001). *How cultures interact in an international merger*. Acta Universitatis Tamperensis 819. Tampere: University of Tampere.
- Saussure, F. de 1964 [1916]. *Cours de linguistique générale*. Published by C. Bally and A. Sechehaye. Paris: Payot.
- Shannon, C., & Weaver, W. (1949). *The mathematical theory of communication*. Urbana Ill.: University of Illinois Press.
- Søderberg, A-M., & E. Vaara (Eds.) 2003. *Merging across borders. People, cultures and politics*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Weick, K.E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

FIFTY YEARS OF INTERCULTURAL STUDY: A CONTINUUM OF PERSPECTIVES FOR RESEARCH AND TEACHING

Priscilla S. Rogers

Associate Professor of Business Communication
Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, USA
psr@umich.edu

Joo-Seng Tan

Associate Professor
Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
ajstan@ntu.edu.sg

Abstract

Based on a review of intercultural research since the publication of Hall's (1959) "The Silent Language," this study identifies and summarizes five perspectives in key scholarly work—universal, national, organizational, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. An analysis of business communication research and pedagogical journals over the last half-decade, reveals a lack of comprehensive work using these perspectives. Midst calls for a more robust methodology for intercultural communication, we suggest approaches by which these perspectives might be integrated for intercultural business communication research and teaching: selected lens, sequential hierarchy, and dialogic identity.

Key Words: intercultural research, intercultural pedagogy, intercultural perspectives, cultural intelligence, dialogue

Introduction

Hall's 1959 *The Silent Language* is said to mark the start of intercultural communication (Hart, 1997). As this field passes 50 years, some have expressed concerns regarding its research and teaching going forward. For example, Jacob (2005) posited that "the time is . . . ripe for considering new approaches to cross-cultural management." She argued that, "researchers today should employ a more robust methodology" involving "different approaches done at varying levels of analyses" (p. 515; see also Limaye & Victor, 1991). Bargiela-Chiappini and Nickerson observed many diverse approaches but found a lack of uniformity field-to-field. "The fundamental constructs of culture and communication involve an array of well-established and highly developed fields of enquiry, with their distinctive and sometimes overlapping approaches, theories and methodologies," they concluded (2003, p. 3). At the same time they found little integration of constructs with intercultural business communication researchers preferring to work at the macro level using nations and universal values as the unit of analysis.

Responding to such observations, the purpose of this research was threefold. First we sought to identify and characterize major scholarly perspectives on intercultural communication, focusing on research with relevance to the workplace. Second we examined how these perspectives have been appropriated in business communication publications, specifically *Business Communication Quarterly*, the *Journal of Business Communication*, the *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, and *Management Communication Quarterly*. Findings provided the reflective grist for our third goal, namely to consider how the key perspectives on intercultural communication might be used for business communication research and teaching going forward. This chapter is organized around these three goals.

Scholarly Perspectives on Intercultural Communication

Key Scholars in Intercultural Research

A review of intercultural literature and citation indexes suggests the following scholarship as highly significant for the study and teaching of intercultural communication for the global workplace: Hall (1959), Hofstede (1980; 1983; 1991), Schwartz (1994a & b; 1999), Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1997), and the more recent work of Earley and Ang (2003). The number of citations in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) and in Harzing's Publish or Perish (POP), as of May 31, 2007, as shown in Figure 1, is a strong indicator of their significance.

Authors	Harzing's Publish or Perish (POP)	Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) (ISI Web of Knowledge)
Hall (1959; 1966)	13,101	6,731
Hofstede (1980)	43,443	14,463
Schwartz (1994; 1999)	6,885	5,872
Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1997)	2,962	695
Earley & Ang (2003)	219	52

Figure 1: Citation Counts for Intercultural Scholars

Respondents to a survey of U.S. members of the Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research, identified Hall as the most influential figure in the field of intercultural communication (Rogers, Hart, & Miike, 2002). But citations, particularly in the Social Science Citation Index, show the influence of Hofstede and Schwartz as well. More recent research enjoys fewer citations, but these new works we've identified as significant are deeply grounded in the giants: Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) in Hofstede (1980), Earley and Ang (2003) in Hall (1959; 1966; 1976). With the exception of Earley and Ang, who are relatively new entrants, the contributions of all these scholars are earmarked as formative by Dahl (2004).

These intercultural scholarly works are also of interest here because of their ties to workplace communication. Although Hall does not use workplace data nor deal with workplace situations as do some of the other scholarly works on our list, Hall's notion of "[c]ontexting is the most cited theoretical framework in articles about intercultural communication in business and technical communication journals and in intercultural communication textbooks" according to Cordon (2008, p. 399). Meanwhile, Hofstede's data are from employees in multinationals and he discusses the implications of his broad dimensions for intercultural encounters in international business organizations directly (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner modify and apply Hofstede's dimensions to comment on the impact of culture on business and to provide tips that help managers communicate midst cultural differences. Schwartz suggests that his theory of universal values may be applied to study societal norms about work and its centrality. And finally, Earley and Ang include two chapters on work environments and the enactment of communication (which they call "behavior") is a construct in their theoretical framework.

Perspectives in Key Scholarship

In reviewing the scholarly work of Hall, Hofstede, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, Schwartz, and Earley and Ang we found five unique yet overlapping perspectives: universal, national, organizational, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. We define a

perspective as a vantage point from which a scholar views intercultural communication. For example, when Hofstede (1991) studied employees in organizations, his analyses tend to center around individuals' *national* cultural identity and much of his interest has been to describe the "*collective* mind" of national groups (1980, p. 21). By contrast, Earley and Ang's (2003) research on cultural intelligence emphasizes helping the *individual* sojourner adapt to new cultural environments (see also Earley, Ang, & Tan, 2006; Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, C, Ng, Templer, Tay, & Chandrasekar, 2007). They focus on the cognitive, metacognitive, and motivation factors that may enable an individual to adapt behavior when encountering a new culture.

We suggest that these five perspectives may be placed on a continuum with Schwartz's universal perspective at one end and Earley and Ang's intrapersonal perspective at the other. Schwartz's *universal* values are followed by Hofstede's *national* differences; meanwhile, Hall observes *interpersonal* interactions while Earley & Ang lean toward *intrapersonal* issues. Emphasizing *organizations* and the multi-cultural issues managers face, Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner fall in the middle, as shown in Figure 2. To illustrate these perspectives, we overview some of the key ideas put forward by these scholars.

	Schwartz	Hofstede	Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner	Hall	Earley & Ang
Perspectives	Universal Values flowing from humans' most basic needs	National Cultural differences among nations as seen in societal systems & collective values	Organizational Adaptation in business contexts through awareness of intercultural differences and self examination	Interpersonal Individual behaviors and the hidden cultural roles governing them	Intrapersonal Cognition & motivation influencing the individual's acquisition, processing, and reaction to social situations

Constructs	Identified universal values that can be compared:	Identified “invisible” cultural differences:	Identified five cultural dichotomies operating in business organizations:	Observed culture “before our eyes” such as the use of time & space.	Introduced “cultural intelligence,” a person’s ability to adapt to new cultural settings.
	1. Individual relate to group: Conservatism vs Autonomy;	1. Power distance	1. Universalism-- Particularism	Introduced two dimensions of culture:	CQ involves:
	2. Preserving Social Fabric: Hierarchy vs Egalitarianism;	2. Individualism	2. Community-- Individual	1. High- and low-context	1. Cognition
	3. Humans relating to natural & social world: Mastery vs Harmony.	3. Masculinity	3. Neutral-- Affective emotion	2. Polychronic versus monochronic time orientation	2. Motivation (molar mental functioning)
		4. Uncertainty avoidance	4. Diffuse-- Specific (private) self revelation		3. Behavior (in daily living)
		5. Long/short term orientation.	5. Achievement-- Ascription (doing vs being)		

Figure 2: Perspectives & Related Constructs of Intercultural Scholars

Universal Perspective of Schwartz

Schwartz identified values that are shared and have similar meanings across cultures. He sought to answer the question: Are there *universal* aspects in the structure and content of human values (1994a; 1999)? For one study he asked 25,863 individuals to rank the extent to which 56 different values were guiding principles for their lives (1994a). From these data he identified four higher-order, bipolar value dimensions, which he found to have near universality across individuals:

openness to change (e.g. self-direction)	< ---- >	conservation (e.g. tradition, conformity, and security)
self-enhancement (e.g. achievement and power)	< ---- >	self-transcendence (e.g. benevolence and universalism).

In 1999 he refined and expanded his categories to include values such as: conservatism versus autonomy as they relate to the individual's connection to the group; hierarchy and egalitarianism as they relate to preserving the social fabric; and mastery versus harmony as they concern humans relating to the social world.

Although Schwartz's primary goal was to identify universal values that have shared meanings across individuals and cultures, he also used the values he identified for country-to-country comparisons, an application overlapping with Hofstede's interest (1980). For example, Schwartz determined that francophone Swiss seem to be most influenced by "intellectual autonomy" yet they, more than any other group, rejected "conservatism values" (Schwartz, 1999, p. 37). Schwartz also believed his universal values could be used to study the individual. For example, he explained that values on the individual level reflect "psychological dynamics of conflict and compatibility that individuals experience in . . . pursuing their different values in everyday life" (1994b, p. 92).

National Perspective of Hofstede

As is well known, Hofstede's driving question has been: What "collective programming of the mind distinguishes the members of one human group from another" (1980, p. 21)? He was particularly interested in the domain of basic values that are the core of *national cultures* (1980; 1983). Like Schwartz, Hofstede used statistical analyses of survey data from individual respondents (e.g. IBM employees from over 40 countries yielded 116,000 responses). But rather than comparing people individually, Hofstede used these data to identify central tendencies or the cultural dimensions for which he has become famous (1980; 1983):

- *High versus low power distance* refers to the degree to which the *less powerful* members of society expect there to be differences in the levels of power. High power distance suggests that there is an expectation that some individuals wield larger amounts of power than others. Low power distance reflects the view that all people should have equal rights. Hofstede ranked Latin American and Arab nations as tending toward high power distance and Scandinavian and Germanic speaking countries as tending toward low.
- *Individualism versus collectivism* reflects the extent to which individuals are expected to stand up for themselves, or alternatively, act predominantly as members of the group or organization. He found the United States to be one of the most individualistic cultures.
- *Masculine versus feminine* reflects the value placed on traditionally male or female values. Masculine cultures value competitiveness, assertiveness, ambition, and the accumulation of wealth and material possessions, whereas feminine cultures place more appreciation on relationships and quality of life. Japan is considered by Hofstede to be the most "masculine" culture, Sweden the most "feminine."
- *High versus low uncertainty avoidance* reflects the extent to which a society attempts to cope with anxiety by minimizing uncertainty. Cultures that scored high on uncertainty avoidance prefer rules, such as about religion and food, and structured circumstances, such as employees tending to remain longer with an employer. Mediterranean cultures and Japan rank the highest on uncertainty avoidance, Hofstede concludes, for example.
- *Long versus short-term orientation* refers to a society's "time horizon," or the importance attached to the future versus the past and present. In long-term oriented societies thrift and perseverance are valued more; in short-term oriented societies respect for tradition and reciprocation of gifts and favors are valued more. Hofstede found Eastern nations tending toward long-term and Western nations toward short-term views.

Hofstede's primary intent was to be "specific about the elements of which [national] culture is composed" (1980, p. 11). But like the other scholars here, Hofstede is not blind to the other perspectives suggested. For example, he explained that his cultural dimensions may allow *individuals* to compare their own cultural tendencies with those of individuals from other countries and groups. As we shall see, this sounds like something one might read in Earley and Ang (2003) who are keenly interested in the individual sojourner.

Organizational/Managerial Perspective of Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner

Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner focused on the question: How can cultural diversity be managed across business organizations? Building on Hofstede's cultural dimensions, they suggested seven cultural dichotomies that managers and their organizations may encounter when working internationally.

- (1) *Universalism versus particularism*: What is more important: rules or relationships?
- (2) *Community versus individual*: Do we function in a group or as individuals?
- (3) *Neutral versus affective emotion*: Do we display our emotions?
- (4) *Diffuse versus specific*: Is responsibility specifically assigned or diffusely accepted?
- (5) *Achievement versus ascription*: Do we have to prove ourselves to receive status or is it given to us?
- (6) *Sequential versus synchronic*: Do we do things one at a time or several things at once?
- (7) *Internal versus external orientation*: Do we control our environment or are we controlled by it?

When Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) elucidate broad national differences it is to suggest how these differences may play out organization-to-organization across cultures. They illustrate differences with anecdotes and examples from the training programs they conducted in more than 20 countries and provide tips for doing business in light of the various cultural dispositions they found. For example, in "future-orientated" cultures, an agreement by a firm to adhere to specific deadlines means that if the work is not completed on time then the agreement need not be kept.

Interpersonal Perspective of Hall

Hall (1959; 1966; 1976) tackled the question: How is culture observed when individuals interact? In a 1998 interview, he described his interest in the interpersonal aspects of intercultural communication.

I spent years trying to figure out how to select people to go overseas. This is the secret. You have to know how to make a friend. And that is it! If you can make friends and if you have a deep need to make friends, you will be successful. It's people who can make a friend, who have friends, who can do well overseas. . . . If we can get away from theoretical paradigms and focus more on what is really going on with people, we will be doing well (Sorrells, 1998, pp. 1 & 11).

As an anthropologist, Hall drew upon his experience rather than empirical data to explore how individuals behave in different cultural contexts and the hidden rules that govern their social behavior. "When I talk about culture I am not just talking about something abstract that is imposed on man and is separate from him, but about man himself, about you and me in a highly personal way," he wrote (1959, pp. 32-33).

Hall observed two dimensions of culture that characterize the way individuals interact: high- and low-context, and polychronic versus monochronic time orientation. High- and low-context have to do with how information is communicated: high-context interactions include minimal information and rely on what the interactants already know. Low-context interactions include more information to make up for a lack of familiarity and more contextual cues to clarify meanings.

Hall's second dimension, polychronic versus monochronic time orientation, deals with the way time is structured in various cultures. Polychronic time orientation allows multiple tasks simultaneously and privileges interpersonal relationships over time demands, whereas monochronic time orientation focuses on "one thing at a time." Hall believed that awareness of these hidden values governing interpersonal behavior could bring order and confidence to the individual sojourner.

Intrapersonal Perspective of Earley and Ang

Earley and Ang addressed the question: Why do some individuals adjust to new cultures while others do not? They introduced the concept of cultural intelligence (CQ). They defined CQ as "a person's capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts" (2003, p. 59). This includes one's ability to interact successfully with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. However, in their definitive work, *Cultural Intelligence: Individual Interactions Across Cultures*, they spent the bulk of their time exploring the *individual's internal wiring*. Three of the four categories in their model—cognition, metacognition, and motivation—are intrapersonal, the fourth being external behavior.

- (1) *Cognition* or knowledge of one's self, environment, information handling, and thinking processes.
- (2) *Metacognition* or one's ability to piece together the available information to form a coherent picture.
- (3) *Motivation* or one's desire to engage the new environment given one's values, expectations.
- (4) *Behavior* or the enactment of communication by both verbal and non-verbal means in social situations.

Earley and Ang's particular interest is the individual sojourner who is committed to learning more about his/her cultural unconsciousness. They overlap with Hall in their interest in behavior or the individual's knowledge of what to do and how to do it. Indeed, their conclusions suggest the necessity of a large behavioral repertoire of verbal and nonverbal responses from which to draw for a given situation; however, they do not develop how these behaviors might be enacted as Hall has done to some degree. Rather, Earley and Ang stress that a culturally intelligent person must have the cognitive capability and motivation to acquire such behaviors (2003, p. 81).

Use of Perspectives in Research and Teaching

So to what extent are these five perspectives appropriated for business communication research and teaching? To address this question we reviewed the last five years of publications (from July 2004 to July 2009) on intercultural communication research and teaching in the *Journal of Business Communication (JBC)*, *Journal of Business & Technical Communication (JBTC)*, *Management Communication Quarterly (MCQ)*, and *Business Communication Quarterly (BCQ)*, the top pedagogical journal in the field. Hofstede was the most frequently cited scholar (total of 22 citations) followed by Hall (total of 10 citations), and Hofstede's national perspective was the most popular framework for research. However, we found no work integrating the intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, national and universal perspectives in key intercultural studies.

Key Authors/Perspectives	JBC	JBTC	MCQ	BCQ	TOTAL
Hofstede (National)	7	6	2	7	22
Hall (Interpersonal)	4	3	0	3	10
Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (Organizational)	1	2	0	3	6
Schwartz (Universal)	0	1	1	1	3
Earley & Ang (Intrapersonal)	0	0	0	1	1

Figure 3: Key Authors/Perspectives in Business Communication journals (July 2004 – July 2009), in order of frequency of citations, from highest to lowest

There have been recent attempts to develop new ways and chart alternative directions for researching and teaching international business communication. Some examples include the reconceptualization of cultural identity (Jameson, 2007), the refinement of English lingua franca as Business English lingua franca (Charles, 2007), and the application of genre theory to the development of language-based communication zones (Du-Babcock & Babcock, 2007). Jameson suggests a new line of research in intercultural professional communication centered on an expanded model of cultural identity. Her notion of cultural identity relates to national, organizational, and interpersonal perspectives, but leaves the intrapersonal perspective largely in the subtext. Charles' conceptualization of Business English lingua franca is limited to the national and organizational perspectives, and to some extent, hints at the universal perspective. Du-Babcock and Babcock's construct of language-based communication zones focuses on the organization and interpersonal perspectives. None of the publications in the business communication literature during the last half-decade, which we examined, incorporated all five perspectives.

In some of the more recent research visualizing the future of international and global communication, we find a growing chorus of support for more comprehensive methods for researching and teaching intercultural communication. Ortiz (2005) asserts the importance and value of a more integrated approach. Rogers (cited in Suchan & Charles, 2006) suggests that we adopt a systems-wide view in developing a deeper understanding of the “embeddedness” of organizational communication as part of larger systems. On the future of teaching international business communication, Du-Babcock (2006) states that “...business communication should be seen as a universal or global product but taught in line with local practices and environmental factors.” Starke-Meyerring (2005) visualizes global discourse in the context of pluralized identities, blurred boundaries, and multiple literacies. If neither the universalistic nor particularistic approaches are adequate in addressing the challenges of global discourse, as (Starke-Meyerring, 2005) suggest, might this not suggest that a more integrated approach embracing both the universalistic and particularistic would be needed?

Integrating Perspectives for Intercultural Communication Research and Teaching

This final section suggests several ways the universal, national, organizational, interpersonal, and intrapersonal perspectives on intercultural communication might be systematically integrated for research and teaching. When we speak of integration we envision using the full template of perspectives for investigating a research question or to conducting intercultural communication training. Integration might not mean that each perspective would be considered to the same degree in the article, dissertation, or course, but rather that several or all the perspectives would be considered substantially. For brainstorming purposes, we suggest three ways to integrate: selected lens, sequential hierarchy, and dialogic identity.

Selected Lens

Using one perspective as the lens to observe the others, or what we've called a *selected lens approach*, may produce a distinctive interpretive outlook and raise unique questions. Let's say the issue of interest is: How can cross-cultural teamwork be improved? Possible questions raised about teamwork when looking through an *interpersonal* lens are shown in Figure 4.

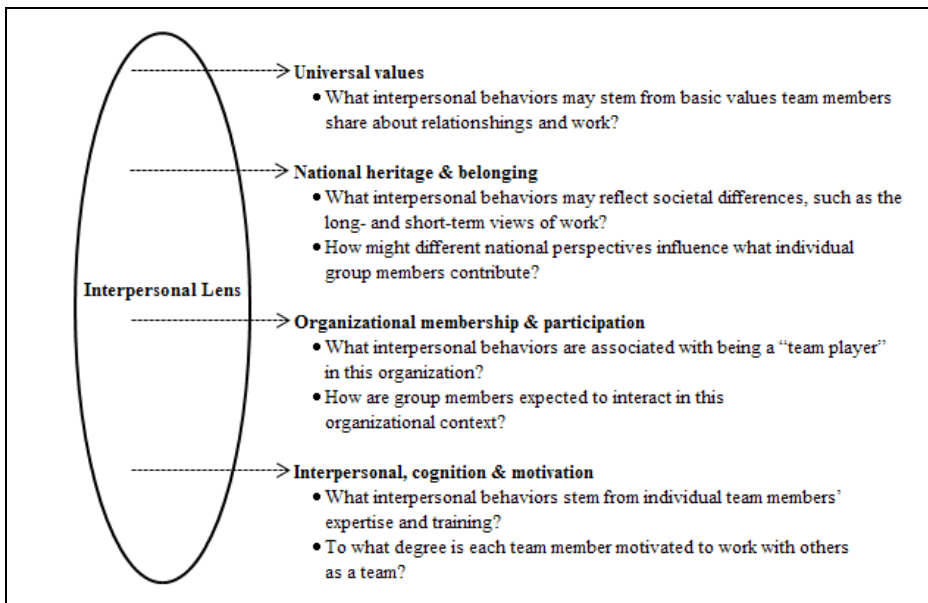


Figure 4: Teamwork viewed through an interpersonal intercultural lens

Through the universal lens, the issue of improving teamwork would shift from the interpersonal interaction toward the underlying values that may influence teamwork as seen in Figure 5.

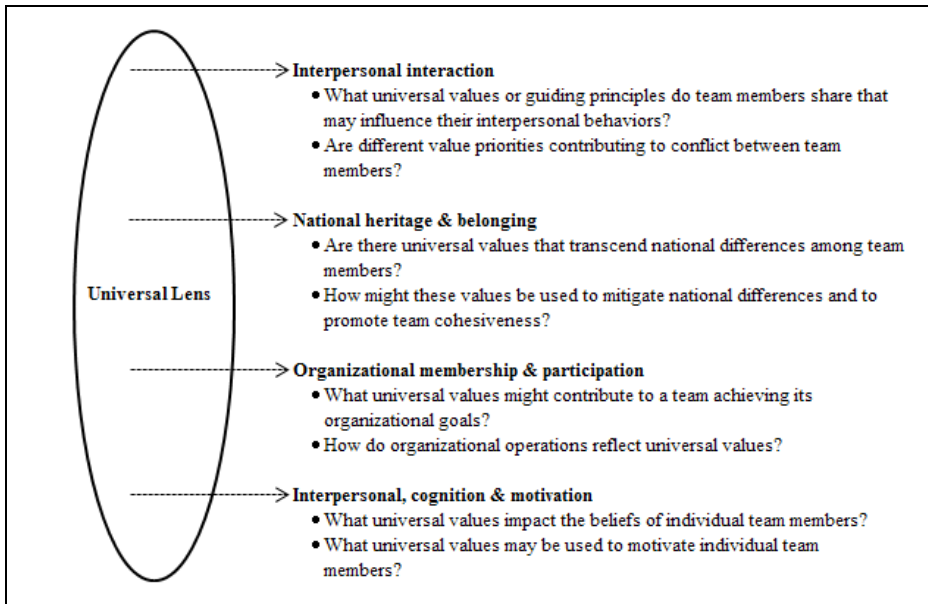


Figure 5: Teamwork viewed through a universal lens

Viewed through a *universal* lens, interest in the national perspective involves values shared by different groups resulting from birthplace and environment, the organizational perspective as values shared by individuals joined for a common goal, the interpersonal as values reflected in what one does or says, and the intrapersonal as values that motivate individual thought and action. Schwartz used his universal values as the selected lens to make country-to-country comparisons. Recall his finding that francophone Swiss seem to be most influenced by “intellectual autonomy” yet they, more than any other group, rejected “conservatism values” (Schwartz, 1999, p. 37).

Sequential Hierarchy

In contrast to the selected lens approach, which views all perspectives from one vantage point, *sequential hierarchy* would examine the perspectives in a logical progression. One could start with universal values as foundational followed by national, organizational, interpersonal, and intrapersonal perspectives as shown in Figure 6, or the reverse.

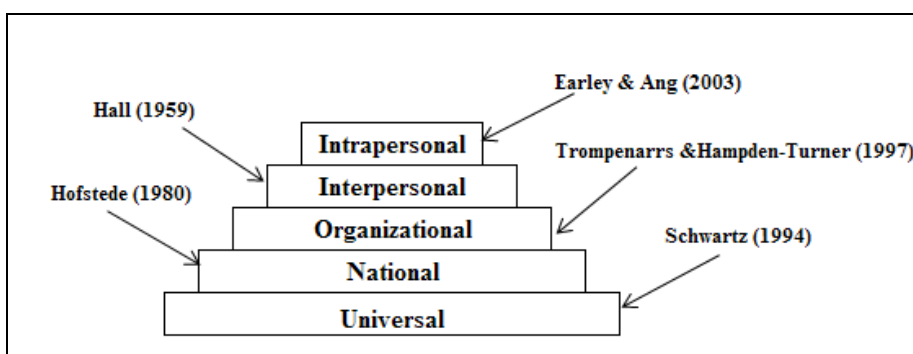


Figure 6: Universal Values as Foundational

Sequential hierarchy has any number of applications. For example, it might serve as the template for a systematic and comprehensive analysis for case study research or to conduct a communication audit of an organization, say for consulting. Or consider how sequential hierarchy might be used in an intercultural course. The course might begin with intrapersonal intercultural issues, engaging participants in self-analyses of their cognition (what one knows about cultures) and motivation (one's desire to learn about cultures), as posed by Earley and Ang (2003). Participants might be asked to complete a personal audit of their cultural knowledge, including the intercultural training they've taken and language skills they've developed. They might be asked to rank their interest in learning about other cultures as a measure of their motivation.

Building on such intrapersonal analyses, course participants could be challenged next to analyze their interpersonal interactions using Hall's (1959; 1966; 1976) observations about time orientation (polychronic versus monochronic) and degree of elaboration (low- and high-context). They might be given an observation exercise using taped or real interactions to see what verbal and non-verbal behaviors they are able to observe in others that may be related to Hall's categories. Observation could be extended to an analysis of the organizational groups to which they belong, including using Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) categories. Hofstede's (1980; 1983; 1991; 2005) national perspectives would follow, perhaps with course participants comparing their experiences with the national inclinations he observed. Such a course might conclude by examining the universal values that Schwartz (1994 a & b; 1999) identified, challenging participants to build on these to get good things done in the world.

Dialogic Identity Framework

As Varner observed (2000), it's been tempting to use Hall (1959) and Hofstede's (1980) constructs to stereotype or profile individuals, and some have yielded to this temptation. Unfortunately, labeling individuals or nations with the constructs Hall, Hofstede, and the others have proposed, "may help us anticipate the . . . predispositions of cultural groups, but it still leaves us tantalizingly distant from the actual processes of specific individuals" (Driskill, 1997, pp. 254-255). However, rather than dismiss the observations of Hall, Hofstede, and others as "grand typologies . . . [that] may now have outlived their utility" (Jacob 2005, p. 514), we propose that their dimensions may be used as tools for analyzing dialogue to uncover cultural differences and similarities.

We suggest *dialogic identity* (Kent, 1993) as a third way to use the template of perspectives for teaching and research. Dialogic identity builds on social constructionism and the belief that communities shape the discourses of members and that "knowledge itself is *socially constructed* and contingent rather than objective" (Grobman, 2000, p. 4, emphasis ours).

Dialogue is interpersonal interaction or the actual “text” of individuals talking. A dialogic approach to teaching writing, for example, would likely involve students writing to actual individuals and receiving responses from those individuals, rather than completing monologic exercises, such as writing essays to no one in particular. Dialogic means the interactive text is central. *Identity* refers to an individual’s complex of identities, such as ethnicity, nationality, and disciplinary training. Cultural identity “refers to an individual’s sense of self derived identity from formal or informal membership in groups that transmit and inculcate knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, and ways of life” (Jameson, 2007, p. 207). An individual’s cultural identity is uniquely shaped and reshaped by many inputs including experiences and exposure to settings and peoples.

Dialogue evidences things that are not seen, or individuals’ internal wiring shaped by the national (country, region, city) and organizational (school/disciplinary, religious institutions, workplace) contexts in which they have lived, studied, and worked. An individual’s verbal and nonverbal behaviors when dialoguing reveal some of these cultural influences—e.g. Individual A is ready to begin his presentation at the exact time when the meeting was scheduled to start, whereas Individual B may only after a long period of small talk. Individual A may talk a long time before he suggests what he’s actually proposing whereas Individual B may state his purpose at the onset. Such behaviors may reveal aspects of these individuals’ cultural background including their national and disciplinary identities.

The universal values that Schwartz (1994a & b; 1999) proposed may also be observed in dialogue. For example, the competing values of self-interest and self-transcendence may be observed in dialogic “turn-taking.” Turn-taking has to do with the amount of speaking time an individual affords himself relative to others. Taking too many turns or frequently interrupting another individual’s turns may reveal a degree of self-centeredness that does not jibe with universal value of self-transcendence. Dialogic behaviors that step outside universally held values may be open to correction through many channels ranging from self monitoring to others’ suggestions regarding conversational fairness.

In earlier work, one of us (Rogers, 2008) suggested that dialogue could be originated by interactants to explore cultural differences and similarities. Building on Earley and Ang's (2003) notion of cultural intelligence, "CQ Talk" was proposed. CQ talk is "an individual's deliberate verbal and nonverbal behavior during an evolving interaction to find out what needs to be learned interculturally" (Rogers 2008, p. 250).

We propose that an individual's CQ talk may be more successful if s/he has some knowledge of the intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, national, universal scholarly perspectives identified here. Consider, for example, how the CQ talk below would be enabled by such background knowledge:

"If we set the meeting time at 2pm, when would you like us to start the presentation?"

Here knowing Hall's polychronic versus monochronic time orientation would provide a framework for such a question and facilitate follow-up dialogue.

"So given our personal commitment here, are you saying that we don't need to follow the organization's specifications for trading in this case?"

Knowing Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's universalism versus particularism regarding the importance of rules relative to relationship, would be helpful background here.

"Do you need to consult with upper management or can we make a decision now?"

Knowing Hofstede's notion of power distance might prompt such a question.

Individuals who have developed skills using CQ talk to find out what they need to know may also be attentive to dialogue that reveals cultural similarities or differences. Consider these examples:

“Unfortunately, I’ve never worked in Germany before, so I’m not sure what’s appropriate. Might you assist me?”

This individual’s dialogue reveals some openness and perhaps some motivation to learn about other cultures, recalling Earley and Ang’s notion of motivation.

“Ever since I studied engineering at MIT I’ve tended to write this way.”

This individual’s enculturation into engineering influences her writing, recalling Earley and Ang’s notion of cognition or knowledge from training.

“In our meetings we usually handle several major items. I would prefer to look at these one at a time.”

This individual prefers sequential over synchronic structuring, recalling Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner’s categories.

In summary, we propose that observing and using dialogue to find out what one needs to know in order to work with another individual across cultures, or CQ talk, can be facilitated with exposure to Schwartz’s universal values, Hall, Hofstede, and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner’s dimensions, and Earley and Ang’s notions cognition, metacognition, motivation, and behavior.

Conclusion

Identifying and reviewing key intercultural research from the last 50 years suggests a continuum of perspectives relevant to researching and teaching intercultural business communication: intrapersonal (Earley & Ang, 2003), interpersonal (Hall, 1959; 1966; 1976), organizational (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997), national (Hofstede 1980; 1983; 1991; 2005), and universal (Schwartz, 1994a & b; 1999). These perspectives have yet to be fully appropriated for business communication, however. Hofstede's national and Hall's interpersonal perspectives have been used to some degree. Other perspectives lack attention. Furthermore, our literature review revealed no studies treating these perspectives as an integrated whole, although some studies have suggested ways that studying culture and language might be enlarged. Meanwhile there are calls for a more "robust methodology" involving "different approaches done at varying levels of analyses (Jacob 2005, p. 515). We believe this need might be addressed by more fully appropriating the five scholarly perspectives, including the analytical categories associated with them, to a greater degree in our research and teaching. The several approaches for integrating these perspectives for teaching and research suggested here--selected lens, sequential hierarchy, and dialogic identity--are but three possibilities for building on the past.

References

- Ang, S., Van Dyne, L., Koh, C., Ng, K., Templer, K.J., Tay, C., & Chandrasekar, N.A. (2007). Cultural intelligence: Its measurement and effects on cultural judgment and decision making, cultural adaptation, and task performance. *Management and Organization Review*, 3, 335-371.
- Bargiela-Chiappini, F. & Nickerson, C. (2003), Intercultural Business Communication: A Rich Field of Studies, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 24(1), 3-15.
- Charles, M (2007). Language matters in global communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44(3), 260-282.
- Condon, P. W. (2008). A critique of Hall's context model. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 22(4), 399-428.
- Dahl, S. (2004). *Intercultural research: The current state of knowledge*. Middlesex University Business School Working Paper.
- Driskill, L. (1997). How can we address international issues in business and technical communication? *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 11(3), 253-260.
- Du-Babcock, B. (2006). Teaching business communication: Past, present and future. *Journal of Business Communication*, 43(3), 253-264.
- Du-Babcock, B. & Babcock, R.D. (2007). Genre patterns in language-based communication zones. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44(4), 340-373.
- Earley, P. C. & Ang, S. (2003). *Cultural Intelligence: Individual Interactions Across Cultures*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Business Books.
- Earley, P. C., Ang, S., & Tan, J. S. (2006). *CQ: Developing Cultural Intelligence at Work*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Business Books.
- Grobman, L. (2000). Multiculturalism and professional communication studies: Response to Patrick Moore and Emily Thrush. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 14(1), 92-101.
- Hall, E. T. (1959). *The Silent Language*. New York: Doubleday.
- Hall, E. T. (1966). *The Hidden Dimension*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond Culture*. New York: Doubleday.

- Hart, W. B. (1997). *A Brief History of Intercultural Communication: A Paradigmatic Approach*. Albuquerque.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hofstede, G. (1983). National cultures in four dimensions: A research-based theory of cultural differences among nations. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 13(1-2), 46-74.
- Hofstede, G. (1991). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. London: McGraw-Hill.
- Hofstede, G. & Hofstede, G. J. (2005). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Jacob, N. (2005). Cross-cultural investigations: Emerging concepts. *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 18(5), 514-528.
- Jameson, D.A. (2007). Reconceptualizing cultural identity and its role in intercultural business communication. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 44, 199-235.
- Kent, T. (1993). *Paralogic rhetoric: A theory of communicative interaction*. London: Lewisburg Bucknell University Press.
- Limaye, M. R., & Victor, D. A. (1991). Cross-cultural business communication research: State of the art and hypotheses for the 1990s. *Journal of Business Communication*, 28(3), 277-299.
- Ortiz, L. A. (2005). The emerging hybrid discourse of business communication in a Mexican-U.S. border region. *Journal of Business Communication*, 42(1), 28-50.
- Rogers, P. S. (2008). The challenge of behavioral CQ: What might dialogue tell us? In Ang, S., & Van Dyne, L. (Eds.). *Handbook on Cultural intelligence: Theory, Measurement and Applications*. New York: M E Sharpe, Inc.
- Rogers, E.M., Hart, W.B. & Miike, Y. (2002). Edward T. Hall and the history of intercultural communication: The United States and Japan. *Keio Communication Review*, 24, 3-26.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1994a). Are there universal aspects in the structure and contents of human values? *Journal of Social Issues*, 50(4): 19-45.

- Schwartz, S. H. (1994b). Beyond individualism/collectivism: New cultural dimensions of values. In U. Kim, H. D. Triandis, C. Kagitcibasi, S-C. Choi, & G. Yoon (Eds). *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, method, and applications* (pp. 85-119). Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Schwartz, S. H. (1999). A theory of cultural values and some implications for work. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 48(1), 23-47.
- Sorrells, K. (1998). Gifts of wisdom: An interview with Dr Edward T. Hall, *The Edge: The E-Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 1(3), 1-12.
- Starke-Meyerring, D. (2005). Meeting the challenges of globalization: A framework for global literacies in professional communication programs. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 19(4), 468-499.
- Suchan, J. & Charles, M. (2006). Business communication research: Past, present and future. *Journal of Business Communication*, 43(4), 389-397.
- Thralls, C. & Roundy Blyler, N. (1993). The social perspective and pedagogy in technical communication. *Technical Communication Quarterly* 2, 249-270.
- Trompenaars, F. & Hampden-Turner, C. (1997). *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
- Varner, I. I. (2000). Teaching intercultural management communication: Where are we? Where do we go? *Business Communication Quarterly* 64(1), 99-111.

LEARNING TO COMMUNICATE CSR: A CHALLENGE FOR BUSINESS COMMUNICATION TEACHING

Maija Tammelin

Lecturer in English

Department of Languages and Communication

Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

maija.tammelin@hse.fi

Abstract

This paper explores the shift in the teaching of environmental communication in HSE's Business Communication curriculum. As its starting point, the paper first describes a presentation given by Charles and Tammelin at the first Association for Business Communication (ABC) conference held in Europe in 1999 on the topic of "Environmental Communication - A New Challenge for Business Communication Teaching" (Charles & Tammelin, 2000). Since then, business communication with an environmental focus has shifted towards a wider concept, that of communication for corporate social responsibility (CSR). The main aims of this paper are to examine the development of the shift and to report how the shift has resulted in embedding CSR communication in the International Business Communication Master's program at Helsinki School of Economics (HSE). In conclusion, the paper briefly speculates on the future trends that might be affecting the International Business Communication curriculum at HSE.

Key Words: environmental communication, CSR communication, corporate social responsibility reporting, socio-constructivist learning environment

From Environmental Communication ...

The first European ABC - Association for Business Communication- conference was held in Helsinki in May 1999. At that conference, Professor Mirjaliisa Charles and I presented a joint paper on the topic of “Environmental Communication - a New Challenge for Business Communication Teaching” (Charles & Tammelin, 2000). The challenging aim of our paper was to encourage Business English teachers and communication trainers in companies to incorporate environmental communication into their training programs. In our paper we argued that the rise of environmental awareness in the 90s that had accompanied changes in consumer values and attitudes had significant repercussions on corporate communication. Increasingly, companies were having to learn to deal with a new type of business communication: communication with a clear environmental focus. We argued that it was not only when environmental issues had reached crisis proportions that communication became essential, but also that informing stakeholders about what the company is doing to create and maintain monitoring systems for sustainable environmental development should always be part and parcel of company communication.

The second aim of our paper (Charles & Tammelin, 2000) was to introduce how environmental communication could be taught in the Business Communication curriculum. An elective course called Environmental Communication had been first developed for the English Business Communication curriculum at Helsinki School of Economics (HSE) in 1996. The course rationale was based on the theoretical principles underlying environmental education consisting mainly of the recognition of the value-laden and cross-disciplinary nature of environmental knowledge. Käpylä's (1995) research into the nature of environmental education demonstrated that an ethical analysis and an analysis centering on the choice of values are also needed when dealing with environmental issues and that environmental knowledge is to a large extent tacit knowledge, which is bound to practices, culture and language. Wahlström (1995) further argued that environmental education in its very essence aims at teaching critical, reflective thinking and involves understanding the principles and the language of several different disciplines.

In our paper we then introduced a design for a socio-constructivist learning environment that we considered suitable for teaching environmental communication. A web-based online environment utilizing various electronic media was such an environment that would enable learners to construct their own knowledge in collaboration with others. The first Environmental Communication course was launched in 1996 for the English Business Communication program in HSE's Department of Languages and Communication.

... to Communication for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

What, then, has taken place in the ten years since the pioneering paper given by Charles and Tammelin (2000), advocating the integration of environmental communication into Business Communication teaching. It seems that soon after the turn of the new century there were already signals of the widening of the environmental focus into including other CSR issues as well. These signals could be seen in the emergence of several different phenomena such as the proliferation of CSR-related research, the recognition of the importance of stakeholder dialogue regarding CSR, changes in corporate values, the globalization of issues ranging from climate change to natural catastrophes, the global consequences of terrorist attacks, the world's financial crises, and the globalization of business in general.

What's in a Word? Looking into CSR terminology

As Halme and Lovio (2004) point out, responsible and ethical business is an old concept, which has arisen from the tenet that in business, economic growth and profitability are to be achieved in an ethically responsible way. In the 1960s and 1970s the focus of the discussion and research was on business ethics and socially responsible business under the umbrella of CSR that also included environmental issues. However, as the discussion on the environment intensified in the 1980s and 1990s, environmental issues turned into an independent area of research of its own. As stated by Halme and Lovio (2004), in the early 2000s a trend towards a wider notion of corporate

responsibility started growing because of the increasing emphasis on the three dimensions of sustainability: economic, environmental and social. The myriad terms used – corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate responsibility (CR), corporate sustainability and corporate citizenship in addition to such terms as, for instance, corporate accountability, responsible business, sustainable responsible business and corporate social performance seem to accentuate varying aspects of the notion of linking business to society. For the purposes of this paper the term corporate social responsibility (CSR) is used.

If the terms describing CSR-related concepts are in a flux, so is the corporate terminology regarding specifically corporate responsibility (CR). Even without research evidence one can identify changes in corporate talk regarding corporate responsibility by just comparing companies’ CR/CSR reports or other related public documents. The highlighted sections in Table 1 demonstrate examples of the kind of vocabulary in corporate talk that started appearing in the first part of the 2000s. Terms such as “responsible company”, “stakeholders”, “honesty”, “socially responsible way”, “to behave ethically”, “quality of life”, “local community”, “society at large”, “accountable”, “human rights”, “democracy”, “community improvement”, “sustainable development”, “international development” seem to be prominent even in the small sample below.

Table 1. Definitions of corporate responsibility (Blowfield & Murray, 2008, p. 13; highlighting added)

<p>A responsible company is one that listens to its stakeholders and responds with honesty to their concerns.</p> <p>Starbucks, CSR Report, 2004</p>
<p>CSR commits us to operate in a socially responsible way everywhere we do business, fairly balancing the needs and concerns of our various stakeholders – all those who impact, are impacted by, or have a legitimate interest in the company’s actions and preferences.</p> <p>Chiquita, www.chiquita.com, accessed 24 March 2004</p>
<p>CSR is the proposition that companies are responsible not only for maximizing profits,</p>

<p>but also for recognizing the needs of such stakeholders as employees, customers, demographic groups and even the regions they serve.</p> <p>PricewaterhouseCoopers, www.pwcglobal.com, accessed 24 March 2004</p>
<p>CSR is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large.</p> <p>Lord Holme, former executive director Rio Tinto, and Philip Watts Former chair of Royal Dutch Shell</p>
<p>CSR is requires companies to acknowledge that they should be publicly accountable not only for their financial performance but also for their social and environmental record... CSR encompasses the extent to which companies should promote human rights, democracy, community improvement and sustainable development objectives through the world.</p> <p>Confederation of British Industry, 2001</p>
<p>CSR is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interactions with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>European Commission, Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs</p>
<p>CSR is the commitment of business to contribute to suitable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life, in ways that are both good for business and good for international development.</p> <p>World Bank, www.worldbank.org/privatesector, accessed 24 March 2004</p>

Changes in reporting practices

Not only could the new use of vocabulary be identified in the CSR-related discourse, but there was also a shift in the official reporting practices in the early 2000s. This shift could clearly be seen e.g. in Finland where an environmental reporting assessment contest had been arranged since 1996. The aim of the contest had been to assess companies' environmental reports and choose the best reports. However, in 2001 the assessment was expanded into also including reports on corporate social responsibility

issues. The contest has since then focused on comparing the level of reporting and it aims to enhance the openness of the companies' reporting practices and thereby to increase the transparency of the implementation of CSR.

Growth of CSR research

What seems like an exponential proliferation of research literature related to CSR issues during the past ten years can also be regarded as evidence of the change of emphasis from the environmental focus to that on CSR. The intensified interest in CSR is shown in a concrete way by, for instance, comparing the number of completed CSR-related Master's theses written in various departments of HSE. Increasing first from just a couple of theses a year to 7 in 2007 and then leaping to 36 in 2008 can be considered a clear sign of a considerable increase. What is also noteworthy from the perspective of this current paper is the increase in research literature on CSR-related communication issues. Such communication issues deal with the following four themes in particular:

- 1) increasing significance of stakeholder communication (see e.g. Dawkins, 2004; O'Riordan & Fairbrass, 2008; Podnar & Golop, 2007; Pohle, 2008)
- 2) new communication media used in reporting of CSR activities on corporate web sites and in other online documents in addition to the cultural influences on such reporting (see e.g. Gill, Dickinson & Scharl, 2008; Kampf, 2007; Nielsen & Thomsen, 2007; Rolland & O'Keefe Bazzoni, 2009); Sones, Grantham & Vieira, 2009)
- 3) comparisons of different CSR approaches, attitudes and practices in the global context (see e.g. Hartman, Rubin & Dhanda, 2007; Welford, 2004)
- 4) strategic CSR as the foundation for communication issues (see e.g. Halme & Laurila, 2009; Porter & Kramer, 2006).

Integrating CSR communication into Business Communication studies

The Environmental Communication course discussed in the first section of this paper held its place in HSE's Business Communication curriculum from 1996 until 2004 (see also Tammelin, 2004). In 2005 it was then time to move on and place the focus on a wider concept, that of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Consequently, a course

called Communication for Corporate Social Responsibility was launched in January 2006 as an elective course in the new International Business Communication (IBC) Master's program in HSE's Department of Languages and Communication. Although the course is primarily meant for the IBC Master's program students, it is currently also available as an elective for HSE's other Master's program students. As a multidisciplinary course, it can also be chosen as a module to be included in the "Environment and Corporate Social Responsibility" minor program offered by HSE's Department of Marketing and Management.

The aims of the Communication for Corporate Social Responsibility course include the deepening of students' understanding of the concept of corporate social responsibility and other related concepts, the role of responsibility reporting in today's corporate world and an introduction to CSR reporting practices in companies today in the global context. The overarching pedagogical aim of the course is to enhance students' critical and analytical thinking skills through writing. As was the case with the environmental communication course, the basic philosophy behind the course rationale is founded on the socio-constructivist conception of learning, according to which students are seen as autonomous constructors of knowledge acting in collaboration and interaction with others.

The course content centers on three main intertwining themes during the 14-week-long course. The themes center on defining, analyzing and researching CSR. For example, the students analyze one specific Finnish company's CSR report by using the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) guidelines and then, on the basis of their analysis, decide in virtual teams on questions or comments that are sent to the company in question. Some specific challenges arise from the online structure of the course, which is based on collaborating and interacting with the peers and the tutor through writing. The course format includes only one mandatory face-to-face kick-off session as the actual course takes place via the web-based Optima platform. The course assignments include writing reaction papers, reports, research papers, peer reviews and online discussions in small groups.

The benefits of the online environment include the following:

- All written messages and documents are saved and are available through the whole duration of the course.
- Students' thinking is made transparent through writing.
- Students' voices can also be heard through written texts.
- Collaboration through communicating by writing can be successful.
- Participation is enabled from a distance.

Since 2006 the Communication for Corporate Social Responsibility course has been offered four times and the students' experiences have been largely positive. From the tutor's perspective, it seems that what has contributed most to the students' satisfaction has been the multidisciplinary background of the participants and the frequent online discussions, which have helped to widen the students' views on CSR issues. So far four IBC students who have completed the course have chosen to write their Master's thesis on a communication topic related to the environment or CSR.

Looking into the future

This paper has dealt with the shift from environmental communication to CSR communication that has taken place within the past ten years. Considering the fast rate at which new environmental and societal developments are currently advancing, it seems justified to argue that we do not need to wait another ten years in order to present new challenges for Business Communication teaching. Although new aspects are included yearly in the content of the currently offered course, the next three four years can already be expected to reveal which environmental and societal trends are affecting the Business Communication curriculum to the extent that a new look into the overall content and structure of the course needs to be taken. A heightened awareness of environmental and societal signals is also needed when proposing new themes to be included in Business Communication teaching.

In her presentation at a Corporate Communications seminar at HSE in November 2009 Sandra Macleod, a CSR communications specialist, predicted the emergence of

Generation G, in which term G stands for “Generosity”, not for “Greed”. Generation G refers to a growing societal and business mindset, where Web 2.0 and CSR come together. As emphasized by Macleod (2009), businesses are joining Generation G as values take centre stage and there will be a move from efficiency gains to greener and sustainable credentials. As she states, a new science of *qualities* of life will emerge whereby growth and evolution are not seen as a competitive struggle but as a cooperative dance. From the perspective of Business Communication teaching, it can be concluded that sustainability and CSR issues are here to stay and will be an integral part of corporate communication in the future as well.

References

- Blowfield, M. & Murray, A. (2008). *Corporate responsibility: a critical introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Charles, M. & Tammelin, M. (2000). Environmental Communication - a New Challenge for Business Communication Teaching. In Charles, M. & Kangasharju, H. (Eds.) *New Orientations and Developments. Business Communication Research and Teaching*. Helsinki School of Economics Working Papers - W-269. Helsinki: HeSePrint.
- Dawkins, J. (2004). Corporate responsibility: The communication challenge. *Journal of Communication Management* 9 (2), 108-120.
- Gill, D. L., Dickinson, S. J. & Scharl, A. (2008). Communicating sustainability: A web content analysis of North American, Asian and European firms. *Journal of Communication Management*, Vol. 12, Issue 3, 243-262.
- Halme, M. & Laurila, J. (2009). Philanthropy, integration or innovation? Exploring the financial and societal outcomes of different types of corporate responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 84, 325-339.
- Halme, M. & Lovio, R. (2004). Yrityksen sosiaalinen vastuu globalisoituvassa taloudessa. In Heiskanen, E. (Ed.) *Ympäristö ja liiketoiminta*. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- Hartman, L. P., Rubin, R. S. & Dhanda, K. K. (2007). The Communication of Corporate Social Responsibility: United States and European Union Multinational Corporations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 74, 373-389.

- Kampf, C. (2007). Corporate social responsibility: WalMart, Maersk and the cultural bounds of representation in corporate web sites. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 12 No.1, 41-57.
- Macleod, S. (2009). *CR and sustainability: Commit or Crunch?* Presentation given at a Corporate Communications seminar at Helsinki School of Economics on November 18, 2009.
- Nielsen, A. E. & Thomsen, C. (2007). Reporting CSR – what and how to say it? *Corporate Communications: An International Journal* 12(1), 25-40.
- O' Riordan, L. & Fairbrass, J. (2008). Corporate social responsibility (CSR): Models and theories in stakeholder dialogue. *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 83, 745-758.
- Podnar, K. & Golob, U. (2007). CSR expectations: The focus of corporate marketing, *Corporate communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 12 No. 4, 326-340.
- Pohle, G. (2008). *IBM Study: Corporate Social Responsibility*. Retrieved February 12, 2009, from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdkYieDuVvY>.
- Porter, M. E. & Kramer, M. R. (2006). Strategy & Society: The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility. *Harvard Business Review*, 84 (12), 78-92.
- Rolland, D. & Bazzoni O'Keefe, J. (2009). Greening corporate identity: CSR online corporate identity reporting. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 2009, 249-263.
- Sones, M., Grantham, E. & Vieira, E. T. (2009). Communicating CSR via pharmaceutical company web sites: Evaluating message frameworks for external and internal stakeholders. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 14, Issue 2, 144-157.
- Tammelin, M. (2004). Introducing a Collaborative Network-based Learning Environment into Foreign Language and Business Communication Teaching: Action Research in Finnish Higher Education. Media Education Publications 11. Department of Applied Sciences of Education. University of Helsinki. Helsinki:Yliopistopaino. Available from <http://www.helsinki.fi/~tella/mep11.html>.
- Welford, R. (2004). Corporate Social Responsibility in Europe and Asia. Critical Elements and Best Practices. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, 13, 31-47

ON THE SYMBOLIC (AND PRACTICAL) BENEFITS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Janne Tienari

Professor (acting)

Department of Marketing and Management

Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

janne.tienari@hse.fi

Abstract

In this text, I argue for the symbolic and practical benefits of the English language in multinational corporations. I recount some of the key points in the work of Mirjalisa Charles and her colleagues on so-called Business English Lingua Franca (BELF), and elaborate on my argument that may be provocative in its simplicity and naivety. I wish to speak *for* English as lingua franca in multinational business, particularly with regard to companies originating from non-Anglophone contexts.

Key words: Business English lingua Franca (BELF), multinational corporations, symbolic, power

In this short note for the edited volume to honour Professor Mirjaliisa Charles, I suggest that the symbolic aspects in language choice in multinational corporations should receive more research attention. In the contemporary global economy, I argue, choosing English as a common working language provides a symbolically neutral and practically meaningful setting for cooperation between people from different societal contexts, with different mother tongues.

Due to its wide spread in the business community, English provides the most neutral alternative available to foster corporate communication. Symbolically, then, the English language offers a compromise. On a more practical note, as a relatively simple language to master both orally and in writing, English provides a least common denominator for meaningful, wide-spread social interaction. In a nutshell, I put forth the simple argument that the symbolic and practical pros of the English language override the cons that come with its adoption in multinational corporations.

Language matters in global communication

In her article published in the *Journal of Business Communication* in 2007, Mirjaliisa Charles took stock of research carried out in the Department of Languages and Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics. The discussion centered around questions and challenges related to the English language in the contemporary global economy where “language and communication dynamics” are the “driving force”. Mirjaliisa argued for a particular conceptualization of English in this context, coined as Business English Lingua Franca or BELF. Elaborating on the forms that BELF takes in corporate settings, particularly as a means of oral communication, Mirjaliisa and her colleagues have paved the way for more nuanced understandings of language and communication in international business.

Mirjaliisa and her colleagues define BELF to relate solely to the domain of business, because its frame of reference is provided by the globalized business community. They

link BELF mostly to oral language through which power is wielded in multinationals, and perceptions of self and others are created. They point out that BELF fosters cooperation between people, and that BELF speakers tend to (make efforts to) understand each other. BELF focuses attention to communication skills, rather than language per se. Its strength is derived from its focus on the needs and requirements of the communicative event in question. In other words, BELF is practical; it is about getting the job done.

At the same time it is argued, however, that BELF is not a cultureless language – rather, it creates new operational cultures. It has implications for how management is constructed, how human resources are managed, and how employees respond to the objectives, policies and practices of the multinational corporation. The challenges of BELF, then, relate especially to meaning making. “Getting the job done” is never apolitical or devoid of power implications, as Mirjaliisa and her colleagues have pointed out in their studies.

The chain of argumentation in the work of Mirjaliisa and her colleagues seems to be looking at BELF from several angles in order to arrive at a balanced understanding of its role and functions in multinational contexts. Mirjaliisa suggests that BELF needs to be elaborated on, and that the “complex process of how people relate to each other” should be studied further. “Heightening awareness of communicative and cultural diversity and working on ways to increase mutual understanding of the Englishes (or other shared languages) used globally,” Mirjaliisa suggests, “is of vital importance.”

A note on the symbolic (and practical) benefits of English

Representing a small nation with a notoriously obscure and difficult language, my ideas on language and communication in the global economy are necessarily coloured. My premise in building an argument *for* English is that all alternatives to English as viable and fair choices for a lingua franca in multinational corporations are inherently more problematic. My pro-English view seems to be shared by Finnish business professionals involved in multinational business. For example, sympathy towards English was widely

advocated by informants in the research I carried out together with Eero Vaara, Rebecca Piekkari and Risto Sääntti on the making of the Nordic financial services company Nordea.

The first language-related issue that we set out to research was the choice of Swedish as the corporate language in the merger of the Swedish Nordbanken and the Finnish Merita Bank, the first cross-border stage in the making of Nordea. We published two articles on the basis of this study, one viewing language as a human resources management issue (Piekkari et al, 2005), the other specifying different power-related aspects of language choice (Vaara et al, 2005). In this text, I will briefly recite the latter article where the premise is that corporate language policies have significant power implications.

The merger of Merita and Nordbanken was communicated as a merger of equals. A lot of effort was put to cherishing a national balance of power in corporate management and operations. At the same time, however, Swedish became to be understood as the official corporate language in the new MeritaNordbanken (MNB). We adopted Stewart Clegg's ideas on the circuits of power to analyze this language choice. Our empirical material consisted of company documents, media texts, interviews and participant observation. Clegg's framework enabled us to look at power through the three intertwined elements of (1) episodic power relationships manifested in concrete situations where different social actors interact, (2) rules of practice that fix relations of meaning and membership (that define identities and subjectivities for interacting actors, as well as being affected by these interactions), and (3) structures of domination constituted by the social practices and techniques empowering or disempowering actors. Clegg's ideas comprise a comprehensive framework for making sense of the power-related aspects of, to quote Mirjalili, the "complex process of how people relate to each other."

It was clear that choosing Swedish as the corporate language at MNB led to a number of practical and symbolic problems. Finnish-speakers suffered in daily interactions, and speaking Swedish (inadvertently) became constructed as a sign of professional competence. New communication networks were constructed on the basis of fluency in

Swedish. Language led to segregation as mastery of Swedish became a prerogative to career progression (apparently, several key actors in the Finnish organization decided to leave MNB for top jobs elsewhere, because of trade-offs in learning and using Swedish). Symbolically, from the Finnish perspective, the language choice signified revived Finnish-Swedish national confrontation. Swedish-speakers became to be considered as superior to Finnish-speakers, and the historical colonial relationship between Swedes and Finns was (re)produced in a contemporary business setting.

When MNB merged with the Danish Unidanmark in March 2000, already in the merger prospectus and press release it was clearly stated that the corporate language will be English. Lessons had been learned, and English was communicated as the only possible option for a common future in the Nordic financial services company. English was a relief for Finns who had felt disadvantaged and who had struggled to learn and use Swedish in communicating with native Swedish-speakers. Symbolically, the choice of English as corporate language signified neutrality and balance of power.

There are, of course, potential reservations in adopting English as the lingua franca in multinational corporations more generally. The choice should always be subjected to careful case-specific analysis. First, as Mirjaliisa and her colleagues have pointed out, the content and form of the English(es) spoken and written depends on the motivation and skills of the people involved. Native speakers (and others) are sometimes worried about the spread of pidgin or broken English, that is simplified and modified forms of the language. Hybrid forms of English necessarily emerge as people forge the English language to fit their skills and needs. New communication challenges arise as different versions of English recide side by side in the organization.

Second, the symbolic and power-related aspects of language choice can also be more complex than in the MNB (and Nordea) case. It is clear that the English language carries Anglophone cultural baggage in that it brings about particular hegemonic patterns of knowledge production (Tietze and Dick, 2009). Naturally, it favours native English speakers in corporate communication. Third, cultural and nationalistic emotions vis-à-vis

English are context-specific. From a Finnish perspective it is relatively easy to suggest that English is a neutral language. From a French or Spanish point of view, this is nonsense. In a Franco-British corporate merger, for example, English will never be a symbolically neutral choice. Other solutions related to language and communication need to be forged. Fourth, the strategic objectives of the multinational corporation dictate the feasibility of the language choice. Sometimes neutrality and balance of power is not the objective, rather, choosing one language over another may be a conscious show of strength.

Back to Mirjaliisa and her colleagues

The significant body of work by Mirjaliisa Charles and her colleagues has helped scholars, practitioners and students to form a better understanding of language- and communication-related dynamics in multinational business. Unpacking the practical benefits and challenges related to Business English Lingua Franca (BELF) is one important example of this.

However, there is always room for elaboration. For example, a more thorough consideration of language as a symbolic expression of power (in)equality or (im)balance between speakers of different mother tongues in multinational business contexts is called for. My intention in this short text has been to draw attention to how the symbolic and the practical interact, and how this provides strong arguments in favour of English over other languages in multinational business contexts. I suggest that in a global business landscape where communication across borders is of crucial importance, there is no alternative for English as a lingua franca. This is already *de facto* the case in many sectors and industries. On top of English, of course, smart people always attempt to speak the language of their customers – and delight their superiors, peers and subordinates in attempting to communicate in *their* language. Hans Dalborg, the Swedish CEO of MNB, took advantage of this when he amused Finns by reciting a few sentences of Finnish in his public speech in Finland. It was the symbolism in Dalborg's efforts that won the hearts of Finns, not his language skills.

To put it crudely, English is the baseline, everything else is extra. This simple and naïve argument is not intended to be a discussion-stopper. I'm sure I've missed something. Yet, I expect that I'll stick to the premises of my position until a BFLF (Business Finnish Lingua Franca) emerges in the global economy.

References

- Charles, Mirjaliisa (2007) Language Matters in Global Communication. Article Based on ORA Lecture, October 2006. *Journal of Business Communication* 44/3, 260-282.
- Piekkari, Rebecca, Vaara, Eero, Tienari, Janne & Sääntti, Risto (2005) Integration or Disintegration? Human Resource Implications of the Common Corporate Language Decision in a Cross-Border Merger. *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 16/3, 333-347.
- Tietze, Susanne & Dick, Penny (2009) Hegemonic Practices and Knowledge Production in the Management Academy: An English Language Perspective. *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 25/1, 119-123.
- Vaara, Eero, Tienari, Janne, Piekkari, Rebecca & Sääntti, Risto (2005) Language and the Circuits of Power in a Merging Multinational Corporation. *Journal of Management Studies* 42/3, 595-623.

COMMUNICATING IMAGES OF WOMEN LEADERSHIP THROUGH IMPLICIT COLLOCATIONS

Taija Townsend

Lecturer of English Business Communication
Department of Languages and Communication
Helsinki School of Economics, Finland

Taija.Townsend@hse.fi

Abstract

In this study, I examine the manner in which the media characterize women in business. The purpose is to show how, as a research methodology, *linguistic analysis* can add to our understanding of women leadership. Linguistic analysis here stands for a pragmatic approach to discourse analysis, where linguistic form and structure are examined with regard to implicitness. In addition, since written language is often overlooked as a source of data in leadership research, the aim is to shed light on the function that written language has in the formation of social meanings of women leadership. The study concentrates on one news story, specifically looking at Nicola Horlick as a woman business leader. The news story is based on a report of an interview which is part of a larger interview series of women in business. In the past, Nicola Horlick has been portrayed by the media as a 'superwoman'. However, the news story under examination introduces and creates a different kind of leadership image, that is, the 'human face' of Nicola Horlick. My study shows how 'the human face' of Nicola Horlick has an ambiguous meaning, which is anchored throughout the news story by means of implicit collocations (cf. Östman, 2005). Also, my findings suggest that the media do not 'routinely' present gender-stereotypical images of women leadership; rather, the characterization of women business leaders is constrained by the situational context.

Key words: implicit collocations, linguistic analysis, written language, women leadership, media, Nicola Horlick

Introduction

There is ample literature to suggest that the media have a profound effect on our understanding of social phenomena (e.g. Bell, 1991; ben Aaron, 2005, pp. 72-82; Fowler, 1991; Fairclough, 1995). In particular, the media are said to “determine what issues are important and discussed in public; transmit knowledge and information; reinforce, crystallize and/or change existing beliefs; and cultivate perceptions of the nature of social reality” (Chen & Meindl, 1991, p. 521). Consequently, the media are thought to influence as well as reflect our perceptions of leadership (e.g. Barisione, 2009; Chen & Meindl, 1991; Holmberg & Åkerblom, 2001; Page, 2003; Townsend, 2004; Townsend, forthcoming). This premise is based on the idea that the meaning of leadership is socially constructed (Gergen, 1999; Searle, 1995). Thus, with regard to our socio-cultural understandings of leadership, the media have a significant role in shaping our views of characteristics that are often associated with leadership.

During the past decade, the number of women leaders both in the public and the private sectors has grown considerably. As a result, the media have become increasingly interested in publishing news stories concerning women leadership. In the past, the media have often been criticized for presenting women leaders through language and discourse practices that build on and reinforce masculine beliefs, concepts and values of leadership (Page, 2003, p. 560; also see Cameron, 1998; Fairclough, 1995; 1992; 1989; van Dijk, 1995; Wodak, 1995). This is noteworthy particularly because this ideological characterization of women leadership in the media has mostly been presented and accepted as a ‘fact of reality’ (Bell, 1991; Fowler, 1991). For this reason, previous research focusing on the portrayal of women leadership in the media has primarily concentrated on gender-stereotypical characterizations of women leaders (e.g. Duke, 1993a; 1993b; Heldman, Carroll & Olson, 2000; Page, 2003; Townsend, forthcoming). The theoretical principle behind this perspective is that gender is something that is constructed, or ‘done’, by means of social structures, processes and/or interaction (Gherardi 1994; West & Zimmerman, 1987).

As one of the main objectives of organizational communication research is to examine the way language creates gendered relationships (Buzzanell, 1994, p. 342), it is important that the field also examines how public discourse construes meanings of social (and global) phenomena occurring in organizations, such as women leadership (cf. Charles, 2007, p. 261). For the purpose of this study, public discourse refers to written news texts that the general public can – at least in principle – easily access if willing (Solin, 2001, p. 12).

In this study, I examine the manner in which the media characterize women in business. The purpose is to show how, as a research methodology, *linguistic analysis*, can add to our understanding of women leadership. Linguistic analysis here stands for a pragmatic approach to discourse analysis, where linguistic form and structure are examined with regard to implicitness. In addition, the aim of this study is to shed more light on the function that written language has in the formation of social meanings of women leadership. The study concentrates on one news story, specifically looking at Nicola Horlick as a woman business leader. The news story is based on an interview which is part of a larger interview series of women in business¹. Nicola Horlick is a high-profile businesswoman in the UK, who is known for her 20-year record in the fund-management industry. She is a mother of five children, which has caught public attention and made her a business persona that the British media have regularly followed and reported on. In the past, Nicola Horlick has been portrayed by the media as a ‘superwoman’. However, the news story under examination introduces and creates a different kind of leadership image, that is, the ‘human face’ of Nicola Horlick. My study will show how ‘the human face’ of Nicola Horlick has an ambiguous meaning, which is anchored throughout the news story by means of implicit collocations (cf. Östman, 2005).

¹ The news story analysed was published on BBC Online News, 19th December 2002. The entire news series on business women leaders consists of 21 news stories about women from different areas of society. The news series was retrieved from BBC Online News at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/> [9th April 2008].

Approaches to leadership research

Traditionally, the dominant theoretical approach in leadership research has emphasized the significance of individualism, focusing particularly on characteristics that are typically associated with individual leaders and their leadership styles (Northouse, 2004; Yukl, 2002). Nowadays this traditional perspective to leadership is being challenged by social constructionism, a theoretical framework which sees leadership as a socially interactive process (Aaltonen & Kovalainen, 2001; Bolden & Gosling, 2006; Gergen, 1999; Hoskings & McNamee, 2006; Pearce & Cogan, 2003; Searle, 1995). To say that leadership is socially constructed suggests that situational and socio-cultural meanings of leadership are formed by means of discourse practices carried out at all levels in society. In particular, studies that examine the discursive nature of leadership look at language to uncover social and cultural aspects related to leadership (Fairhurst, 2007 & 2008). Despite this so-called ‘linguistic turn’ in social science (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000), leadership studies focusing on discourse rarely make use of linguistic analysis as a means of research methodology. Indeed, previous research has examined the language used in ‘traditional’ leadership settings, such as business meetings (e.g. Clifton, 2006) as well as ‘non-traditional’ leadership settings, such as small talk situations (e.g. Ekman, 2001). However, the focus of these studies has primarily been on content and not on the correlation between content and linguistic form. This is a fundamental oversight considering that “content cannot be properly analysed without simultaneously analysing [linguistic] form, because contents are always necessarily realized in forms, and different contents entail different forms and vice versa” (Fairclough, 1992a, p. 210). Another oversight regarding methodology is that previous research has primarily concentrated on spoken language and overlooked written language as a source of data in leadership research. This might be a consequence of preconceptions according to which language is an insufficient tool for research on social phenomena (Silverman, 2006, p. 153-154). However, since discourse has become an essential part of leadership research (Fairhurst, 2007 & 2008) and written language is a fundamental aspect of discourse (Fairclough, 1989; 1992a; 1995), the need for research that looks at the manner in which devices of written language add to the situational and socio-cultural meanings of leadership is clearly wanting.

Nicola Horlick – from ‘superwoman’ to ‘human’

In this section, I examine the way Nicola Horlick is characterized in the data. The analysis begins with the opening of the news text, that is, the headline, which functions as the starting point of Nicola Horlick’s image as a woman business leader. This part of the analysis is followed by an examination of the entire news text and, in particular, the manner in which reported speech is used to support the ‘human face’ image of Nicola Horlick created in the headline.

Headlines are significant elements of news stories as, together with the lead, they summarize the central message of the news text and aim at drawing the readers’ attention to a particular viewpoint. According to Bell (1991, p. 186), headlines contain ‘simple’ language and therefore they are often created from “one-word catch lines or slug lines” which are quick and easy to notice and read. Headlines have initial position in all news stories and thus function as the starting point of discussion: they operate as gateways that lead the readers into the entire news text (Östman & Virtanen, 1999, p. 96, 104 & 107; see also Halliday, 1994, p. 37; Greenbaum et al., 1995, p. 397). Extract (1) gives the headline of the news story referring to Nicola Horlick as a woman business leader.

(1) *The Human Face of Nicola Horlick*

The most noteworthy feature in the headline is the attributive function of ‘*Nicola Horlick*’ in relation to the head of the phrase ‘*The Human Face*’, particularly because the headline could just as well as been grammatically structured by means of a genitive construction (i.e. *Nicola Horlick’s Human Face*). In comparison, there is only one other headline (extract 2) in the entire news series of women in business (i.e. 21 news stories) which takes the *of*-construction, and two headlines (extracts 3-4) which take a genitive construction.

- (2) *The Making of Martha*
- (3) *Dame Anita's radical approach*
- (4) *Hewitt's crusade for women*

The significance of the linguistic composition of the headline referring to Nicola Horlick can be explained by means of Information Structuring. With regard to the Crucial Information First (CIF) principle (cf. Östman & Virtanen, 1999), the *of*-construction is used to draw attention to the head of the phrase '*The Human Face*'. This process is also called 'staging' which refers to the idea that '*The Human Face*' is used as "a *peg* to hang the entire news story on" (Östman & Virtanen, 1997, p. 97). The linguistic principle of Given-New information (Greenbaum et al., 1995, pp. 396-397), in contrast, suggests that the purpose of the *of*-construction is to emphasize '*Nicola Horlick*' as the focus of information so that '*The Human Face*' is understood as 'old' and 'self-evident' information. This is significant with regard to the situational context as the media have previously portrayed Nicola Horlick as a 'superwoman', a gender-stereotypical depiction of mothers who pursue a high-profile career as well as take care of their families (cf. Page, 2003). Thus the headline is ambiguous as it simultaneously takes on two meanings: one that accentuates 'human face' as the discourse topic and another that implicitly goes against a gender-stereotypical representation of women leadership. This ambiguity is noteworthy as the meaning of the other headlines is more explicitly communicated. In '*The Making of Martha*', the *of*-construction is essential in order to present information in a particular order (cf. Martha's making = Martha is making, is not an option). Conversely, according to the 'end-focus' principle, in '*Dame Anita's radical approach*' and '*Hewitt's crusade for women*' attention is drawn to the actions portrayed by these women.

Throughout the news story, the 'human face' image is linguistically structured by means of reported speech. Reported speech is typically divided into two forms, that is, direct and indirect speech (Greenbaum et al., 1995, pp. 297-300). In the data, direct speech refers to the exact words that Nicola Horlick has uttered during the interview (Greenbaum et al., 1995, pp. 297-298). Direct speech is signalled by means of wording which is enclosed in quotation marks and a reporting clause which may occur before,

after or within the direct speech (e.g. *“It’s ridiculous that I am known as superwoman,” she says.*) Indirect speech, in contrast, conveys a report of what Nicola Horlick has said in the interview (Greenbaum et al., 1995, pp. 297-300). Indirect speech is indicated by means of reporting words which are in present tense and which are followed by an indirect statement, e.g. a subordinate *that*-clause (e.g. *Nicola Horlick spends several minutes of our interview denying allegations that she is a superhero.*). Direct speech within indirect statements/questions is a combination of these two forms of reported speech, where quotations are placed within subordinate *that*-clauses (*[Nicola Horlick] admits that the attention “hasn’t been unhelpful from a business point of view”.*) or within indirect questions (e.g. *But as to whether you can have it all – the answer is “no”.*).

In the following, I examine the occurrence and content of the forms of reported speech used in the news story profiling Nicola Horlick. Table 1 gives the forms of reported speech used in the news story. The table shows the number of occurrences (18) of the forms of reported speech (the tokens) as well as how they are distributed in relation to each other. In addition, the table shows the percentage of distribution.

Table 1. Forms of reported speech used in the news story

Reported speech	Token	Percentage
Direct speech	12	66 %
Direct speech within indirect statements/questions	3	17 %
Indirect speech	3	17 %
TOTAL	18	100 %

The figures given in Table 1 show that direct speech is the most often used form of reported speech in the news story. More specifically, direct speech is used as a form of reported speech 12 times, covering 66 per cent of all tokens whereas indirect speech is employed only three times, resulting in 17 per cent of the total number of tokens. Additionally, there are three occurrences where the forms of direct speech are used within indirect statements/questions. There is nothing unusual about direct speech being the most common form of reported speech as quotations are typical features of news

stories, particularly because they distance journalists from what is being said (Bell, 1991; Fowler, 1991). Direct quotations also create a sense of ‘conversation’ as the language used in them comes across as ‘ordinary and everyday’ language which the readers can easily comprehend. The purpose of creating a conversation style in a news text is to ‘naturalize’ the way reality is presented (Fowler, 1991, p. 57) and, in a sense, make the news story seem more ‘factual’ (Fairclough, 1995, p. 10; Stenvall, 2004, p. 15; also see Stenvall, 2008). Direct speech is commonly used in all of the news stories from the interview series on women in business. However, the significance of direct speech in the news story referring to Nicola Horlick is the different way that direct speech is used in comparison e.g. to the news stories given in extracts (2-4). More specifically, in the Nicola Horlick news story direct speech is used so that implicit collocations are embedded within quotations, which adds to the ambiguity of the headline.

Collocation is a linguistic term used to refer to the relation between words that are habitually used together (Sinclair, 1991, p. 170). Collocation is also closely connected to semantics as words are thought to get part of their meaning from other words that surround them (Östman, 2005, p. 183). Typically, collocations are examined as prototypes, consisting of node-words which repeatedly co-occur with words which are placed before and/or after them within language use (Stubbs, 2002, p. 29). However, Östman (2005, pp. 190-191) suggests that collocations can also be based on the span of words which are located within a whole text. These collocations are based on implicit choices, that is, other-than propositional choices, and therefore he calls them “implicit collocations” (ibid.). Based on the content of direct speech, ‘human’ is identified as the node-word of the news story referring to Nicola Horlick. The Collins Cobuild database² shows that ‘human’ collocates with the words ‘behaviour’, ‘emotion’ and ‘nature’. These collocates of ‘human’ do not, however, appear in the occurrences of direct speech per se in the Nicola Horlick text; rather, they are referred to through lexical choices which semantically are related to the words ‘behaviour’, ‘emotion’ and ‘nature’. Thus

² For more information about the Collins Cobuild database, see <http://www.collins.co.uk>

words referring to ‘behaviour’, ‘emotion’ and ‘nature’ function as implicit collocations of the node-word ‘human’ (cf. Östman, 2005).

Table 2 gives the occurrence and percentage of implicit collocations, that is, the words referring to collocates of ‘human’ in direct speech and direct speech within indirect statements/questions. The Table shows that nine of the 15 occurrences, that is, 60 per cent of all tokens, make use of implicit collocations whereas 40 per cent do not.

Table 2. Implicit collocations in direct speech (within indirect statements/questions).

Direct speech (within indirect statements/questions)	Token	Percentage
Words related to collocates of 'human'	9	60 %
Words not related to collocates of 'human'	6	40 %
TOTAL	15	100 %

The extracts listed in (2-12) are the direct speeches and direct speeches within indirect statements that include words and phrases related to the words ‘behaviour’, ‘emotion’ and ‘nature’. The significance of extracts (2-5) is that they all pertain to human behaviour. Becoming accustomed to a certain situation, such as being successful in one’s career in extract (2), can be regarded as ‘natural’ human behaviour. In extract (3), expressing an understanding that people often prioritize and place their family before work also serves as a common example of human behaviour (*tell [your employer] your priorities - you might need to go see your children in a carol concert*). In addition, extracts (4-5) portray Nicola Horlick by means of human behaviour as they show that, like any other human being, Nicola Horlick also makes mistakes in business (*wrong-footed*) and is sometimes too hopeful about business outcomes (*too optimistic too early*).

- (2) “I was so **used to success** in my career. I had never had any setbacks before.”

- (3) “You have to be honest with your employer and you have to tell them your **priorities**. People at work have to understand that **you might need to go see your children in a carol concert**.”
- (4) Ms Horlick recognises she was “**wrong-footed**” by the stock markets last year.
- (5) “We were **too optimistic too early**.”

Extracts (6-8) are also important with regard to the characterization of Nicola Horlick as they all relate to human emotion. In extracts (6-7), the ‘human’ side of Nicola Horlick is constructed through her bereavement as a mother and especially through her daughter’s struggle against leukaemia. In particular, extracts (6-7) make use of lexical choices (*crying*; *a desperate sense of loss*) as well as phrases (*to come to terms with it*; *I won’t get over it*) describing states of emotion and personal loss. In contrast, extract (8) relates to Nicola Horlick’s falling out with her former employer, Morgan Grenfell Investment Management. She describes the incident with the company’s senior management as *terribly shocking*, which sheds light on her emotional reaction to her professional failure.

- (6) “I am not **crying** all the time now, but I still have **a desperate sense of loss**.”
- (7) “I have **come to terms with it**, but **I won’t get over it**.”
- (8) “It was **terribly shocking**.”

Extracts (9-11) show how ‘human’ is connected to Nicola Horlick’s personality. In extract (9), ‘human’ gains meaning when she reveals her ‘easy-going’ attitude to life (*I have always been laid back*); a feature which has especially become part of her personality since her daughter’s death (*the little things don’t seem so important any more*). In extract (10), admitting that the media’s interest in successful business women has been helpful to her from a business viewpoint highlights a pragmatic feature of her personality. Also, extract (11) pertains to Nicola Horlick’s character even though the

adjective *ruthless* can also be thought to go against the ‘human’ side of Nicola Horlick. With regard to her personality, this extract suggests that no matter how difficult the situation may be, Nicola Horlick is always persistent in business matters (*I can be ruthless for the good of the overall organisation*).

(9) *“I have always been **laid back**, but I think I’m more so now. **The little things don’t seem so important any more.**”*

(10) *Although Ms Horlick belittles the media’s fixation with successful women in the City, she admits the attention **“hasn’t been unhelpful from a business point of view”**.*

(11) *“I can be **ruthless** for the good of the overall organisation.”*

Conclusion

This study shows how linguistic analysis, that is, a pragmatic methodological approach to discourse analysis that focuses on both linguistic form and content, can add to our understanding of leadership. The study sheds light on the manner in which written language, as a form of naturally occurring data, serves as an important addition to research material that can be utilized to examine the discursive nature of leadership (cf. Fairhurst, 2007 & 2008). My examination of the news story profiling Nicola Horlick reveals how textual-structuring devices commonly used in news texts function as linguistic carriers of social meanings. In the data, the headline is used to set the discourse topic of the news story which is consistently constructed throughout the text by way of implicit collocations embedded in direct speech. Most importantly, not only do implicit collocations coherently structure ‘the human face’ of Nicola Horlick in the data, but they are also used to anchor the discourse topic to characteristics of women leadership as ‘human’ goes against the gender-stereotypical representation of ‘superwoman’.

Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that the media do not – as is usually claimed – ‘routinely’ present gender-stereotypical representations of women leaders. Rather, my study draws attention to the fact that even though women are often portrayed in accordance with existing gender stereotypes, the characterization of women leadership is also constrained to the situational context. Since the study examines a news story chosen from a larger interview series of women who have built a successful career in the business sector, the overall objective is to give women ‘a voice’ through which they can shape their own leadership images. From this point of view, there is nothing unusual about Nicola Horlick being portrayed as someone who has a ‘human face’. The ‘human face’ image has news value as it contradicts the gender-stereotypical ‘superwoman’ image that has previously been associated with her leadership. The significance of these findings is that they suggest that socio-cultural views of women leadership are changing. In the past, gender has generally been considered to be something that is constructed, or ‘done’, by means of social structures, processes and/or interaction (Gherardi, 1994; West & Zimmerman, 1987). However, the notion of ‘doing’ entails the idea that gender can also be re-constructed, or ‘undone’, by the same social structures, processes and/or interactions through which gender-stereotypical leadership images are initially structured (Deutsch, 2007). From this perspective, we can say that news stories which seek to enhance leadership images of women in business by avoiding gender-stereotypical characterizations constitute an attempt to re-construct, or ‘undo’, socio-cultural perceptions of gender.

References

- Aaltonen, M. & Kovalainen, A. (2001). *Johtaminen Sosiaalisena Konstruktiona*. Helsinki: Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration.
- Alvesson, M. & Kärreman, D. (2000). Varieties of discourse: On the study of organizations through discourse analysis. *Human Relations*, 53(9), 1125-1149.
- Barge, K. & Fairhurst, G. (2008). Living leadership: A systematic constructionist approach. *Leadership*, 4(3), 227-251.
- Barisone, M. (2009). Valance image and the standardization of democratic political

- leadership. *Leadership*, 5(1), 41-60.
- Bell, A. (1991). *The Language of News Media*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- ben-Aaron, D. (2005). *Given and News. Media Discourse and the Construction of Community on National Days*. PIC Monographs 4. English Department, University of Helsinki.
- Bolden, R. & Gosling, J. (2006). Leadership competencies: Time to change the tune? *Leadership*, 2(1), 147-163.
- Buzzanell, P. (1994). Gaining a voice: Feminist organizational communication theorizing. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 4, 339-383.
- Bystrom, D. (2006). Advertising, websites and media coverage: Gender and communication along the campaign trail. In S. Carroll and R. Fox (eds.). *Gender and Election: Shaping the Future of American Politics* (pp. 169-188). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cameron, D. (1998). *The Feminist Critique of Language*. (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Charles, Mirjaliisa. (2007). Language matters in global communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44(3), 260-282.
- Chen, C. & Meindl, J. (1991). The construction of leadership images in the popular press: The case of Donald Burr and People Express. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 36, 521-551.
- Conger, J. (1999). Qualitative research as the cornerstone methodology for understanding leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, 9(1), 107-121.
- Deutsch, F. (2007). Undoing gender. *Gender and Society*, 21(1), 106-127.
- Duke, L. (1993a). *Women in Politics – Outsiders or Insiders*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Duke, L. (1993b). Women and sex stereotypes: Cultural reflections in the mass media. In Lois Lovelace Duke (ed.). *Women in Politics – Outsiders or Insiders* (pp. 229-239). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Fairclough, N. (2006). *Language and Globalization*. London: Routledge.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Media Discourse*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. London: Longman Group.

- Fairhurst, G. (2008). Discursive leadership. A communication alternative to leadership psychology. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 21(4), 510-521.
- Fairhurst, G. (2007). *Discursive Leadership. In Conversation with Leadership Psychology*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Ford, J. (2006). Discourse of leadership: Gender, identity and contradiction in a UK public sector organization. *Leadership*, 2(1), 77-99.
- Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the News. Discourse and Ideology in the Press*. London: Routledge
- Gergen, K. (1999). *An Invitation to Social Construction*. London: Sage.
- Gherardi, S. (1994). The gender we think, the gender we do in our everyday organizational lives. *Human Relations*, 47(6), 591-610.
- Greenbaum, S., Quirk, R., Leech, G., and Svartvik, J. (1990). *A Student's Grammar of the English Language*. Harlow: Longman.
- Heldman, C., Carroll S. & Olson S. (2000). *Gender Differences in Print Media Coverage of Presidential Candidates: Elizabeth Dole's Bid for the Republican Nomination*. Retrieved 9 December , 2004 from <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Research/reportslist.html>
- Holmberg, I. & Åkerblom S. (2000). 'The production outstanding leadership – an analysis of leadership in the Swedish media'. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 17, 67-85.
- Hoskings, D-M. & McNamee, S. (eds.). (2006). *The Social Construction of Organization*. Oslo: Liber.
- Hoskings, D-M. (1988). Organizing, leadership and skillful process'. *Journal of Management Studies*, 25(2), 147-166.
- Munter, M. (2006). *Guide to Managerial Writing. Effective Business Writing and Speaking*. (7th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson.
- Nentwich, J. (2006). Changing Gender: The discursive construction of equal opportunities. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 13(6), 500-521.
- Northouse, P. (2004). *Leadership. Theory and Practice*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Östman, J-O. (2005). Persuasion as implicit anchoring. The case of collocations'. In H. Halmari and T. Virtanen (eds.) *Persuasion Across Genres* (pp. 183-212). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

- Östman, J-O. & Virtanen, T. (1999). Theme, comment, and newness as figures in information structuring. In K. van Hoek, A. A. Kibrik and L. Noordman (eds.), *Discourse Studies in Cognitive Linguistics* (pp. 91-110). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Page, R. (2003). Cherie: lawyer, wife, mum': contradictory patterns of representation in media reports of Cherie Booth/Blair. *Discourse and Society*, 14(5), 559-579.
- Pearce, C. & Conger, J. (eds.). (2003). *Shared Leadership: Reframing the Hows and Whys of Leadership*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Searle, John. 1995. *The Construction of Social Reality*. London: Penguin Books.
- Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Sjöstrand, S-E., Sandberg, J. & Tystrup, M. (eds.). (2001). *Invisible Management. The Social Construction of Leadership*. London: Thomson Learning.
- Solin, A. (2001). *Tracing Texts. Intertextuality in Environmental Discourse*. Pragmatics, Ideology and Contacts – PIC Monographs 2. Department of English: University of Helsinki.
- Stenvall, M. (2008). On emotions and the journalistic ideals of factuality and objectivity – tools for analysis. *Journal of Pragmatics* 40(9), 1569-1586. Special Issue “Pragmatic and discourse-analytic approaches to present-day English”. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Stenvall, M. (2004). On anonymity in news agency reports. *PIC Bulletin*. University of Helsinki. 6, 15-27.
- Stubbs, M. (2002). *Words and Phrases. Corpus Studies on Lexical Semantics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Townsend, T. (forthcoming). (In)dependence in headlines. Running as a Senate Candidate or as The First Lady. In L. Mattfolk and J-O. Östman (eds.). *Language, Politeness and Gender*. Helsinki: University of Helsinki.
- Townsend, T. (2007). Using linguistic forms of self-reference to create leadership images. The self-presentation of Hillary Clinton in her online autobiographies. Paper presented at the 10th International Pragmatics Conference (IPrA), Gothenburg, Sweden, 8th -13th July, 2007.
- Townsend, T. (2004). Lead openings as strategic devices in campaign coverage.

- Pragmatics, Ideology and Contacts (PIC) Bulletin*. Helsinki: University of Helsinki.
6, 6-14.
- van Dijk, T. (1995). Discourse semantics and ideology. *Discourse & Society*,
6, 243-289.
- West, C. & Zimmerman, D. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender and Society*. 1(2), 125-151
- Wodak, R. (1995). Critical Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis.
In J.Verschueren, J-O. Östman and J. Blommaert (eds.). *Handbook of Pragmatics
Manual*.
- Yukl, G. (2002). *Leadership in Organizations* (5th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

A RE-EVALUATION OF THREE INTERDISCIPLINARY FIELDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN BUSINESS: A POST-SILO REPOSITIONING OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

David A. Victor

Director of International Business Programs

Professor of Management

College of Business

Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan, USA

dvictor@emich.edu

Abstract

This article reviews the role that business communication, international business and information systems have played in common in the traditional business school. None of these fields fits easily into the discipline-based silos that solidified in business schools. The position posited is that this failure to fit in a pre-existing discipline is based on two factors. First, all three fields are by nature interdisciplinary. Second, all three fields flowered only after business schools had adopted field-based disciplines which in their rigidity represent the antithesis to interdisciplinary research and teaching. Both as new fields and as interdisciplinary subjects, all three have much to offer to the changing nature of business education. Far from viewing themselves as orphans without a home in an existing discipline, business communication, international business and information systems studies can help shape the future nature of the increasingly interdisciplinary business school of the future.

Key words: business communication, international business, information systems, business school, interdisciplinary, business education, business curriculum

Introduction

Leaders in the fields of business communication, international business and information systems have all expressed concerns about where they belong in the traditional business school. All three of these fields are necessary fields of study in business. They are in demand in the world of business outside of academe. Indeed, they came into existence primarily in response to pressures from the business world.

That said the reason that these three fields feel orphaned in the traditional business school does not rest in their subject matter but in the traditional structure of the business school.

All three fields are by nature interdisciplinary. Additionally, all three fields have come into prominence only within the last third of the 20th century, after existing business disciplines had been established. The structure of the business school has since the late 1950's been constructed on disciplines that have solidified into silos. These silos, by the very fact that they are discipline-centered, are by their nature unaccommodating to that which *is* interdisciplinary. These existing disciplines remain important areas of study. Still the siloization of these fields has made traditional business schools less flexible than they might otherwise be in how they respond to the emergence of new communication-based, global, computer-driven business needs.

Business communication, international business and information systems as fields would benefit themselves and business education as a whole by re-examining what they really represent. Both as new fields and as interdisciplinary subjects, all three have much to offer the changing nature of the business education. Far from viewing themselves as orphans without a home in an existing discipline, business communication, international business and information systems studies can help shape the future nature of the increasingly interdisciplinary business school of the future.

Common Concerns of Being Perceived As Interdisciplinary

Business Communication

Margaret Baker Graham and Charlotte Thralls (1998) have observed, that “The goal of defining business communication as a discipline ... remains elusive.” (p. 8) More recently, in a summary of the state of the field of business communication, Jim Suchan and Mirjaliisa Charles (2006) express the concern “That lack of a clear identity may make our work invisible to business practitioners and even to our colleagues in related disciplines” (p. 293). Business Communication, as a field, does not fall cleanly into an established discipline. Suchan and Charles (2006) explain that, instead:

We borrow theory from other disciplines—rhetoric, management, organizational theory, psychology—and celebrate that fact by describing ourselves as multi- or interdisciplinary. Although the label *multidisciplinary* enables us to be inclusive (perhaps too inclusive) of researchers from a large number of areas, that open-endedness creates a significant identity problem for the field. (p. 293)

While this is, in fact, true, it is by no means unique to business communication as a field of business study.

International Business

Other disciplines too have traditionally found themselves without a clear home in the traditionally structured College of Business. For example, a nearly identical debate to that of business communication is going on in the field of international business (IB).

Jack Berhrman (2006), at the end of a long and illustrious career as a leader in IB studies warns of the consequences of the fact that “business schools treat IB as an orphan” (p. 442). Echoing Graham and Thralls’ concerns of the “elusive” definition of business

communication, Behrman (2006) recalls, those in the IB field have attempted “to resolve the question of location of the courses within functional areas or as a separate discipline, but it remains unresolved.” (p. 442)

As an organization, the Academy of International Business (AIB) has struggled with its diversity of fields in much the same way that the Association for Business Communication has. Some of this surfaced – as it did with the ABC – in the renaming of the organization. The AIB replaced the former Association for Education in International Business (AIEB) just as the ABC supplanted the American Business Writing Association (ABWA). The struggles to place IB courses within a pre-existing discipline remain nearly identical to that of business communication. As Behrman recalls, those in the IB field simply gave up on the issue of creating a single discipline or at least of housing the field among the existing business disciplines.

Unable to decide the issue, the AEIB accepted as members those teaching any international course – accounting, management, marketing, strategy or whatever. The name of the organization was changed to Academy of International Business for the purpose of reflecting the research interests of the members and essentially sidestepping the ‘discipline’ issue. (Behrman, 2006, p. 441)

In forecasting the challenges to the Association for International, John Fayerweather (1994) suggested that the AIB’s future challenge centered on

the changing structure of international study in academia, notably the broad, diffused character it has assumed with a very wide range of professors expected to add an international dimension to their courses, and those professors finding that the international dimension is a vital part of their own range of interest in both teaching and research. (p. 42)

What Fayerweather does not address here, though, is that while the need to include international elements into the business curriculum has changed of necessity, the existing functional areas have nowhere to actually house IB studies. The difficulty with this is less in the realities of international business as a field than in the acceptability of IB within the existing structure of business higher education. The result is what Berhman (2006) calls an “academic limbo”: “as long as the functional journals consider that US experience can be appropriately generalized around the world, thereby giving short shrift to international and cross-cultural aspects, so long will the international issues remain ‘in academic limbo’” (p. 442). The *need* for IB – as with business communication – is apparent, but the organization of the existing business school has not changed to accommodate this need.

Information Systems

Yet a third orphaned field in business schools is that of Information Systems (IS). Here too, scholars openly express their concern that Izak BenBassat and Robert Zmud (2003) explain, “that, after 30 years, insufficient progress has been made in establishing this [IS’s] collective identity” (p. 184). BenBassat and Zmud are far from alone (see Impagliazzo and Gorgonne, 2002; Hirschheim and Klein, 2003; Agarwal and Lucas, 2005). As with business communication and IB, the source of the concern is identified, at least in part, as IS field’s interdisciplinary nature. To quote BenBassat and Zmud (2003) again:

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of IS research, IS scholars have emerged from varied academic backgrounds: organization science, computer science, information science, engineering, economics, and management science/operations research. As a result, the theories embraced, the methods applied, and the topics addressed by IS scholars are themselves varied, producing the diversity exhibited across the discipline. (p. 185)

Again, the field in question has changed, but the debate is nearly identical.

Lack of an Existing Discipline

In each case, concerns are expressed about the diversity of the discipline, the concern about how others in the older functional areas view them and the ability to be accepted into the old order. The question all three fields – business communication, international business and information systems – seem to be asking themselves is how to fit into the old order.

Suchan and Charles (2006) worry that the “identity may make our work invisible to business practitioners and even to our colleagues in related disciplines” (p. 293). Behrman (2006) worries about IB’s “academic limbo” (p. 442). BenBasat and Zmud (2003) express “concerns across the discipline that the viability and unique contributions of the IS discipline are being questioned by influential stakeholders” (p. 184). All of these writers are among the most-respected figures in their fields, and their stature alone suggests we take their concerns seriously.

New Fields and Old Standards

The issue here has less to do with the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the field. Communication, international business and information systems are all central to the current needs of an interconnected and integrated world economy. Instead, the orphan status of these three fields so central to the present workplace is based on the solidification – even fossilization -- of standards created in the 1950’s as business education began to take its current form.

It is pertinent to observe that all three of these fields came into being only after the business schools had solidified into their current functional areas of expertise. In each case, they arose – often against considerable resistance from the existing disciplines -- as a result of external pressures from the business community outside the Colleges of Business.

The importance of communication as part of a business education lacked any notable champion inside academe. As a field, it had no home because it belonged to no single discipline. Within Colleges of Business, it was perceived as too much of a soft skill at a time while with Colleges of Liberal Arts it was perceived as too business related. Yet, as Kitty Locker (2003) explained,

In spite of this disdain, courses in business and technical communication grew, albeit slowly and unevenly. This growth was fueled by the demands of industry for graduates who could write and by requirements from accrediting associations for instruction in workplace communication. (p. 119)

When John Fayerweather created at Columbia University what was to become the first true IB studies program in the mid-1950's, the impetus to do so had not come from among the faculty there, but rather from an outsider -- Courtney Brown -- who had left his job in industry at the heavily internationalized company Standard Oil of New Jersey (now Exxon) to become the dean at Columbia Business School. Brown saw the need for IB. The academy itself did not. As Fayerweather (1994) recounts: "But it was soon apparent that some international coursework with a business administration orientation was required. The established departments, with little interest in Brown's initiative, were not inclined to collaborate in meeting this need." (p. 18)

Arguably no sector of business has been as important or transformational as that of information systems and computer-related fields. Yet far from being affected by the advent of the computer, business schools did not include them as an area of study in their curricula. Thus, while the first computer science department was set up in 1962 (at Purdue University), it wasn't until almost two decades later that a major business school -- MIT's Sloan School of Management -- included a computer-based discipline. As noted on Sloan's website: "In 1981, the Management of Technology program was established and remained the only program of its kind for several years." (<http://mitsloan.mit.edu/about/history.php>). Even then, this was a joint program between MIT's Sloan and School of Engineering. In

short, even at MIT, IS struggled to find a home in the business school because it was too interdisciplinary.

Siloization

All three of these fields – business communication, IB and IS to a large extent remain – orphaned fields. The reasons for this are admittedly complex and numerous. That said, though, two factors strongly contribute to their orphan status. First, all three came into their own only in the last third of the 20th century, well after the existing model of the business school had solidified. Second, all three are heavily interdisciplinary, and the business school model had solidified into specialized disciplines: the antithesis of the interdisciplinary.

The solidification, however, did not evolve over centuries as had such disciplines as, say chemistry or English literature. They simply were not old enough: Wharton, the first business school, was only founded in 1881. Rather, the business schools only settled into their existing disciplines by the end of the 1950's in response to criticisms that they lacked academic rigor and were too vocationally oriented coupled with (or perhaps prompted by) the post-World War II emergence of business degrees as the most popular undergraduate degree in the United States (see Cheit, 1985 for an more thorough overview).

The Case against Silos in Business Education

Siloization had been the dominant model of university structure long before business studies was ever conceived of as an academic field. As Albert Teich, Director of Science and Policy programs for the American Association for the Advancement of Science explains:

Universities are traditionally organized into academic departments around specific disciplines, and those departments are the primary means of exercising quality control and distributing awards... As a result, universities are set up so that the reward structures operate through the departments. The

departments are the units that award tenure, raises, and promotions for faculty members. (Skandalaris, 2006, p. 100)

The difficulty here, however, is that – at least compared to such fields as chemistry or physics -- business as a whole *is* interdisciplinary. Yet interdisciplinary fields could not readily fall into the traditionally organized specific disciplines that Teich describes for the sciences. To address this, the business schools created disciplines which in fact admirably dealt with the issue of academic rigor. This addressed the concerns of the major constituency represented by the rest of academe, and indeed, business professors began to receive considerably more (if not full) acceptance among their university peers outside of the business school.

Yet the model they followed began to receive considerable objections in the following decades. The more specialized the business disciplines became, it was argued, the more detached from the realities of business the material that business schools taught became. Beginning in the mid-1990's, business schools began to receive frequent criticism of what has come to be called its *silozation* into essentially artificial functional areas (Dudley et al., 1995; Stover et al., 1997; Bishop, Vaughan, Jensen, Hanna, & Graf, 1998; Michaelson, 1999; Walker & Black, 2000; Hamilton, McFarland and Mirchandani 2000; Pharr, 2000; Aurand et al., 2001; Barber, Borin, Cef and Swartz, 2001, Smith Ducoffe, Tromley and Tucker, 2006). The silos that resulted, it was argued, were based on the solidification of disciplines created in the 1950's as business education began to take its current form. The world has changed considerably since then.

Steven W. Pharr (2000), in a comment that typifies such criticism, wrote that:

In response to industry demands and accreditation standards, many business schools are developing integrated versions of Common Body of Knowledge courses. The purpose of the integration is to demonstrate the inter-relatedness of the various business functions and how they work together within the firm. (p. 20)

Moreover, the operating structure of business schools face demands that did not exist as the silos were formed in the decades following World War II. With the fast pace of technologically-based communication and globalization, businesses are in many cases technologically or globally more advanced than the schools that hire their students. As the entrepreneur and CEO of Noble Industries, Bob Skandalaris (2006) observes, “Many of today’s breakthrough innovations occur at the intersection of different disciplines” (p. 100). Moreover, business schools face the potential loss of part of their student base to various private training programs or to online or multi-locational competitors (such as the University of Phoenix). These alternatives – whatever the issues of quality they may have – are at least flexible to the needs of the marketplace when business schools are not. Yet, as Harvey et al. (2006) have condemned, “The static, hierarchical, tradition-bound business schools have been reluctant to improve their operating productivity, to adapt to the needs of their students, or to predict what employers expect their students to know” (p. 163).

The persuasiveness of these critiques was given further strength when, in 2000, the AACSB advised Colleges of Business that their "curriculum should integrate the core areas and apply cross-functional approaches to organizational issues" (AACSB, paragraph C 1.3.E of the AACSB Business Accreditation Standards 2000).

Institutional support of multidisciplinary efforts on the part of business school faculty exists. Indeed, the AACSB (1996) indicated that "if faculty members don't know how to think about business as integrated relationships, then students won't learn how to, either." (p. 2)

Kenton Walker and Ervin Black (2000) indicate that the real resistance to creating a cross-disciplinary structure comes at the level of individual faculty members. “Faculty resistance to change,” they argue, “is the foremost obstacle to changing the undergraduate curriculum” (p. 208). Those faculty who are comfortable with the silos structure of business education as it is, frankly do not want to undergo the retooling and the work involved with changing it. In fact, though, not all of the faculty members have to change. The teaching of specialized functional areas can – and should – coexist with an integrated multi-disciplinary

set of courses. Walker and Black (2000) argue that “colleges of business should expect *at least a portion of their faculty* to possess the same broad-based understanding of basic business that faculties (and labor markets) expect of our students.” (pp. 208-209, italics added). The operative phrase here is “a portion of their faculty.” Not all faculty need to be interdisciplinary, but *at least a portion a portion of their faculty* should be.

IS, IB and Business Communication and a Changing Business Environment

The business world of the early 21st century has changed considerably since the silos of the business school were constructed in the 1950's. Indeed, IS, IB and business communication grew out of the demand to meet those changes. Together they define what has changed in the world of business.

To illustrate this, it might be useful to look at one example that changed the face of modern business. In 1977, Koji Kobayashi, the chairman of Japan's NEC, coined his now-famous “C & C” slogan: Computers and Communication. Kobayashi was visionary. For him, the vision was not only for NEC, but for Japan as a global strategy was the recognition that the convergence of “computers and communication” would transform business and interlink the world before the 21st century began. Kobayashi too had a different view of global business, making it NEC's strategy to consider the United States its second domestic market rather than a foreign market.

The computer began to shrink the world. With that shrinking came the increasing ease of communication, the growth of information technology and the spread of globalization. Kobayashi had seen in this convergence an integrated world economy with computer-driven communication at its heart. IS, IB and business communication scholars may feel themselves marginalized in the university, but that is not the case in the world of business practice.

This was not – could not be – ignored by business schools. Still, the business schools were already entrenched in their established fields, each with a concern about changing what

they were doing to cross disciplines, let alone the turf wars involved in a perceived loss of ground to the upstart interdisciplinary fields of IS, IB and business communication.

Business Communication, IB and IS and Their Role in the Business School

The real question, however, is *who* is actually questioning the contributions of the interdisciplinary fields. What we are experiencing is a sea-change of conceptualization of business education. Business schools currently face external pressures to adapt the existing silo structure to something more flexible. The students who graduate from business school face a communication-based, global, computer-driven reality of the business world that simply did not exist when the business scholars began their siloization into specialized disciplines.

The existing traditional disciplines of the business schools remain – and will remain – important. There will continue to be a need to study finance, accounting, marketing or management, although in the coming decades possibly not as stand-alone disciplines. As Albert Teich explains (speaking of reshaping the scientific academic structure), “We need to keep the good parts of that basic structure in place, but we need to broaden it in a way that allows people to get recognition for their contributions in multidisciplinary research as well” (Skandalaris, 2006, p. 100).

That said the business school of the future will not long survive if it remains rigidly encased in a system that no longer reflects the business world in which its graduates are called to operate. In a business world that increasingly demands greater flexibility, fields that are by nature interdisciplinary – whether business communication, international business or information systems (or others like them) – can lead the way in meeting this need to an interdisciplinary model for business education.

There is a clear demand in business for all three fields. There is equally a need in business schools for the interdisciplinary and flexible world view that these three fields by experience represent. We may once have bemoaned our situation as lacking a home in the

old order of the artificially siloized business school. Rather, we should stop trying to find a place for ourselves in the old order, and envision ourselves instead as the vanguard of the new order.

Priscilla Rogers (2001), in positing an alternative, asked, “Might we pursue a new kind of togetherness that confronts us individually with unfamiliar processes, requiring new and flexible research competencies?” (p. 17)

Next Steps

The way in which Pris Rogers’ “togetherness” will take form is fundamentally one of reaching beyond our immediate comfort zones to find applications outside of our own skill sets in interdisciplinary contexts. This may, at first, seem disquieting as moving beyond one’s comfort zones is, by definition, uncomfortable. Yet the level of discomfort in embracing an interdisciplinary approach that breaks free of the traditional silos is arguably less so for those in business communication, IB and IS. This is because they are already interdisciplinary and (developing after the silos had solidified) they are already outside of the pre-existing structure.

This much is encouraging. The other side of this argument, though, is that those faculty deeply engrained in their ways are much less likely to agree with the need for such a change. Moreover, these faculty are often the ones in power. Rogers’ “togetherness” includes not only the new but the old as well.

So the task for those promoting an interdisciplinary approach to business education rests in large part in convincing those with a vested interest in the old system. To do so, it is necessary to avoid an “us vs. them” approach at all costs. On the theoretical side, such division represents the antithesis of interdisciplinary “togetherness.” On the pragmatic side, it is quite possible that those faculty who are least likely to change are those who have secured tenure or power through the old way. Indeed, being outside of the silos may leave many in business communication, IS or IB in comparatively insecure positions.

The key here, however, is that those in the silos are just as insecure as those outside the silos. This is because the business school as an institution threatens to lose relevancy if they do not meet the needs of their stakeholders. These stakeholders – employers, government and students alike – are coming from a world that has changed from the one that the silos represent.

For a moment, it might be useful to extend the metaphor of the silos to the farm on which the silos stand. On this farm, one can feel tremors underfoot. These tremors are the demands of the stakeholders of the business school. Those outside the silos may well feel the earth shake more easily than those insulated in the silos, but make no mistake – if the tremors increase, the resultant earthquake will harm everyone on the farm. Yet inside or outside the silo, those involved actually share a common goal: the continued ability of the farm to survive and provide an important service to the community it serves.

The first step, then, for those outside the silo is to communicate that we share a common goal. It is necessary to explain how the fields outside the silo strengthen the ability of the business school to meet the demands of its key stakeholders. The silos were built by those who are isolated in them, yet they share the same desire to serve the business school's key stakeholders.

The second step is to secure allies within the silos. From outside of the silo, one might suspect to find only resistance inside the silos. That is by no means a given. Those in the interdisciplinary fields may well find those inside the silo less than happy by its constraints. These faculty in the pre-existing disciplines, in turn, have much to offer the fields of business communication, IB, IS or a host of others from ethics to foreign languages to supply chain management and so on. Additionally, faculty who actively counsel students on career paths will have noted too the increased interest of those students in disciplines that fall outside the silos. Finally, faculty who consult or conduct research actively outside the business school are also likely to have recognized the demand of post-silo disciplines and interdisciplinary approaches articulated by those with whom they come into contact in the business world as a whole.

That said, there may well be resistance to change by some within the silo. Therefore, the third step is to communicate to these resistant faculty members how these interdisciplinary fields address the needs of the college as a whole. To do so, it is necessary to frame the question of how business communication or IB or IS complements and enhances each specific discipline in the pre-existing order. From this point, one must go to the faculty of each discipline and make it clear how business communication, international business and information systems *complement that silo's discipline*.

In other words, if one finds resistant colleagues within the accounting silo, one must demonstrate how business communication enhances accounting, how international perspectives enhance accounting, how IS enhances accounting. Once each silo has been addressed individually, it is then possible to explain that this enhancement *exists for each silo*. This is not self-evident. The silos – by definition – do not interact with each other.

From here, those in the silos can see how business communication, IB and IS not only enhance this or that individual silo, but instead can complement the business school curriculum as a whole. In effect, the interdisciplinary fields, through enhancing each silo individually, link all of the silos together. The final step and ultimate goal in this process, then, is to encourage those colleagues in each silo to work together as a team for the business school as a whole.

Conclusion

It is time that as a profession, those of us in multidisciplinary fields – whether in business communication, international business or information systems – should reconceptualize who we are and what we have to offer. The questions of where business communication, IB or IS fit in the traditional business school is simply the wrong question. The drag of legitimacy or of placement within the business school silos is essentially an issue anchored in the past. The question of the future rests in contribution to a flexible and holistic business education in which the various disciplines are converging – as they increasingly

do in business. “All in all,” as Pris Rogers (2001) explains: “Convergence asks us to turn our attention away from specialization in quest of disciplinary legitimacy, to turn away from our familiar roads diverged, and to turn toward the more complex, less comfortable, more exciting, less controllable superhighway of convergence.” (p. 19)

In IS and IT, as Richard Celsi and Mary Wolfenbarger (2001) foresee what they call (in the title of their article) “an era of convergence.” They explain that

as the use of technology in business becomes more pervasive and customer directed, the increased integration of IT and business strategy functions is necessary. This merging of technology and strategy requires a new type of crossdisciplinary or Renaissance employee who clearly sees these emerging interrelationships and crossfunctional needs. (p. 308)

William Wardrobe (2001) once wrote that he saw business communication’s “interdisciplinary nature as a source of opportunity rather than as a challenge” (p. 242).

While Wardrobe referred only to business communication, that opportunity would apply to all interdisciplinary efforts in redefining the nature of business schools to adapt to the current realities facing their graduates. In short, the era of the non-integrated, isolated field of business studies into essentially artificial functional areas is coming to a close. The coming nature of the business school of the next few decades will reflect the cross-functional nature of the workplace outside of academe. Let those of us who are already in interdisciplinary fields lead the way in helping to bring about this transformation.

References

- American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). (2000). *Business Accreditation Standards*. Retrieved from <http://www.aacsb.edu>
- American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). (1996). Remaking doctoral education: the missing link to customer satisfaction? *AACSB Newslines*, 26 (4), 1-6.
- Agarwal, R. & Lucas, H. C. Jr. (2005, September) *MIS Quarterly*, 29 (3), 381-397.
- BenBasat, I. & Zmud, R. W. (2003, June) The identity crisis within the IS discipline: Defining and communicating the discipline's core properties. *MIS Quarterly*, 27 (2), 183-194.
- Bishop, T. R., Vaughan, T. S., Jensen, G. R., Hanna, N., & Graf, D. (1998). A cross-functionally integrated undergraduate business core curriculum. *Mid-American Journal of Business*, 13 (1), 65-71.
- Celsi, R. & Wolfinbarger, M. (2001). Creating renaissance employees in an era of convergence between information technology and business strategy: A proposal for business schools. *Journal of Education for Business* 76, (6), 308-312.
- Cheit, E. F. (1985, Spring). Business schools and their critics. *California Management Review*, 27, 43-62.
- Dudley, S. C., Dudley, L. W., Clark, F. L., & Payne, S. (1995). New directions for the business curriculum. *Journal of Education for Business*, 70 (5), 305 Retrieved August 17, 2007, from ABI/INFORM Global database. (Document ID: 6787834).
- Fayerweather, J. (1994). A personal odyssey through the early evolution of international business pedagogy, research and professional organization. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 25 (1), 1-44.
- Graham, M.B. & Thralls, C. (1998). Connections and fissures: Discipline formation in business communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 35 (1), 7-13.
- Hamilton, D., McFarland, D., & Mirchandani, D. (2000). A decision model for integration across the business curriculum in the 21st century. *Journal of Management Education*, 24, 102-126.

- Harvey, M. G., Novicevik, M., Ready, K. J., Kuffel, T. & Duke, A. (2006). Viewpoint: Managing change in business schools: Focus on faculty responses. *Journal of Education for Business*, 81 (3), 160-164.
- Hirschheim, R. and Klein, H. K. (2003). Crisis in the IS field? A critical reflection on the state of the discipline. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, (4) 5, 237-293.
- Impagliazzo, J. and Gorgonne, J. T. (2002). Professional accreditation of Information Systems programs. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, 9, 50-63.
- Locker, K.O. (2003). Will professional communication be the death of business communication? *Business Communication Quarterly*, 66 (3), 118 - 132.
- Michaelson, L. (1999). Integrating the core business curriculum: An experience-based solution. *Selections*, 15 (2), 9-17.
- Pharr, S. W. (2000). Foundational considerations for establishing an integrated business common core curriculum. *Journal of Education for Business*, 76 (1), 20.
- Rogers, P. S. (2001). Convergence and commonality challenge business communication research: Outstanding researcher lecture. *Journal of Business Communication*, 38 (1), 14-23.
- Skandalaris, Bob. (2006). *Rebuilding the American Dream: Restoring American Jobs and Competitiveness Through Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. Bloomfield Hills, Michigan: Pembrook.
- Sloan School of Management website. Retrieved from <http://mitsloan.mit.edu/about/history.php>
- Smith Ducoffe, S.J.; Tromley, C. L. & Tucker, M. (2006). Interdisciplinary, team-taught, undergraduate business courses: The impact of integration. *Journal of Management Education*, 30 (2), 276-294.
- Stover, D., Morris, J. S., Pharr, S., Reyes, M. G., & Byers, C. R. (1997, June). Breaking down the silos: Attaining an integrated business common core. *American Business Review*, 15 (2), 1-11.
- Suchan, J. & Charles, M. (2006). Business communication research: Past, present, and future. *Journal of Business Communication*, 43, 389-397.

- Walker, K. B., & Black, E. L. (2000). Reengineering the undergraduate business core curriculum: Aligning business schools with business for improved performance. *Business Process Management Journal*, 6 (3), 194-213.
- Wardrobe, W. (2001). "Challenge" is a positive word: Embracing the interdisciplinary nature of business communication" *Journal of Business Communication*, 38 (2), 242-247.

COMPANY-INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN BELF REQUIRES INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES

Taina Vuorela

Principal Lecturer

School of Business and Information Management

Oulu University of Applied Sciences, Finland

taina.vuorela@oamk.fi

Abstract

This paper discusses the interactional strategies required in successful company-internal meetings in Business English Lingua Franca (BELF). The discussion is based on observations made of video-recorded simulations by Finnish students at the end of a training session on meetings and negotiations at the tertiary professional level. The aim of the study was to analyse ICT students' communicative competence regarding interactional and language strategies. According to the results as regards the content, the students manage in their roles at a "company-internal meeting" without difficulty. The meetings are operational and take place as brainstorming sessions, and the students' English lingua franca, with its at times irregular grammar and pronunciation causes no understanding problems. However, the participants' communicative behaviour is not particularly interactive; often the students seem rather to produce rehearsed monologues, not dialogue. Company-internal meetings are about business and require strategic interactional skills, and particular strategies in BELF interaction. Further studies should be carried out in order to study authentic situations with new graduates in meetings in the working world. It seems important that in order to teach interactive skills in BELF to Finnish students, attention should be paid to such competences as accommodation to the speech of other (ELF) speakers, but also interactional teamwork, use of humour, and the rhetorical skills required of a team leader.

Key words: internal communication, interactional and language strategies, international business communication, (B)ELF, leadership communication, BE

Introduction

Not much communicative competence was traditionally expected of the ‘rank and file’ information technology staff working in various Finnish companies and organisations e.g. as technical support staff. They needed to understand about bits and bytes much more than where to use phatic communication with customers. Some of them seldom met customers. That was then but this is now: looking at job advertisements for different types of positions in the field of information and communications technology (ICT) clearly shows that new recruits in this sector of the business world are expected to have good communication skills. Even though some members of staff do not deal directly with customers, it is important that company-internal communication functions well. Work in projects of various kinds is carried out in teams and for a team to produce good results efficient management and transfer of knowledge is required. This is not possible without good interpersonal and communication skills and not only in the mother tongue but also in English, which is an important medium of external as well as internal communication in many ICT companies. The present paper discusses some theoretical and practical aspects related to Business English (BE) and English Lingua Franca (ELF) and the use of BELF, i.e. English Lingua Franca in a business context (see Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2007), in the working world.

In the early 1990s, in tertiary-level professional education, it was often difficult to get ICT students to give presentations and engage in group discussions in English. Some quite simply refused. Much has changed since then. Students are exposed to so much interpersonal communication in English in face-to-face communication and through social media: they spend time on the net in different virtual networks, which today means communicating with other people much more than playing computer games alone. The rapid expansion of the English language via the entertainment industry and through information sharing on the internet has contributed to young people’s increasingly good language skills in English. Globalisation and ‘Europeanization’ through exposure to different (communication) cultures have influenced Nordic youth, who travel and participate in international exchange programmes as students much more than in the 1980s-1990s. Also, the relaxation of gender roles has a bearing: although

silence has traditionally been golden for many Finns, and Finnish men in particular, today a key to professional success is to be communicative and interpersonally adept, gender notwithstanding.

The focus of this paper is synchronic: to take a sample of meeting simulations by Finnish ICT students, which function as oral tests that students take yearly at the end of a training session on meetings and negotiations in English. The aim is to survey the present interactional and language competences of the students as well as the difficulties that they face, if any, in expressing themselves interactively in a semi-formal oral event, such as a professional company-internal meeting at the work place.

Literature review

Business can be seen as the driving force behind the need to understand the speech and culture of other people (Gore, 2007). People working in organisations spend an ample amount of their time communicating. How people communicate in business about business – e.g. relay information within the company or communicate in order to promote an organisation, a service or a product - can have a large-scale impact on the successfulness of an organisation; this applies not only to company external communication but internal communication as well (see Tourish, 1997; Holtz, 2004).

Business communication is intercultural communication to an increasing extent. With the increasing escalation of globalisation of business, worldwide communication networks are formed within firms, with individuals from different cultures with different language competences working together. Specific strategies are required to help staff of such international companies to achieve effective communication in business interactions (Ayoko et al., 2004). Speakers of languages with a small population are obliged to use other, more international, languages for business purposes if they want to play an active role in international business; most commonly this means English, and ELF or international English in today's globalised commerce. In speaking English for business, i.e. conveying companies' and speakers' own points of view such as perceptions, beliefs and norms, choices need to be made about discursive cultures in

the mother tongue and business English. Directness, for example, has been found to be a feature of BELF (Palmer-Silveira, 2006); other key strategies in business English include active listening, conflict management and uncertainty reduction (Gimenez, 2006). At times, resorting to the use of several languages has been found a current and useful practice in the context of multinational meetings (Poncini, 2003).

Fortunately, intercultural business communication skills can be learned. As communication is much more than the words alone – it is the thinking and even unarticulated meanings behind sentences and words – what is needed is an awareness of the way the other interactants look at the world, their views and values (Beamer & Varner, 2008). In learning the necessary skills, it is important to connect business communication skills and an understanding of cultural priorities with actual business practices. The basic tenet in experiential learning, which allows such a connection to be made, is that experience plays a significant role in learning. Formal learning needs to be integrated with practical work and informal learning in different types of settings, such as overseas exchange programmes, field placements, industrial and business organisations, including various interactive practices where the participants have opportunities to learn from each others' experiences (Kohonen et al., 2001). A task-based simulation such as is used in the present study is presumed to allow for such an active learning experience (see Willis, 1996).

A communicatively competent person has both the knowledge of appropriate communication patterns and the ability to apply that knowledge (Cooley & Roach, 1984) in specific situations. Both strategic and tactical communication competences are required, with the afore-mentioned referring to organisational realities and the latter to regulative rules which need to be followed or manipulated (Jablin et al., 1994). Business communication competence across cultures (BCC) is anchored in communication accommodation theory (see Giles, 1973) and includes approximation ('converging on the counterpart's language use'), discourse management, interpersonal control and interpretability ('attention to others' interpretative competence or ability to understand') (Ayoko et al., 2004, pp. 161-163). Discourse management means the interactants' willingness to facilitate each others' contributions (Ayoko et al., 2004, p. 163).

For communication to be interactive, certain interactional strategies are required. Interaction can be seen as a game where interactants play their cooperative parts. The more they do this, the more smoothly the interaction flows. Interactional teamwork is one such strategy and it can be seen as a measure of the cooperativeness of the speakers. The more the interactants see the goal of the interaction as a common one, the more likely they are to adhere to interactional teamwork, i.e. put the puzzles of the interaction together as a team (see Vuorela, 2005): e.g. they finish off each other's turns-at-talk, they give supportive feedback through phatic communion and body language and complete turns-at-talk together. Additionally, they may resort to humour, particularly in company-internal meetings, in order to lighten the atmosphere and help reaching goals together (Vuorela, 2005). Team leaders have a particular role in making a team's interaction successful: the leader's discourse has a rhetorical effect on the rest of the team (Van Praet, 2009). Interaction can be seen as a performance where the speakers provide others with impressions that are in line with their desired goals (Scollon & Scollon, 2003). Power is performance which is created together through discourse. The status of a team leader entails formal respect, which manifests itself through different interactional practices, e.g. whose sense of humour brings about the most laughs (Vuorela, 2005).

Material and method

The material of the paper consists of three simulations of business meetings by information and communications technology (ICT) students who study in the professional tertiary sector (university of applied sciences). The simulations last between 20-30 minutes each and are acted out in groups of 5-6 students. The students were in the third year of their studies at the time the simulations were video recorded, hence close to completing their Bachelor-level degrees. They acted out a simulation which is a company-internal meeting involving management staff (finance director, operations director, human resources director, IT director, supervisors' representative) and a consultant (Comfort et al., 1998). The meetings are essentially company-internal meetings rather than meetings with customers, although one outsider, a consultant, was present. The participants discuss 'teleworking', i.e. working from home while being in

touch with colleagues via the internet and telephone and whether the company will start using teleworking as a means of cutting costs and promoting a more environmentally sound work culture. The material was collected in the spring of 2009 and at the time it functioned as a test at the end of a training session on meetings and negotiations interaction. Permission was later obtained from the students to use the material for a research purpose. The training material that was studied with and by the students prior to the simulation was collected from several sources (e.g. Cialdini, 2008; Comfort, 1998; Gesteland, 2002; Ury, 1991)

The study is a qualitative one. The paper will focus on answering the following research questions: 1. What linguistic strategies do the students use in the simulation case to promote propositional and interpersonal content and pursue acceptance of their ideas? 2. What speech acts are used in the meeting simulation in order to negotiate about the task at hand, i.e. whether to start using 'teleworking'? 3. How is speech organised and structured in order to promote the goals of the speakers, which are known on the basis of the description of the simulation task? Here the focus is on interactional strategies rather than strategies directly related to the subject of the discussion.

The material was analysed with the help of Mulholland (1991) who divides language strategies into 1. strategies which are used to realise propositional content through choice of vocabulary and use of nuances; 2. strategies for pursuing acceptance of propositional content, such as narratives/stories, through 'opinion words'; 3. strategies which are used to realise interpersonal content through tone, role and bond; and 4. strategies for organising text (here: speech) through logic and continuity. Speech acts that are classified by Mulholland (1991, p. 12) as useful or necessary for expressing negotiating actions were also under scrutiny, e.g. Accept, Accuse, Advise, Answer, Apologise, Argue, Ask, Assert, Complain, Confirm, Direct, Discuss, Inform (oneself), Negotiate, Offer, Promise, Refer, Report, Reprimand, Tell, and regarding the extent to which they are used by the students. The results obtained in the study will be described in the results section below.

The communication context of the simulations is not authentic, nor is the speech spontaneous. The students had time to familiarise themselves with the case material before the video-recording and they were encouraged to plan a loose script for the simulation. All the speakers are native Finns so their mother tongue is Finnish and they speak English as a second or third language, i.e. as ELF, English Lingua Franca, a type of English that is commonly used in many professional communities of practice, particularly in the information technology sector, where many large multinational companies have adopted English as their official language. This means that it is used for daily work-related communication in order to pass on messages effectively through a language that is felt to be 'neutral' by the users in a multinational environment (see Louhiala-Salminen, 1996, p. 44). Later research has shown this 'neutrality' to be a complex issue (Charles, 2007). The students in the corpus had studied English for ten years prior to entering tertiary education. Besides the simulation context, the video recording can be presumed to influence the students' communication as well, although it is not possible to measure the extent of this influence in the present paper. In the instructions to the case each student was given a set of opinions and views that belong to the chosen role (operations director, HR director, finance director, IT director, supervisors' representative, consultant), but they were also encouraged to be creative in their roles.

Results

Generally, the three meeting simulations run smoothly; all the participants contribute to the discussion and there are no apparent understanding problems. According to earlier research, in the circumstances where ELF is used, if the participants in a communication event share the same first language and have a similar cultural background, understanding problems in ELF are rare (Deterding et al., 2006); it is interaction with native speakers that is often more challenging. For example, their speech can be experienced as too fast and their use of idioms as obscure. The present data supports this claim.

The three meeting simulations are first described generally and then an attempt is made to synthesise about their interactional features as a whole. *Meeting number 1* is a sober and effective discussion. There are five participants: four males and one female. The chair controls the agenda and the turns-at-talk, sometimes rather forcefully, e.g. by ordering who will be taking the minutes. He seems to use a rather direct, task-oriented Finnish interactive style that is transferred into the English language (see Palmer-Silveira, 2006) and goes straight to agenda items. However, although the chair is direct on the one hand, he makes careful choices of syntactical structures in his procedural language when agenda items are discussed, on the other: he uses the conditional tense in the introduction of agenda items, e.g. 'should we move on to...'. Although the meeting is semi-formal, there is no socialising at any point and no small talk at the beginning. The use of body language and eye contact is also limited. Still, the participants display an awareness of the need to apply their interpersonal skills: e.g. they apologise for interrupting. They also master well the idioms of 'meetings talk'. However, the meeting features no humour and no interactional teamwork, with speakers helping each other in finishing their turns (see Vuorela, 2005) although the interaction functions well content-wise without any hitches. Yet, the speakers do help each other if they face difficulties in finding a suitable word in English and instead say it in Finnish. Occasionally there is embarrassed laughter in connection with goal-oriented speech acts which voice content that may not be agreeable to the other participants, e.g. by the operations director. Some speakers clearly choose their vocabulary carefully in pursuing their goals: e.g. the consultant talks of 'teleworking' as an improvement. The chair sets the tone for the meeting and this seems to influence how interpersonal relationships are managed. Regarding the management of the content of the meeting, i.e. its logic and continuity, the agenda was given and the students follow it meticulously. The chair of the meeting provides a summary at the end where the outcome of the discussion is also evaluated and conclusions are drawn. Language strategies are used for pursuing acceptance by some speakers: attitudinal words are used (e.g. unfortunately). Of the negotiating speech acts identified by Mulholland (1991), Inform and Tell are used most commonly. Regarding language skills, the speakers generally demonstrate a functional mastery of vocabulary; there is some irregular use of prepositions, vocabulary and verb forms but this seems to have no bearing on understanding.

Meeting number 2 is an efficient brainstorming session with plenty of good ideas arising from the discussion. There are six participants: three men and three women. There are, in effect, two chairs who 'work in shifts'; one of them starts the meeting and the other one manages the exchange of ideas later in the meeting. There is no socialising, nor role setting at the beginning of the meeting. Only the HR director attempts at socialising at the beginning of her first turn. She also resorts to language strategies for pursuing acceptance of her points; e.g. through wordings such as 'please understand this point...'. Some participants use effective argument structures and persuasive language. Consequently, it is interesting that the meeting does not seem interactive; rather the participants engage in long monologues. Eye-contact is limited, which could have a bearing on this. Also, the chair makes the decision about whether to start using teleworking alone and simply informs the others of the decision. The group is rather heterogeneous in language competence, which may make the flow of communication less smooth. Similarly to meeting 1, there is no interactional teamwork, nor humour in the meeting, although some supportive minimal turns are produced by the participants, where they acknowledge and confirm the previous speakers' points. Although the speakers' use of strategic interactional skills seems minimal, content-wise the meeting fulfils its task without difficulty. Regarding strategies used for realising interpersonal content, their use is limited but e.g. some reference to shared matters is made as a form of bonding. The students follow the agenda carefully through the following speech acts: Tell, Advise, Accept, Confirm, Direct, Report, so the use of speech acts is more varied here than in meeting 1. Regarding participants' language skills, some speakers demonstrate subject-predicate congruence problems. Also, transfer from the Finnish language is obvious in pronunciation but this does not seem to interfere with intelligibility.

Meeting number 3 differs from meetings 1 and 2 in that there is small talk and humour at the beginning of the meeting while the interactants introduce themselves and their roles. There are five participants, of whom one is female, who acts as a consultant. She produces her ideas as a monologue and takes no part in the discussion henceforth. There is effective leadership by the chair – although he does not introduce the agenda – throughout the meeting and the chair seems to set the tone for the meeting overall,

which is more casual here than in meetings 1 and 2. Still, when discussing agenda items, the interaction limits itself to question – answer sessions by two speakers at a time. Only at the end the chair attempts to enliven the meeting by encouraging open discussion with an offer of ‘free speech’. The same is true here as well as in the other two meetings of the data corpus: the chair uses a direct style of speech which seems transferred from the Finnish language into the ELF environment (see Palmer-Silveira, 2006). In all the meetings the recorder provides a summary at the end of the meeting; here, however, it is particularly detailed, even unnecessarily so. Meeting 3 features more humour overall than meetings 1 and 2; it is even used to pursue goals, such as a suggestion to bring employees together through sauna nights. Humour and laughter also cover embarrassment as in meetings 1 and 2. The participants, the chair included, use rather abrupt ways to start and end turns-at-talk; such as ‘I don’t have anything else to say on this matter’, ‘is there something you wish to say...’. Also ‘I think’ is often used to start a turn that does not really involve ‘thinking’; rather the verb is used as a generic way to start turns. Content-wise communication behaviour of this type is effective although it may appear ‘blunt’ and straight-forward. The information exchange produces interesting ideas regarding how to put teleworking into action in the company. The strategic use of interactional means is rather limited, although laughter seems to carry this function. Of the negotiating speech acts Tell and Inform are most commonly used. Regarding language skills there are some unidiomatic beginnings and endings of turns but this produces no interference with understanding.

Finnish corporate communication culture is generally felt to be rather formal, authoritative and task-oriented (see Charles, 2007). In the data, the participants rely on the chair in their interactional behaviour quite strongly, which results in an orderly meeting, plenty of information as everyone contributes, but not much interaction in a communicatively cooperative and supportive fashion. In a summary, it can be stated that meetings 1, 2 and 3 were efficient overall in that they fulfilled the function of ‘brainstorming’ content-wise. Information was passed around within the group and this produced new ideas. All the participants were sufficiently active – for a test purpose, in order to allow evaluation of their skills at the end of the course - and some quite professional in their procedural language. However, the simulation was a ‘drill’ and the

speakers had planned their roles. Consequently, it was easy to produce a brainstorming effect even though the lack of use of interactional strategies by the speakers did not seem to support this. Also, in the present data, there seemed to be no link between the versatile use of speech acts and the use of interactional strategies. There was limited interactional support through phatic communication and seldom did the speakers construct their turns-at-talk together, which has been shown to be the case in cooperative international company-internal meetings which were authentic (Vuorela, 2005). Hence, the participants seemed rather uncooperative as a team.

Generally, the speakers seem to follow a script and produce individually rehearsed monologues rather than engage in open interaction with each other. This gives the data a communications exercise feel rather than that of an authentic meeting. This is understandable as the simulations were exercises. Still, the aim was to be as authentic as possible. In this the meetings failed to some degree from an instructor's point of view. Team leaders had a strong influence on the communicative atmosphere and this could be exploited in the exercise more in order to produce more interactive meeting simulations.

Regarding the use of interactional strategies, differences seem to exist in the communicative behaviour by Finnish students when compared to those of multinational groups (Vuorela, forthcoming). The sample of the present study is taken from the Finnish-language mediated degree programmes. In the English-language mediated degree programmes, where all instruction takes place in English and the groups are multinational – with at least fifty per cent of the students in a group being Finnish nationals, the communicative style is different, more supportive and less purely task-oriented (Vuorela, forthcoming). Consequently, it would seem that even if such minimal use of interactional strategies is functional in ELF communication when the majority of the speakers are Finnish, this is no longer the case when the groups are more international.

Discussion and conclusions

Since more and more companies, particularly in the ICT sector, use English in their company internal communication, language and communication instructors should pay attention to the particular skills needed in those situations. Such skills include accommodation to the speech of other BELF speakers, interactional teamwork, uncertainty reduction through active listening, phatic communication, use of humour to help in conflict management, and the rhetorical skills required of team leaders in particular.

The three meeting simulations were successful content-wise, i.e. in producing good ideas, but since some of this information was given in the role descriptions of the participants, it was rather easy to (re)produce. The interactional strategic behaviour of the participants, however, did not seem to support the process of exchanging ideas. One of the reasons for the monologues rather than dialogues in the meetings may be that the meetings were not authentic, but rather simulations. In other words, the participants may lack the motivation for interaction when the situation is not real. Another reason for the minimally interactive communicative behaviour could be that it is inherently 'Finnish' (see Charles, 2007): it seems characteristic of the Finnish communication style to produce well thought-out monologues. Still, the future of BELF communication looks bright in Finland-based international companies. The Finnish recruits have a functional level of English – although knowledge of other languages and cultures should also be strengthened to allow for openness in multicultural communication (see Dewaele, 2009).

More emphasis should clearly be placed on learning interactional strategic communication skills. It is more important than learning native speaker like language competence in pronunciation and grammar. Indeed, the evaluation tools in use in communication instruction in the professional tertiary sector support this view (see e.g. Huhta et al., 2006). Language instruction in Finland has undergone a number of changes from behaviourism to communicative teaching methods over the years (see KIEPO, 2008). What the instruction needs now is a strategic edge – an awareness of the power

of interactional strategies and their importance in BELF communication. It would seem that Finnish speakers need to be more aware of the responsibility of each speaker to facilitate communication. National discourse characteristics do carry through in our speech and it is fully acceptable in a multinational Europe and in the world which converses in (B)ELF. This is good news: Finns can continue to be Finns in a multinational Europe where ELF is used as a hybrid. Finnish communicative style can continue to be an asset in business communication and its directness – idiosyncratic though it may be at times – can and often does mean efficiency. What we must teach is clear procedural language for meetings, with an emphasis on interaction management: interpersonal skills in communication and interactional strategies, such as active listening and uncertainty reduction through, for example, cooperative phatic communication, while allowing national character to come through. Team communication skills, particularly those of a team leader, are important in such training. Also, future business people should be aware of the risks and benefits involved in using humour in multinational meetings and the strategic functions of laughter in managing unwanted goals and actions in the ongoing discussion.

Appropriate training will be critical in ensuring that internal communication in BELF achieves the status it deserves and that the strategic competences required in it get the attention they require. Maintaining close relationships between research and teaching strategic communication is a key issue (see Poncini, 2006). An increasingly competitive global market will ensure that effective communication, whether with internal or external audiences, is seen of vital importance to economic survival of companies and their workforce (see Smith, 2005).

References

- Ayoko, O., Härtel, C., Fisher, G. and Fujimoto, Y. (2004). Communication competence in cross-cultural business interactions. In D. Tourish and O. Hargie (Eds.), *Key issues in organizational communication* (pp.17-36). New York: Routledge.
- Beamer, L. and Varner, I. (2008). *Intercultural communication in the global workplace*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Charles, M. (2007). Language Matters in Global Communication. *Journal of Business Communication*, 44, 260-282.
- Cialdini, R. (2008). Harnessing the science of persuasion. *The Harvard Business Review*.
- Comfort, J. (1998). *Effective negotiating*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Comfort, J. and Breiger, N. (1998). *Business English Meetings. Instant Agendas*. Penguin Books.
- Cooley, R. C. and Roach, D. A. (1984). Theoretical approaches to communication competence: a conceptual framework. In R. N. Bostrom (Ed.), *Competence in Communication* (pp. 11-32). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage
- Dewaele, J-M and van Oudenhoven, J. P. (2009). The effect of multilingualism/multiculturalism on personality: no pain without gain for Third Culture Kids? *International Journal of Multiculturalism*, 6, 443-459.
- Gesteland, R. R. (2002). *Cross-Cultural Business Behaviour*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press.
- Giménez, J. C. (2006). International Business Communication: Helping Advanced Learners of English Cope with the Demands. In J. C. Palmer-Silveira, M. F. Ruiz-Garrido and I. Fortanet-Gómez (Eds.), *Intercultural and International Business Communication*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Giles, H. (1973). Communication effectiveness as a function of accented speech. *Speech Monographs*, 40, 330-1.
- Gore, K. (2007). *Networking cultural knowledge*. Helsinki: WSOY.
- Holtz, S. (2004). *Corporate conversations. A guide to crafting effective and appropriate internal communications*. New York: Amacom.
- Huhta, M., Johnson, E., Lax, U., Hantula, S. (2006). Työelämän kieli- ja viestintätaito. Helsingin ammattikorkeakoulu Stadian julkaisu, sarja A: Tutkimukset ja raportit 8.
- Jablin, F. M. , Cude, R. L. , House, A., Lee, J. and Roth, N. L. (1994). Communication competence in organizations: Conceptualization and comparison across multiple levels of analysis. In L. Thayer and G. Barnett (Eds.). *Organization Communication: Emerging Perspectives* Vol. 4. Norwood: NJ: Ablex.
- Jablin, F. M. and Putnam, L. L. (Eds.). (2001). *New Handbook of Organizational Communication*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Kankaanranta, A. and Louhiala-Salminen, L. (2007). Business Communication in BELF. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 70, 55-59.
- KIEPO [Project on language policies] (2008). Jyväskylä: Jyväskylä University
<http://www.jyu.fi/hum/laitokset/solki/tutkimus/projektit/kiepo>
- Kohonen, V., Jaatinen, R., Kaikkonen, P. Lehtovaara, J. (2001). *Experiential learning in foreign language education*. Harlow, England: Longman.
- Mulholland, J. (1991). *The Language of Negotiation*. London: Routledge.
- Palmer-Silveira, J. C., Ruiz-Garrido, M. F., Fortanet-Gómez, I., Introduction: Facing the Future of Intercultural and International Business Communication (IIBC) (2006). In Palmer-Silveira, J. C. et al. (Eds.) *Intercultural and International Business Communication* (pp. 9-24). Bern: Peter Lang.
- Poncini, G. (2003). Multicultural business meetings and the role of languages other than English. *The Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 24(1), 17-32.
- Poncini, G. (2006). Evaluation in Written and Spoken Business Discourse: Integrating Research into Teaching. In J. C. Palmer-Silveira, M. F. Ruiz-Garrido, I. Fortanet-Gómez (Eds.). (2006). *Intercultural and International Business Communication*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Smith, L. (2005). *Effective internal communication*. London: Kogan Page.
- Tourish, D. (1997). Transforming internal corporate communications: the power of symbolic gestures and barriers to change. *Corporate Communications. An International Journal*, 2(3), 109-116.
- Scollon, R. and Scollon Wang, S. (2003). *Discourses in Place*. London: Routledge.
- Ury, W. (1991). *Getting Past No*. Sydney: Random House.
- Van Praet, E. (2009). Staging a team performance. A linguistic ethnographic analysis of weekly meetings at a British Embassy. *Journal of Business Communication*, 46, 1, 80-99.
- Vuorela, T. (2005). How does a sales team reach goals in intercultural business negotiations? A case study. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24, 65-92.
- Willis, J. (1996). *A Framework for Task-Based Learning*. Essex: Pearson.

AUTHORS

Bertha Du Babcock is an Associate Professor at City University of Hong Kong where she teaches business organizational/management communication. She was the recipient of the Meada Gibbs Outstanding Teaching Award and Kitty O Locker Researcher's Award by the Association for Business Communication (ABC). Her research work has been published in various international journals.

Finn Frandsen, (mag.art., Aarhus University), is Professor of Corporate Communication and Director of ASB Centre for Corporate Communication at Aarhus School of Business, Aarhus University in Denmark. His primary research interests are crisis communication and crisis management, environmental communication, public relations, marketing communication, organizational communication, organization and management theories, rhetorics and discourse analysis.

Marja Heikkinen, MA, works as a freelance translator and communications consultant. She holds an MA in English and Romance Philology from the University of Helsinki, with a special focus on translation studies. Marja is currently a postgraduate student of International Business Communication at HSE and is preparing a doctoral thesis on lottery communication.

Winni Johansen, (PhD, Aarhus School of Business), is Associate Professor at the ASB Centre for Corporate Communication and Director of the Executive Master's Program in Corporate Communication at Aarhus School of Business, Aarhus University in Denmark. Dr. Johansen's research interests include crisis management and crisis communication, change communication, environmental communication, public relations, marketing communication, rhetorics and visual communication.

Yeonkwon Jung, PhD, is an Associate Professor at School of English Language and Communication, Kansai Gaidai University in Japan. He holds a PhD from the University of Edinburgh and an MA from University of Hawaii. He has held numerous teaching and research appointments, including University of Michigan, Helsinki School of Economics, Chuo University, and Korea University.

Constance Kampf, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the Knowledge Communication Research group at the Department of Language and Business Communication, Aarhus School of Business, Aarhus University. Her research interests include knowledge communication processes in global settings, a communications approach to Project Management, and cultural aspects inherent in different approaches to Corporate Social Responsibility. She has been a Guest Researcher at the Helsinki School of Economics, Finland in Spring 2008 for the HSE International Business Communication Unit.

Anne Kankaanranta, PhD, MSc (Econ), EMBA, is (acting) Professor in International Business Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics. Her main research interests include the use of English as a business lingua franca (BELF), corporate communications in MNCs, and the effect of media on communication in global business contexts.

Päivö Laine, PhD, works as Programme Head at the Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences, Business School. Having worked as a language teacher at the Seinäjoki Business School, he did a postgraduate degree (licentiate) at the University of Vaasa in 1997 and defended his doctoral thesis in 2004. His research topic is the language of interaction in electronic commerce and on company websites in general.

Sari Lehmuskallio, MA, is conducting research for her doctoral dissertation on corporate intranets at the Helsinki School of Economics in Finland. Her current research interests – internal communication, strategic communication, intercultural communication, corporate intranets, and communication ethics – have emerged from her experience as a corporate communications practitioner at multinational corporations in Finland. Her M.A. degree is in mass communications from Towson University, USA.

Miikka Lehtonen, MSc (Econ. & Bus. Adm.), earned his Master's degree in International Business Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics. He is currently a D.Sc. student at the Helsinki School of Economics and an external lecturer in the International Bachelor of Marketing and Management Communication at the Aarhus School of Business, University of Aarhus, Denmark. His research interests include combining Knowledge Management theory and Knowledge Communication practices.

Leena Louhiala-Salminen, PhD, Lic.Phil., MSc(Econ), is (acting) Professor of International Business Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics. She is also Program Director of the new HSE Master's Program in International Business Communication. Her main research interests include the various genres of business communication, the role of English as the business lingua franca and corporate communication in international contexts.

Catherine Nickerson, PhD, has more than twenty years of experience in teaching and research in the related fields of Managerial and Business Communication. Her research interests include the use of English as an international language in business, the development of appropriate teaching materials for high proficiency (ESL) business people, and the communication of Corporate Social Responsibility.

Tuija Nikko, PhD, is Director of the Department of Languages and Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics, Finland. Mirjaliisa Charles supervised her doctoral dissertation in International Business Communication. Her current research interest focuses on lingua franca meeting interaction especially in a cross-border corporate environment.

Priscilla Rogers, PhD, is Associate Professor of Business Communication at the University of Michigan Ross School of Business. Her current intercultural work includes teaching for Michigan's Global MBA in Tokyo and research on customer service interactions at a MNC financial services call center in Singapore.

Maija Tammelin, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer in English/International Business Communication in the Department of Languages and Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics. She holds a PhD, Faculty of Behavioral Sciences, and an MA in English Philology from the University of Helsinki. Her main research interest is online teaching and learning and her current teaching interests center on academic writing, business communication and corporate social responsibility issues.

Joo-Seng Tan is Associate Professor at Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. His research and teaching are focused on cross-cultural communication, international business negotiation, and cultural intelligence. He was the founding Program Director at the Center of Cultural Intelligence.

Janne Tienari, DSc (Econ), works as Professor of Organizations and Management at the Helsinki School of Economics, Finland. His research interests include managing multinational corporations, cross-cultural studies of gender and organizing, and media representations. He is particularly interested in discourse analyses and the language of global capitalism.

Taija Townsend, MA, is a lecturer in English Business Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics. She is interested in discourse, gender and leadership, and is currently finalizing her doctoral dissertation which cuts across all of these three areas of interest. Mirjaliisa Charles is the chief supervisor of her doctoral dissertation.

David Victor, PhD (University of Michigan, 1984), is Director of International Business Programs at the Eastern Michigan University College of Business where he is also a tenured Full Professor of Management. His course in Managing World Business Communication first designed and taught nearly 20 years ago was among the first regularly taught on cross-cultural business communication in an AACSB-accredited school.

Taina Vuorela received her PhD in International Business Communication at the Helsinki School of Economics in 2005. She has varied work experience from industry and administration as well as more than 10 years of teaching experience. Besides business negotiations, her present research interests include e-communication. She is currently employed as Principal Lecturer at the Oulu University of Applied Sciences.

A-SARJA: VÄITÖSKIRJOJA - DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS. ISSN 1237-556X.

- A:287. TIMO JÄRVENSIVU: Values-driven management in strategic networks: A case study of the influence of organizational values on cooperation. 2007.
ISBN-10: 952-488-081-4, ISBN-13: 978-952-488-081-7.
- A:288. PETRI HILLI: Riskinhallinta yksityisen sektorin työeläkkeiden rahoituksessa. 2007.
ISBN-10: 952-488-085-7, ISBN-13: 978-952-488-085-5.
E-version: ISBN 978-952-488-110-4.
- A:289. ULLA KRUHSE-LEHTONEN: Empirical Studies on the Returns to Education in Finland. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-089-3, E-version ISBN 978-952-488-091-6.
- A:290. IRJA HYVÄRI: Project Management Effectiveness in Different Organizational Conditions. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-092-3, E-version: 978-952-488-093-0.
- A:291. MIKKO MÄKINEN: Essays on Stock Option Schemes and CEO Compensation. 2007.
ISBN 978-952-488-095-4.
- A:292. JAAKKO ASPARA: Emergence and Translations of Management Interests in Corporate Branding in the Finnish Pulp and Paper Corporations. A Study with an Actor-Network Theory Approach. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-096-1, E-version: 978-952-488-107-4.
- A:293. SAMI J. SARPOLA: Information Systems in Buyer-supplier Collaboration. 2007.
ISBN 978-952-488-098-5.
- A:294. SANNA K. LAUKKANEN: On the Integrative Role of Information Systems in Organizations: Observations and a Proposal for Assessment in the Broader Context of Integrative Devices. 2006. ISBN 978-952-488-099-2.
- A:295. CHUNYANG HUANG: Essays on Corporate Governance Issues in China. 2007.
ISBN 978-952-488-106-7, E-version: 978-952-488-125-8.
- A:296. ALEKSI HORSTI: Essays on Electronic Business Models and Their Evaluation. 2007.
ISBN 978-952-488-117-3, E-version: 978-952-488-118-0.
- A:297. SARI STENFORS: Strategy tools and strategy toys: Management tools in strategy work. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-120-3, E-version: 978-952-488-130-2.
- A:298. PÄIVI KARHUNEN: Field-Level Change in Institutional Transformation: Strategic Responses to Post-Socialism in St. Petersburg Hotel Enterprises. 2007.
ISBN 978-952-488-122-7, E-version: 978-952-488-123-4.
- A:299. EEVA-KATRI AHOLA: Producing Experience in Marketplace Encounters: A Study of Consumption Experiences in Art Exhibitions and Trade Fairs. 2007.
ISBN 978-952-488-126-5.
- A:300. HANNU HÄNNINEN: Negotiated Risks: The Estonia Accident and the Stream of Bow Visor Failures in the Baltic Ferry Traffic. 2007. ISBN 978-952-499-127-2.

- A:301. MARIANNE KIVELÄ: Dynamic Capabilities in Small Software Firms. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-128-9.
- A:302. OSMO T.A. SORONEN: A Transaction Cost Based Comparison of Consumers' Choice between Conventional and Electronic Markets. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-131-9.
- A:303. MATTI NOJONEN: Guanxi – The Chinese Third Arm. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-132-6.
- A:304. HANNU OJALA: Essays on the Value Relevance of Goodwill Accounting. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-133-3, E-version: 978-952-488-135-7.
- A:305. ANTTI KAUKHANEN: Essays on Empirical Personnel Economics. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-139-5.
- A:306. HANS MÄNTYLÄ: On "Good" Academic Work – Practicing Respect at Close Range. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-142-1, E-version: 978-952-488-142-5.
- A:307. MILLA HUURROS: The Emergence and Scope of Complex System/Service Innovation. The Case of the Mobile Payment Services Market in Finland. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-143-2
- A:308. PEKKA MALO: Higher Order Moments in Distribution Modelling with Applications to Risk Management. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-155-5, E-version: 978-952-488-156-2.
- A:309. TANJA TANAYAMA: Allocation and Effects of R&D Subsidies: Selection, Screening, and Strategic Behavior. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-157-9, E-version: 978-952-488-158-6.
- A:310. JARI PAULAMÄKI: Kauppiasyrittäjän toimintavapaus ketjujyityksessä. Haastattelututkimus K-kauppiaan kokemasta toimintavapaudesta agenttiteorian näkökulmasta. 2008. Korjattu painos. ISBN 978-952-488-246-0, E-version: 978-952-488-247-7.
- A:311. JANNE VIHINEN: Supply and Demand Perspectives on Mobile Products and Content Services. ISBN 978-952-488-168-5.
- A:312. SAMULI KNÜPFER: Essays on Household Finance. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-178-4.
- A:313. MARI NYRHINEN: The Success of Firm-wide IT Infrastructure Outsourcing: an Integrated Approach. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-179-1.
- A:314. ESKO PENTTINEN: Transition from Products to Services within the Manufacturing Business. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-181-4, E-version: 978-952-488-182-1.
- A:315. JARKKO VESA: A Comparison of the Finnish and the Japanese Mobile Services Markets: Observations and Possible Implications. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-184-5.
- A:316. ANTTI RUOTOISTENMÄKI: Condition Data in Road Maintenance Management. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-185-2, E-version: 978-952-488-186-9.
- A:317. NINA GRANQVIST: Nanotechnology and Nanolabeling. Essays on the Emergence of New Technological Fields. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-187-6, E-version: 978-952-488-188-3.
- A:318. GERARD L. DANFORD: INTERNATIONALIZATION: An Information-Processing Perspective. A Study of the Level of ICT Use During Internationalization. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-190-6.

- A:319. TIINA RITVALA: Actors and Institutions in the Emergence of a New Field: A Study of the Cholesterol-Lowering Functional Foods Market. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-195-1.
- A:320. JUHA LAAKSONEN: Managing Radical Business Innovations. A Study of Internal Corporate Venturing at Sonera Corporation. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-201-9, E-version: 978-952-488-202-6.
- A:321. BRETT FIFIELD: A Project Network: An Approach to Creating Emergent Business. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-206-4, E-version: 978-952-488-207-1.
- A:322. ANTTI NURMI: Essays on Management of Complex Information Systems Development Projects. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-226-2.
- A:323. SAMI RELANDER: Towards Approximate Reasoning on New Software Product Company Success Potential Estimation. A Design Science Based Fuzzy Logic Expert System. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-227-9.
- A:324. SEPPO KINKKI: Essays on Minority Protection and Dividend Policy. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-229-3.
- A:325. TEEMU MOILANEN: Network Brand Management: Study of Competencies of Place Branding Ski Destinations. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-236-1.
- A:326. JYRKI ALI-YRKKÖ: Essays on the Impacts of Technology Development and R&D Subsidies. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-237-8.
- A:327. MARKUS M. MÄKELÄ: Essays on software product development. A Strategic management viewpoint. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-238-5.
- A:328. SAMI NAPARI: Essays on the gender wage gap in Finland. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-243-9.
- A:329. PAULA KIVIMAA: The innovation effects of environmental policies. Linking policies, companies and innovations in the Nordic pulp and paper industry. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-244-6.
- A:330. HELI VIRTÄ: Essays on Institutions and the Other Deep Determinants of Economic Development. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-267-5.
- A:331. JUKKA RUOTINEN: Essays in trade in services difficulties and possibilities. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-271-2, E-version: ISBN 978-952-488-272-9.
- A:332. IIKKA KORHONEN: Essays on commitment and government debt structure. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-273-6, E-version: ISBN 978-952-488-274-3.
- A:333. MARKO MERISAVO: The interaction between digital marketing communication and customer loyalty. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-277-4, E-version 978-952-488-278-1.
- A:334. PETRI ESKELINEN: Reference point based decision support tools for interactive multiobjective optimization. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-282-8.
- A:335. SARI YLI-KAUHALUOMA: Working on technology: a study on collaborative R&D work in industrial chemistry. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-284-2

- A:336. JANI KILPI: Sourcing of availability services - case aircraft component support. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-284-2, 978-952-488-286-6 (e-version).
- A:337. HEIDI SILVENNOINEN: Essays on household time allocation decisions in a collective household model. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-290-3, ISBN 978-952-488-291-0 (e-version).
- A:338. JUKKA PARTANEN: Pk-yrityksen verkostokyvyykkydet ja nopea kasvu - case: Tiede- ja teknologiavetoiset yritykset. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-295-8.
- A:339. PETRUS KAUTTO: Who holds the reins in Integrated Product Policy? An individual company as a target of regulation and as a policy maker. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-300-9, 978-952-488-301-6 (e-version).
- A:340. KATJA AHONIEMI: Modeling and Forecasting Implied Volatility. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-303-0, E-version: 978-952-488-304-7.
- A:341. MATTI SARVIMÄKI: Essays on Migration. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-305-4, 978-952-488-306-1 (e-version).
- A:342. LEENA KERKELÄ: Essays on Globalization – Policies in Trade, Development, Resources and Climate Change. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-307-8, E-version: 978-952-488-308-5.
- A:343. ANNELI NORDBERG: Pienyrityksen dynaaminen kyvykkyys - Empiirinen tutkimus graafisen alan pienpainoyrityksistä. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-318-4.
- A:344. KATRI KARJALAINEN: Challenges of Purchasing Centralization – Empirical Evidence from Public Procurement. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-322-1, E-version: 978-952-488-323-8.
- A:345. JOUNI H. LEINONEN: Organizational Learning in High-Velocity Markets. Case Study in The Mobile Communications Industry. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-325-2.
- A:346. JOHANNA VESTERINEN: Equity Markets and Firm Innovation in Interaction. - A Study of a Telecommunications Firm in Radical Industry Transformation. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-327-6, E-version: 978-952-488-374-0.
- A:347. JARI HUIKKU: Post-Completion Auditing of Capital Investments and Organizational Learning. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-334-4, E-version: 978-952-488-335-1.
- A:348. TANJA KIRJAVAINEN: Essays on the Efficiency of Schools and Student Achievement. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-336-8, E-version: 978-952-488-337-5.
- A:349. ANTTI PIRJETÄ: Evaluation of Executive Stock Options in Continuous and Discrete Time. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-338-2, E-version: 978-952-488-339-9.
- A:350. OLLI KAUPPI: A Model of Imperfect Dynamic Competition in the Nordic Power Market. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-340-5, E-version: 978-952-488-341-2.
- A:351. TUIJA NIKKO: Dialogic Construction of Understanding in Cross-border Corporate Meetings. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-342-9, E-version: 978-952-488-343-6.
- A:352. MIKKO KORJA: Investigating Innovation in Projects: Issues for International Development Cooperation. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-344-3, E-version: 978-952-488-345-0.
- A:353. MINNA MUSTONEN: Strategiaviestinnän vastaanottokäytännöt - Henkilöstö strategia- viestinnän yleisönä. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-348-1, E-versio: 978-952-488-349-8.

- A:354. MIRELLA LÄHTEENMÄKI: Henkilötietojen hyödyntäminen markkinoinnissa kuluttajien tulkitsemana. Diskurssianalyttinen tutkimus kuluttajan tietosuojasta. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-351-1, E-versio: 978-952-488-352-8.
- A:355. ARNO KOURULA: Company Engagement with Nongovernmental Organizations from a Corporate Responsibility Perspective. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-353-5, E-version: 978-952-488-354-2.
- A:356. MIKA WESTERLUND: Managing Networked Business Models: Essays in the Software Industry. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-363-4
- A:357. RISTO RAJALA: Determinants of Business Model Performance in Software Firms. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-369-6. E-version: 978-952-488-370-2.

B-SARJA: TUTKIMUKSIA - RESEARCH REPORTS. ISSN 0356-889X.

- B:77. MATTI KAUTTO – ARTO LINDBLOM – LASSE MITRONEN: Kaupan liiketoiminta-osaaminen. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-109-8.
- B:78. NIILLO HOME: Kauppiasyrittäjäyys. Empiirinen tutkimus K-ruokakauppiaiden yrittäjyysasenteista. Entrepreneurial Orientation of Grocery Retailers – A Summary. ISBN 978-952-488-113-5, E-versio: ISBN 978-952-488-114-2.
- B:79. PÄIVI KARHUNEN – OLENA LESYK – KRISTO OVASKA: Ukraina suomalaisyritysten toimintaympäristönä. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-150-0, E-versio: 978-952-488-151-7.
- B:80. MARIA NOKKONEN: Näkemyksiä pörssiyhtiöiden hallitusten sukupuolikiintiöistä. Retorinen diskurssianalyysi Helsingin Sanomien verkkokeskusteluista. Nasta-projekti. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-166-1, E-versio: 978-952-488-167-8.
- B:81. PIIA HELISTE – RIITTA KOSONEN – MARJA MATTILA: Suomalaisyritykset Baltiassa tänään ja huomenna: Liiketoimintanormien ja -käytäntöjen kehityksestä. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-177-7, E-versio: 978-952-488-183-8.
- B:82. OLGA MASHKINA – PIIA HELISTE – RIITTA KOSONEN: The Emerging Mortgage Market in Russia: An Overview with Local and Foreign Perspectives. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-193-7, E-version: 978-952-488-194-4.
- B:83. PIIA HELISTE – MARJA MATTILA – KRZYSZTOF STACHOWIAK: Puola suomalaisyritysten toimintaympäristönä. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-198-2, E-versio: 978-952-488-199-9.
- B:84. PÄIVI KARHUNEN – RIITTA KOSONEN – JOHANNA LOGRÉN – KRISTO OVASKA: Suomalaisyritysten strategiat Venäjän muuttuvassa liiketoimintaympäristössä. 2008. ISBN 978-953-488-212-5, E-versio: 978-952-488-241-5.
- B:85. MARJA MATTILA – EEVA KEROLA – RIITTA KOSONEN: Unkari suomalaisyritysten toimintaympäristönä. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-213-2, E-versio: 978-952-488-222-4.
- B:86. KRISTIINA KORHONEN – ANU PENTTILÄ – MAYUMI SHIMIZU – EEVA KEROLA – RIITTA KOSONEN: Intia suomalaisyritysten toimintaympäristönä. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-214-9, E-versio: 978-952-488-283-5

- B:87. SINIKKA VANHALA – SINIKKA PESONEN: Työstä nauttien. SEFE:en kuuluvien nais- ja miesjohtajien näkemyksiä työstään ja urastaan. 2008.
ISBN 978-952-488-224-8, E-versio: 978-952-488-225-5.
- B:88. POLINA HEININEN – OLGA MASHKINA – PÄIVI KARHUNEN – RIITTA KOSONEN: Leningradin lääni yritysten toimintaympäristönä: pk-sektorin näkökulma. 2008.
ISBN 978-952-488-231-6, E-versio: 978-952-488-235-4.
- B:89. Ольга Машкина – Полина Хейнинен: Влияние государственного сектора на развитие малого и среднего предпринимательства в Ленинградской области: взгляд предприятий. 2008.
ISBN 978-952-488-233-0, E-version: 978-952-488-240-8.
- B:90. MAI ANTILA – ARTO RAJALA (Editors): Fishing with business nets – keeping thoughts on the horizon Professor Kristian Möller. 2008.
ISBN 978-952-488-249-1, E-version: 978-952-488-250-7.
- B:91. RENÉ DE KOSTER – WERNER DELFMANN (Editors): Recent developments in supply chain management. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-251-4, E-version: 978-952-488-252-1.
- B:92. KATARIINA RASILAINEN: Valta orkesterissa. Narratiivinen tutkimus soittajien kokemuksista ja näkemyksistä. 2008.
ISBN 978-952-488-254-5, E-versio: 978-952-488-256-9.
- B:93. SUSANNA KANTELINEN: Opiskelen, siis koen. Kohti kokevan subjektin tunnistavaa korkeakoulututkimusta. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-257-6, E-versio: 978-952-488-258.
- B:94. KATRI KARJALAINEN – TUOMO KIVIOJA – SANNA PELLAVA: Yhteishankintojen kustannusvaikutus. Valtion hankintatoimen kustannussäästöjen selvittäminen. 2008.
ISBN 978-952-488-263-7, E-versio: ISBN 978-952-488-264-4.
- B:95. ESKO PENTTINEN: Electronic Invoicing Initiatives in Finland and in the European Union – Taking the Steps towards the Real-Time Economy. 2008.
ISBN 978-952-488-268-2, E-versio: ISBN 978-952-488-270-5.
- B:96. LIISA UUSITALO (Editor): Museum and visual art markets. 2008.
ISBN 978-952-488-287-3, E-version: ISBN 978-952-488-288-0.
- B:97. EEVA-LIISA LEHTONEN: Pohjoismaiden ensimmäinen kauppatieteiden tohtori Vilho Paavo Nurmilahti 1899-1943. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-292-7,
E-versio: ISBN 978-952-488-293-4.
- B:98. ERJA KETTUNEN – JYRI LINTUNEN – WEI LU – RIITTA KOSONEN: Suomalaisyriyten strategiat Kiinan muuttuvassa toimintaympäristössä. 2008 ISBN 978-952-488-234-7,
E-versio: ISBN 978-952-488-297-2.
- B:99. SUSANNA VIRKKULA – EEVA-KATRI AHOLA – JOHANNA MOISANDER – JAAKKO ASPARA – HENRIKKI TIKKANEN: Messut kuluttajia osallistavan markkinakulttuurin fasilitaattorina: messukokemuksen rakentuminen Venemessuilla. 2008.
ISBN 978-952-488-298-9, E-versio: ISBN 978-952-488-299-6.
- B:100. PEER HULL KRISTENSEN – KARI LILJA (Eds): New Modes of Globalization: Experimentalist Forms of Economics Organization and Enabling Welfare Institutions – Lessons from The Nordic Countries and Slovenia. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-309-2,
E-version: 978-952-488-310-8.

- B:101. VIRPI SERITA – ERIK PÖNTISKOSKI (eds.)
SEPPÖ MALLENIUS – VESA LEIKOS – KATARIINA VILLBERG – TUUA RINNE –
NINA YPPÄRILÄ – SUSANNA HURME: Marketing Finnish Design in Japan. 2009.
ISBN 978-952-488-320-7. E-version: ISBN 978-952-488-321-4.
- B:102. POLINA HEININEN – OLLI-MATTI MIKKOLA – PÄIVI KARHUNEN – RIITTA KOSONEN:
Yritysrahoitusmarkkinoiden kehitys Venäjällä. Pk-yritysten tilanne Pietarissa. 2009.
ISBN 978-952-488-329-0. E-version: ISBN 978-952-488-331-3.
- B:103. ARTO LAHTI: Liiketoimintaosaamisen ja yrittäjyyden pioneeri Suomessa. 2009.
ISBN 978-952-488-330-6.
- B:104. KEIJO RÄSÄNEN: Tutkija kirjoittaa - esseitä kirjoittamisesta ja kirjoittajista akateemisessa
työssä. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-332-0. E-versio: ISBN 978-952-488-333-7.
- B:105. TIMO EKLUND – PETRI JÄRVIKUONA – TUOMAS MÄKELÄ – PÄIVI KARHUNEN:
Kazakstan suomalaisyritysten toimintaympäristönä. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-355-9.
- B:106. ARTO LINDBLOM – RAMI OLKKONEN – VILJA MÄKELÄ (TOIM.): Liiketoimintamallit,
innovaatiotoiminta ja yritysten yhteistyön luonne kaupan arvoketjussa. 2009.
ISBN 978-952-488-356-6. E-versio: ISBN 978-952-488-357-3.
- B:107. MIKA GABRIELSSON – ANNA SALONEN – PAULA KILPINEN – MARKUS PAUKKU
– TERHI VAPOLA – JODY WREN – LAURA ILONEN – KATRIINA JUNTUNEN: Respon-
ding to Globalization: Strategies and Management for Competitiveness. Final Report of a
TEKES-project 1.8.2006-30.4.2009. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-362-7.
- B:108. MATTI ROSSI – JONATHAN SPRINKLE – JEFF GRAY – JUHA-PEKKA TOLVANEN (EDS.)
Proceedings of the 9th OOPSLA Workshop on Domain-Specific Modeling (DSM'09).
2009. ISBN 978-952-488-371-9. E-version: ISBN 978-952-488-372-6.
- B:109. LEENA LOUHIALA-SALMINEN – ANNE KANKAANRANTA (Editors): The Ascent of
International Business Communication. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-373-3.
E-version: ISBN 978-952-488-381-8.
- B:110. MIKKO VIEMERÖ: Tietosuoja sähköisessä kaupassa ja sähköisessä viestinnässä. 2009.
ISBN 978-952-488-376-4.
- B:111. RAIJA JÄRVINEN – JUHA UUSPELTO: Uhkaavatko asiakkaat? Kaupan henkilökunnan
näkemyksiä turvallisuushkista. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-379-5.
E-versio: ISBN 978-952-488-380-1.

N-SARJA: HELSINKI SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS. MIKKELI BUSINESS CAMPUS PUBLICATIONS.
ISSN 1458-5383

- N:63. SOILE MUSTONEN – ANNE GUSTAFSSON-PESONEN: Oppilaitosten yrittäjyys-
koulutuksen kehittämishanke 2004–2006 Etelä-Savon alueella. Tavoitteiden, toimen-
piteiden ja vaikuttavuuden arviointi. 2007. ISBN: 978-952-488-086-2.
- N:64. JOHANNA LOGRÉN – VESA KOKKONEN: Pietarissa toteutettujen yrittäjäkoulutus-
ohjelmien vaikuttavuus. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-111-1.

- N:65. VESA KOKKONEN: Kehity esimiehenä – koulutusohjelman vaikuttavuus. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-116-6.
- N:66. VESA KOKKONEN – JOHANNA LOGRÉN: Kaupallisten avustajien – koulutusohjelman vaikuttavuus. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-116-6.
- N:67. MARKKU VIRTANEN: Summary and Declaration. Of the Conference on Public Support Systems of SME's in Russia and Other North European Countries. May 18 – 19, 2006, Mikkeli, Finland. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-140-1.
- N:68. ALEKSANDER PANFILO – PÄIVI KARHUNEN: Pietarin ja Leningradin läänin potentiaali kaakkoissuomalaisille metallialan yrityksille. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-163-0.
- N:69. ALEKSANDER PANFILO – PÄIVI KARHUNEN – VISA MIETTINEN: Pietarin innovaatiojärjestelmä jayhteistyöpotentiaali suomalaisille innovaatioitoimijoille. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-164-7.
- N:70. VESA KOKKONEN: Perusta Oma Yritys – koulutusohjelman vaikuttavuus. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-165-4.
- N:71. JARI HANDELBERG – MIKKO SAARIKIVI: Tutkimus Miktech Yrityshautomon yritysten näkemyksistä ja kokemuksista hautomon toiminnasta ja sen edelleen kehittamisestä. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-175-3.
- N:72. SINIKKA MYNTTINEN – MIKKO SAARIKIVI – ERKKI HÄMÄLÄINEN: Mikkelin Seudun yrityspalvelujen henkilökunnan sekä alueen yrittäjien näkemykset ja suhtautuminen mentorointiin. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-176-0.
- N:73. SINIKKA MYNTTINEN: Katsaus K-päivittäistavarakauppaan ja sen merkitykseen Itä-Suomessa. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-196-8.
- N:74. MIKKO SAARIKIVI: Pk-yritysten kansainvälistymisen sopimukset. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-210-1.
- N:75. LAURA TUUTTI: Uutta naisjohtajuutta Delfoi Akatemiasta – hankkeen vaikuttavuus. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-211-8.
- N:76. LAURA KEHUSMAA – JUSSI KÄMÄ – ANNE GUSTAFSSON-PESONEN (ohjaaja): StuNet -Business Possibilities and Education - hankkeen arviointi. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-215-6.
- N:77. PÄIVI KARHUNEN – ERJA KETTUNEN – VISA MIETTINEN – TIINAMARI SIVONEN: Determinants of knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship in Southeast Finland and Northwest Russia. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-223-1.
- N:78. ALEKSANDER PANFILO – PÄIVI KARHUNEN – VISA MIETTINEN: Suomalais-venäläisen innovaatioyhteistyön haasteet toimijanäkökulmasta. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-232-3.
- N:79. VESA KOKKONEN: Kasva Yrittäjäksi – koulutusohjelman vaikuttavuus. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-248-4.
- N:80. VESA KOKKONEN: Johtamisen taidot - hankkeessa järjestettyjen koulutusohjelmien vaikuttavuus. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-259-0.
- N:81. MIKKO SAARIKIVI: Raportti suomalaisten ja brittiläisten pk-yritysten yhteistyön kehittämisestä uusiutuvan energian sektorilla. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-260-6.

- N:82. MIKKO SAARIKIVI – JARI HANDELBERG – TIMO HOLMBERG – ARI MATILAINEN: Selvitys lujitemuovikomposiittituotteiden mahdollisuuksista rakennusteollisuudessa. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-262-0.
- N:83. PÄIVI KARHUNEN – SVETLANA LEDYAEVA – ANNE GUSTAFSSON-PESONEN – ELENA MOCHNIKOVA – DMITRY VASILENKO: Russian students' perceptions of entrepreneurship. Results of a survey in three St. Petersburg universities. Entrepreneurship development –project 2. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-280-4.
- N:84. PIIA NIKULA – ANU PENTTILÄ – OTTO KUPI – JUHANA URMAS – KIRSI KOMMONEN: Sirpaleisuudesta kilpailukyvyyn keskiöön Asiantuntijoiden näkemyksiä luovien alojen kansainvälistymisestä. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-346-7.
- N:85 JUHANA URMAS – OTTO KUPI – PIIA NIKULA – ANU PENTTILÄ – KIRSI KOMMONEN: ” Kannattaa ottaa pienikin siivu” – Luovien alojen yritysten näkemyksiä kansainvälistymisestä. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-347-4.

W-SARJA: TYÖPAPEREITA - WORKING PAPERS . ISSN 1235-5674.
ELECTRONIC WORKING PAPERS, ISSN 1795-1828.

- W:412. LOTHAR THIELE – KAISA MIETTINEN – PEKKA J. KORHONEN – JULIAN MOLINA: A Preference-Based Interactive Evolutionary Algorithm for Multiobjective Optimization. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-094-7.
- W:413. JAN-ERIK ANTIPIN – JANI LUOTO: Are There Asymmetric Price Responses in the Euro Area? 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-097-8.
- W:414. SAMI SARPOLA: Evaluation Framework for VML Systems. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-097-8.
- W:415. SAMI SARPOLA: Focus of Information Systems in Collaborative Supply Chain Relationships. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-101-2.
- W:416. SANNA LAUKKANEN: Information Systems as Integrative Infrastructures. Information Integration and the Broader Context of Integrative and Coordinative Devices. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-102-9.
- W:417. SAMULI SKURNIK – DANIEL PASTERNAK: Uusi näkökulma 1900-luvun alun murroskauteen ja talouden murrosvaiheiden dynamiikkaan. Liikemies Moses Skurnik osakesijoittajana ja -välittäjänä. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-104-3.
- W:418. JOHANNA LOGRÉN – PIIA HELISTE: Kymenlaakson pienten ja keskisuurten yritysten Venäjä-yhteistyöpotentiaali. 2001. ISBN 978-952-488-112-8.
- W:419. SARI STENFORS – LEENA TANNER: Evaluating Strategy Tools through Activity Lens. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-120-3.
- W:420. RAIMO LOVIO: Suomalaisten monikansallisten yritysten kotimaisen sidoksen heikkeneminen 2000-luvulla. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-121-0.
- W:421. PEKKA J. KORHONEN – PYRY-ANTTI SIITARI: A Dimensional Decomposition Approach to Identifying Efficient Units in Large-Scale DEA Models. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-124-1.

- W:422. IRYNA YEVSEYEVA – KAISA MIETTINEN – PEKKA SALMINEN – RISTO LAHDELMA: SMAA-Classification - A New Method for Nominal Classification. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-129-6.
- W:423. ELINA HILTUNEN: The Futures Window – A Medium for Presenting Visual Weak Signals to Trigger Employees' Futures Thinking in Organizations. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-134-0.
- W:424. TOMI SEPPÄLÄ – ANTTI RUOTOISTENMÄKI – FRIDTJOF THOMAS: Optimal Selection and Routing of Road Surface Measurements. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-137-1.
- W:425. ANTTI RUOTOISTENMÄKI: Road Maintenance Management System. A Simplified Approach. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-1389-8.
- W:426. ANTTI PIRJETÄ – VESA PUTTONEN: Style Migration in the European Markets 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-145-6.
- W:427. MARKKU KALLIO – ANTTI PIRJETÄ: Incentive Option Valuation under Imperfect Market and Risky Private Endowment. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-146-3.
- W:428. ANTTI PIRJETÄ – SEPPÖ IKÄHEIMO – VESA PUTTONEN: Semiparametric Risk Preferences Implied by Executive Stock Options. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-147-0.
- W:429. OLLI-PEKKA KAUPPILA: Towards a Network Model of Ambidexterity. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-148-7.
- W:430. TIINA RITVALA – BIRGIT KLEYMANN: Scientists as Midwives to Cluster Emergence. An Interpretative Case Study of Functional Foods. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-149-4.
- W:431. JUKKA ALA-MUTKA: Johtamiskyvykkyyden mittaaminen kasvuyrityksissä. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-153-1.
- W:432. MARIANO LUQUE – FRANCISCO RUIZ – KAISA MIETTINEN: GLIDE – General Formulation for Interactive Multiobjective Optimization. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-154-8.
- W:433. SEPPÖ KINKKI: Minority Protection and Information Content of Dividends in Finland. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-170-8.
- W:434. TAPIO LAAKSO: Characteristics of the Process Supersede Characteristics of the Debtor Explaining Failure to Recover by Legal Reorganization Proceedings. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-171-5.
- W:435. MINNA HALME: Something Good for Everyone? Investigation of Three Corporate Responsibility Approaches. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-189.
- W:436. ARTO LAHTI: Globalization, International Trade, Entrepreneurship and Dynamic Theory of Economics.The Nordic Resource Based View. Part One. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-191-3.
- W:437. ARTO LAHTI: Globalization, International Trade, Entrepreneurship and Dynamic Theory of Economics.The Nordic Resource Based View. Part Two. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-192-0.
- W:438. JANI KILPI: Valuation of Rotable Spare Parts. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-197-5.

- W:439. PETRI ESKELINEN – KAISA MIETTINEN – KATHRIN KLAMROTH – JUSSI HAKANEN: Interactive Learning-oriented Decision Support Tool for Nonlinear Multiobjective Optimization: Pareto Navigator. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-200-2.
- W:440. KALYANMOY DEB – KAISA MIETTINEN – SHAMIK CHAUDHURI: Estimating Nadir Objective Vector: Hybrid of Evolutionary and Local Search. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-209-5.
- W:441. ARTO LAHTI: Globalisaatio haastaa pohjoismaisen palkkatalousmallin. Onko löydettävissä uusia aktiivisia toimintamalleja, joissa Suomi olisi edelleen globalisaation voittaja? 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-216-3.
- W:442. ARTO LAHTI: Semanttinen Web – tulevaisuuden internet. Yrittäjien uudet liiketoimintamahdollisuudet. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-217-0.
- W:443. ARTO LAHTI: Ohjelmistoteollisuuden globaali kasvustrategia ja immateriaalioikeudet. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-218-7.
- W:444. ARTO LAHTI: Yrittäjän oikeusvarmuus globaalisaation ja byrokratisoitumisen pyörteissä. Onko löydettävissä uusia ja aktiivisia toimintamalleja yrittäjien syrjäytymisen estämiseksi? 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-219-4.
- W:445. PETRI ESKELINEN: Objective trade-off rate information in interactive multiobjective optimization methods – A survey of theory and applications. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-220-0.
- W:446. DEREK C. JONES – PANU KALMI: Trust, inequality and the size of co-operative sector – Cross-country evidence. 2008. ISBN 978-951-488-221-7.
- W:447. KRISTIINA KORHONEN – RIITTA KOSONEN – TIINAMARI SIVONEN – PASI SAUKKONEN: Pohjoiskarjalaisten pienten ja keskisuurten yritysten Venäjä-yhteistyöpotentiaali ja tukitarpeet. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-228-6.
- W:448. TIMO JÄRVENSIVU – KRISTIAN MÖLLER: Metatheory of Network Management: A Contingency Perspective. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-231-6.
- W:449. PEKKA KORHONEN: Setting “condition of order preservation” requirements for the priority vector estimate in AHP is not justified. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-242-2.
- W:450. LASSE NIEMI – HANNU OJALA – TOMI SEPPÄLÄ: Misvaluation of takeover targets and auditor quality. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-255-2.
- W:451. JAN-ERIK ANTIPIN – JANI LUOTO: Forecasting performance of the small-scale hybrid New Keynesian model. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-261-3.
- W:452. MARKO MERISAVO: The Interaction between Digital Marketing Communication and Customer Loyalty. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-266-8.
- W:453. PETRI ESKELINEN – KAISA MIETTINEN: Trade-off Analysis Tool with Applicability Study for Interactive Nonlinear Multiobjective Optimization. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-269-9.
- W:454. SEPPO IKÄHEIMO – VESA PUTTONEN – TUOMAS RATILAINEN: Antitakeover provisions and performance – Evidence from the Nordic countries. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-275-0.

- W:455. JAN-ERIK ANTIPIN: Dynamics of inflation responses to monetary policy in the EMU area. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-276-7.
- W:456. KIRSI KOMMONEN: Narratives on Chinese colour culture in business contexts. The Yin Yang Wu Xing of Chinese values. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-279-8.
- W:457. MARKKU ANTTONEN – MIKA KUISMA – MINNA HALME – PETRUS KAUTTO: Materiaalitehokkuuden palveluista ympäristömyötäistä liiketoimintaa (MASCO2). 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-279-8.
- W:458. PANU KALMI – DEREK C. JONES – ANTTI KAUHANEN: Econometric case studies: overview and evidence from recent finnish studies. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-289-7.
- W:459. PETRI JYLHÄ – MATTI SUOMINEN – JUSSI-PEKKA LYYTINEN: Arbitrage Capital and Currency Carry Trade Returns. 2008. ISBN 978-952-488-294-1.
- W:460. OLLI-MATTI MIKKOLA – KATIA BLOIGU – PÄIVI KARHUNEN: Venäjä-osaamisen luonne ja merkitys kansainvälisissä suomalaisyrityksissä. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-302-3.
- W:461. ANTTI KAUHANEN – SATU ROPONEN: Productivity Dispersion: A Case in the Finnish Retail Trade. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-311-5.
- W:462. JARI HUIKKU: Design of a Post-Completion Auditing System for Organizational Learning. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-312-2.
- W:463. PYY-ANTTI SIITARI: Identifying Efficient Units in Large-Scale Dea Models Using Efficient Frontier Approximation. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-313-9.
- W:464. MARKKU KALLIO – MERJA HALME: Conditions for Loss Averse and Gain Seeking Consumer Price Behavior. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-314-6.
- W:465. MERJA HALME – OUTI SOMERVOORI: Study of Internet Material Use in Education in Finland. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-315-3.
- W:466. RAIMO LOVIO: Näkökulmia innovaatiotoiminnan ja –politiikan muutoksiin 2000-luvulla. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-316-0.
- W:467. MERJA HALME – OUTI SOMERVOORI: Revisiting Demand Reactions to Price Changes. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-317-7.
- W:468. SAMULI SKURNIK: SSJS Strategiabarometri – kehitystyö ja nykyvaihe. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-319-1.
- W:469. TOM RAILIO: A Brief Description of The Transdisciplinary Jurionomics and The Scandinavian Institutional Sources of Law Framework. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-324-5.
- W:470. KALYANMOY DEB – KAISA MIETTINEN – SHAMIK CHAUDHURI: An Estimation of Nadir Objective Vector Using a Hybrid Evolutionary-Cum-Local-Search Procedure. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-326-9.
- W:471. JENNI AHONEN – MARI ANTTONEN – ANTTI HEIKKINEN – JANI HÄTÄLÄ – JASMI LEHTOLA – LAURI NURMILAUKAS – TEEMU PELTOKALLIO – ANNINA PIEKKARI – MARJO REEN – SEBASTIAN SMART: Doing Business in Hungary. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-350-4.

- W:472. MIKA WESTERLUND: The role of Network Governance in Business Model Performance. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-361-0.
- W:473. DMITRY FILATOV – SINIKKA PARVIAINEN – PÄIVI KARHUNEN: The St. Petersburg Insurance Market: Current Challenges and Future Opportunities. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-365-8.
- W:474. MARKKU KALLIO – MERJA HALME: Redefining Loss Averse and Gain Seeking Consumer Price Behavior Based on Demand Response. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-366-5.
- W:475. JOHANNA BRAGGE – TUURE TUUNANEN – PENTTI MARTTIIN: Inviting Lead Users from Virtual Communities to Co-create Innovative IS Services in a Structured Groupware Environment. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-367-2.
- W:476. RISTO RAJALA: Antecedents to and Performance Effects of Software Firms' Business Models. 2009. ISBN 978-952-488-368-9.

Z-SARJA: HELSINKI SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS.
CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS RESEARCH. CIBR WORKING PAPERS. ISSN 1235-3931.

- Z:16. PETER GABRIELSSON – MIKA GABRIELSSON: Marketing Strategies for Global Expansion in the ICT Field. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-105-0.
- Z:17. MIKA GABRIELSSON – JARMO ERONEN – JORMA PIETALA: Internationalization and Globalization as a Spatial Process. 2007. ISBN 978-952-488-136-4.

Kaikkia Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulun julkaisusarjassa ilmestyneitä julkaisuja voi tilata osoitteella:

KY-Palvelu Oy
Kirjakauppa
Runeberginkatu 14-16
00100 Helsinki
Puh. (09) 4313 8310, fax (09) 495 617
Sähköposti: kykirja@ky.hse.fi

Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulu
Julkaisutoimittaja
PL 1210
00101 Helsinki
Puh. (09) 4313 8579, fax (09) 4313 8305
Sähköposti: julkaisu@hse.fi

All the publications can be ordered from

Helsinki School of Economics
Publications officer
P.O.Box 1210
FIN-00101 Helsinki
Phone +358-9-4313 8579, fax +358-9-4313 8305
E-mail: julkaisu@hse.fi