Narratives about Finnish Web Sites What do a group of executives moving to Finland grasp online?

Organization and Management

Master's thesis

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Narratives about Finnish Web Sites!

What do a group of executives moving to Finland grasp online?

Research Objectives

The research objectives and the goal of this study was to better understand what a group of Executives moving to Finland from various cultural backgrounds are able to grasp from the 12 companies operating in Finland mainly based on their online presence.

Methodology

The methodology chose for this study is a form of Empirical research known as Narrative approach. It fits this study due to the fact that it focuses on understanding and analyzing what an individual feels, understands and shares. The study material was chosen accordingly.

Research Findings

The major finding was that in general the companies within the study do not have English sites tailored to fit the needs of a person with international backgrounds and no Finnish knowledge.

Key Words

Cross Cultural Communication, Management, Integration, Perception, Impression, Translation Web Site

Tarinoita Suomalaisista nettisivuista!

Minkälaista informaatiota joukko johtajia, jotka ovat muuttamassa suomeen saavat netin kautta.

Tutkimuksen tavoitteet

Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on paremmin ymmärtää mitä 10 johtajaa, joita on palkattu ulkomailta suomeen ymmärtävät suomalaisten palvelutarjoajien tarjoamasta perustuen näiden yritysten englanninkielisiin sivuihin.

Tutkimusmetodi

Tähän tutkimukseen soveltui laadullisen empiirisen tutkimusmetodin ala narratiivinen lähestymistapa. Se sopii parhaiten valitsemaani aiheeseen, sillä se antaa puitteet ymmärtää tapahtuma ihmisten kokemusten kautta. Tutkimusaineisto on kerätty vastaamaan metodia.

Tutkimuksen tulokset

Tutkimuksessa selvisi, että valitsema yritysjoukko ei pystynyt kommunikoimaan haastateltavillemme englanninkielellä mitä he ovat tarjoamassa.

Avainsanat

Kulttuuri, viestintä, johtajuus, integraatio, kääntäminen

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1. Introduction

1.1   Subject

As Globalization advances and migration becomes more than just a humanitarian act, the importance of Business Communication beyond the local languages increases. According to the Finnish authorities (Pääkaupunkiseudun neuvottelukunta 2012) by 2025 up to 175 000 of the people living in the Helsinki Metropolitan area will speak other than Finnish as their native language. This means that domestic service providers might have to see their customers internationalizing within the Finnish borders. Until now, Finnish companies have not considered traditional Immigrants or foreigners as a considerable target group. This means that, if the estimates are close to accurate, a vast minority of the population will be left out as potential consumers.

One aspect that might explain this phenomenon according to Constant and Zimmerman (2005) is that political atmosphere generally in Europe undermines the diversification of European countries. The Political discussion mainly focuses on the economical impacts or burdens of foreigners or immigrants on the social security system. Instead their potential as possible consumers is not realized in the discussion. The framework of the current discussion also undercuts the group of educated migrants who move to high-tech countries to pursue a better career.

According to Tilastokeskus (2007) up to 17,4% of immigrants living in the great Metropolitan area of Helsinki possess a University or an equivalent degree. Chinese immigrants lead this statistic by 29,8%. Second largest group are Germans by 28% and the third group are Russians by 24,6%. The portion of the native population with a higher degree in 2005 was 28.9%. Studies also show that those migrants with a higher education level integrate into destination country faster and in some cases even better than their fellow countrymen (Constant and Zimmerman 2005). Also there have been indications that those with higher education levels are able to reach higher income levels faster.

The matter of immigration and its impacts on the Finnish population, politics and economics have been studied widely. Studies have shown that there are so many aspects to immigration and integration issues, making it almost impossible to tackle the entire heading without a single point of view.

The subject of Immigration and Internationalization of Finland is closely related to the businesses that my company Iran Trade Oy conducts, thus I chose to tackle the issue from a business point of view. After getting acquainted with various executives that had been hired to Finnish companies from abroad, I realized that there might be a need to better understand what information is there available online regarding Finnish companies in English, and whether this information is relevant to those moving to Finland.

The basis of this study is to see what a group of 10 foreign executives moving to Finland with different cultural backgrounds and linguistic abilities can grasp from marketing material online regarding 12 Finnish businesses that provide essential services in Finland.

I chose this subject mainly because my own company Iran Trade Oy provides services that help companies help their own foreign personnel moving to or currently living in Finland to better integrate to the society. We have found that the faster the person can cope with cultural differences, language barriers as well social and economic differences, the faster they can focus solely on the task they have been hired to do. This also gives me the opportunity to justify my study as a management and organizational study.

The scope of the projects that my company gets hired to do, vary from initial instructions to Finnish business etiquette all the way to coaching a person to better understand and cope with Finnish culture and business climate. During the time we have done these projects, I have encountered many cases where an executive would like to purchase certain services from the private sector, but has not. I wanted to

understand this better. Thus I decided to pick a topic that could help me shed a light into this subject.

1.2 Study material

I have, solely collected the material for this thesis. In order to better understand and try to explain my observations and assumptions, I took a literature journey toward studies and researches conducted about Business Communication. Since Internet had a crucial role in what I was trying to understand and explain, I studied online communication and Internet as medium for Business. Culture also reflects on this topic in many ways, thus I collected studies and researches that explain cultures and their differences in a Business Communication context. The literature I utilized for this study is mainly from 2000 forward. I made this choice to ensure that the studies have been conducted with the knowledge of Internet as a considerable business and communication medium.

For this specific study I have chosen 10 Executives with diverse cultural backgrounds and different Finnish language abilities. I have also chosen 12 Finnish companies that provide essential services for living in Finland. The chosen service areas are: housing, employment, healthcare, education and banking. The study is based on what the chosen 10 executives are able to grasp about the chosen companies solely based on their websites and online presence.

I asked the selected participants to answer a brief questionnaire regarding the websites they had to visit. After that I interviewed each participant through Skype or similar application. These materials helped me understand and explain my assumptions and conduct this study. The participants were chosen based on the business cases that Iran Trade Oy, a company, owned and operated by my own family, was working on during 2010-2011. One of the business areas that we provide is services for the corporate sector that help high position leaders coming to Finland

to better integrate and adapt into the environment, thus being able to fully concentrate on their tasks and positions.

Since the chosen group for this study is solely based on the individual cases that my company worked with during 2010-2011, it will limit the liability of this study. The study material is collected during the time period of 2010-2011.


1.3　Earlier research and theoretical framework

Issues regarding Immigration and its impacts on Finland have been studied widely and as a heading it includes numerous subcategories. There are also wide amount statistics and other collective data explaining the phenomenon. Also Business Communication and its online implications is a widely studied field of business. Thus I felt that the most important issue in mapping the theoretical framework for my study is to have a simple approach to the issues that affect my study the most.

Since I wanted to better understand the what information 10 Executives got by visiting 12 Finnish websites, I chose the following topics to work as the base for my theoretical framework.

Business Communications is the basic element for conducting business. Since Business Communication in its simplest form includes all the visible and nonvisible, verbal and non-verbal messages about a company or its products, it then includes the company websites as a considerable platform for communication. The importance of understanding Business Communications also arouses when discussing how Finnish companies talk about themselves online in English. Is the text understandable and does it meet the requirements of making a good first impression to potential customers that are not Finnish. Within the context of Business Communications I also raise the issue of translation. Understanding the cultural context of a text is crucial when there is no personal attachment or relationship to the product or the company.
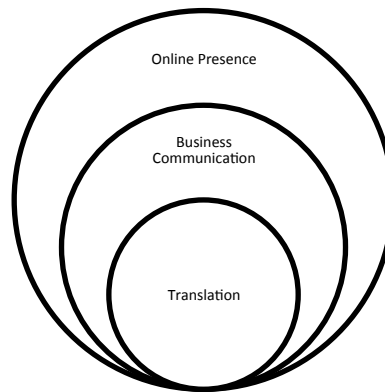
Online presence is part of Business Communication. But since it is in the context of BU taking gigantic leaps, academia is perhaps not up to date with its current state. There are studies available in this field from the past 5 years, however the leaps that Internet as a communications medium has forsaken, in form of social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest etc, changes the reality of it faster than the academic world is able to study it. However I chose online presence, since it is the major channel for information among those who are moving to a country such as Finland.

1.4 Goal of the study and some minor assumptions

The goal of my study is to better understand what sort of information a person coming to Finland to work, is able to grasp about basic services online. I encountered several aspects when studying this issue. My secondary objective is to understand whether some context online, when translated gets lost in translation and looses its original meaning.

I have also many assumptions. One of my assumptions is that people moving to Finland from diverse cultural backgrounds are not able to understand what Finnish domestic companies are providing due to poor Cross Cultural Business

Communication. Therefore a group of potential customers are not utilizing as much services, as they would have hypothetically been able to.

1.5   Study questions and limits

1. What kind of information are the chosen companies able to give out online, if the person visiting their site is a non-Finnish consumer living in Finland?

I have limited this study to these factors:

1. Each service provider should be from the private sector and premium price range.
2. Each participant should be highly educated and moving to Finland in order to work in a management position in the private sector.
3. Each participant should speak fluently English.

This is not a study of integration. Further my view is how well does a small group of educated people moving to Finland with various cultural and linguistic abilities are able to utilize the private sector based on the existing marketing and communication material of these specific firms in English.

This study is also limited to how much information each participant was allowed to get. For instance, all the participants were given specific instructions to what sites they were allowed to visit. Apart from the information on the sites participants were not allowed to search these companies on discussion forums or any other similar platforms.

1.6   Structure of the study

I have built this study to suit the academic requirements of the Aalto University School of Economics.

I will start my study by framing out a theory regarding the study, thus in chapter 2, I will introduce Business Communications in brief. I will strive to introduce this subject in its simplest form as possible. My main focus in chapter 2 is to better understand the various aspects of Online Business Communications while trying to link the theories to my research results. In chapter 3, I will mainly focus on communication in a cultural context. When discussing a vast topic such as culture, I quickly realized that I have no means to include all of the aspects. Therefore I decided to narrow my focus on understanding how Cross-Cultural Communication has been developed and what implications it has on understanding verbal communication online.

In Chapter 4, I will conclude my literature review and explain my theoretical framework in depth. In Chapter 5 I will explain the Narrative approach as the methodology chosen. I will also include my research materials into this chapter. In Chapter 6, I will introduce the results of my study. In Chapter 7, I will discuss my findings and conclude my study.

2. Understanding Online Communications as Business Communication

2.1 Defining Business Communication

Business communication in general is perceived to be sending and receiving of verbal and nonverbal messages within the organizational context (Roebuck, 2001; Ober, 2001; Murphy, Hildebrandt, & Thomas, 1997). So within this context any information that a specific company makes available about itself can be defined as Business Communications. Hanna and Wilson (1998) expanded the traditional definition of business communication as it being process' of generating, transmitting, receiving, and interpreting messages in interpersonal, group, public, and mass communication contexts through written and verbal formats.

According to Reinch (1994) Business Communication is known simply as "communications". It encompasses a variety of topics, including marketing, branding, customer relations, consumer behavior, advertising, public, corporate communication, community engagement, research & measurement, reputation management, interpersonal communication, employee engagement, online communication, and event management. It is closely related to the fields of professional communication and technical communication. In business, the term communications encompasses various channels of communication, including the Internet, Print (Publications), Radio, Television, Ambient media, Outdoor, and Word.

Hynes (2005) stated effective business communication is the key to planning, leading, organizing, and controlling the resources of the organizations to achieve objectives, and may be formal or informal in nature. Argenti (2007) discussed business communication functional aspects and found that over half of the heads of corporate communication departments oversee business communications functions that include media relations, online communications, marketing, special events, product/brand communications, crisis management, employee/internal communications, community relations, and product/brand advertising. The expanse

and importance of business communication underscores the need for business education and business to collaborate in preparing business majors for the workplace.

Thus we could conclude that Business Communications is the processes as in which companies create messages internally and externally. Business Communications also include all those activities in which a company is visible to their potential customers. According to these definitions, communication that happens online is thus a part of Business Communication that should be carefully planned and executed. Next I will take a look at Internet and its possibilities in the field of Business Communications.

2.2 Commercial Internet in a nutshell

Internet was created first by the U.S. military as part of a defense program. The academia and finally the scientists of CERN (Alasilta, 2002) turned into what we see today. Initially Internet was created as part of a defence program to ensure that information flow is not stopped although under attack. Commercially the Internet grew largely through the concept of the world-wide web created by Tim Berners-Lee in 1989. Tim created the www format and was among the first ones to assagin an email using a @ sign.

The biggest transformation from just a network of supercomputers to the concept of www that we are familiar to currently, was the switch from a dull text based environment into a network that could handle images (Robinson, 2000). Steinbock (2000) also suggests that at the end of the 1980's and the growing number of high-speed connections between supercomputers of those days made the transmission of images possible. Since the possibilities of this new medium grew apparent, the marketing pioneers envisioned great possibilities within this medium, but the actual results had to wait until the end of 90's.

According to Netcraft (2012) there were close to 624 million websites in the World Wide Web in may 2012. Internet as a whole has been growing more or less steadily since its creation. Online marketing has been growing at the same pace as the Internet itself, but a universal marketing model that would be effective online is yet to be found. In some cases the net as a marketing channel has managed to surprise a few by its efficiency and reach, while others are still pursuing its true potential. The latter group has been described by Steinbock (2000) as the group that flowed with the 1960's ideology of the four P's from a conventional market place into the dynamic and interactive world of Internet.

In the beginning of the millennium many researchers predicted that through the expansion of the Web, marketing will become easier, more interactive, quicker and consumer oriented (Kärkkäinen 2009). These predictions have partially come true and at the same time the consumers online have gained more power. As Facebook, Twitter and YouTube expand to every household and Google has become the number one source for information, the importance of viral and guerilla marketing have grown. These new medias have also become more political as seen during the Arab Spring of 2011. Yet only a minority of companies has managed to benefit from online marketing. Many have spent large amounts of money without any results, while success stories such as the Old Spice Man –are rare, and many follow giants like General Motor's in retrieving from Facebook ad-campaigns.

Steinbock (2000) predicted that traditional marketing would exist along side online marketing. Steinbock was correct, traditional marketing is growing and Internet has not yet managed to replace it. However just as seen in the mid 1900's and coming of TV, marketers just expand their toolboxes and focus on regenerating the 4P's in different format. Internet simultaneously has put major strains on marketers. Companies want faster and better results with less money, and since customers have a larger variety of choice than ever before, the playground has become complex and only ones with brilliant ideas are able to survive. According to Steinbock (2000), no

one really knows whether it is just a transition towards a fully digitalized marketing reality or a lasting state of marketing for the time being.

2.3 Internet as a Information Medium

The electronic medium known as Internet is incredibly dynamic. As more and more users are able to consume smart phones and tablets connected to the net, Internet exploring has become a daily routine instead of a luxury, thus the environment has changes dramatically. For marketers, this means that the medium continues to grow incredibly complex and more unpredictable every day. In order to attempt to better understand the medium, marketers have developed many tools to help them analyze the ever-changing complexities of the Internet. (Thornton & Lin 2003)

One way to gain information regarding the consumer behavior online is through online research portals (Kärkkäinen 2009). The need for these portals is based on the idea that there is an ever increasing amount of information available on consumers to marketers, and the sheer amount of information makes synthesizing it into something useful very difficult, if not impossible (Adams, 2001).

Many of these portals are taking on familiar faces, being set up in ways similar to many of the common search engines on the Internet, those such as Google or Yahoo. By typing in a key word or a phrase, the information that user request is almost instantly available for use. The findings can be broken down into categories such as user preferences and characteristics, geographic regions, attitudes, and much more (Vonder Haar 1999). More- over, this information is tailored specifically for use on the Internet and is based on surveys and reports compiled over specific periods of time, all with the user's permission (King 2000).

Each of these portals attempts to acquire unique research for its clients, and, as a result, marketers are able to discover where they should focus their efforts. For instance, Harris Interactive has extensively researched streaming audio and video

advertising tools, and how to best use them in order to sell customers on products. Additionally, a company by the name of Media Metrix specializes in tracking the different types of media that Internet users employ the most (King, 2000). These are just a few of the different portals developing along with the growth of the digital advertising media (Thornton & Lin 2003).

However the usage of these portals have become less frequent during the past few years, as Facebook and Google are able to provide even more accurate data. Legislations have also changed gathering of personal information and consumer online behavior more complex. Also consumers are more aware and alert of what information they want to be public about their online behavior. The discussion on online personal rights has also become a major issue within the political climate.

2.4   Understanding Websites

Company websites – or brand websites – can be used for many different purposes. The most common uses are either to communicate with the target group or to commit the users to the brand (De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Van Der Bergh, 2001). Company website domains are in general according to the name of the company. Many companies have also international sites that differ in ending .com, .fi, .co.uk and etc. This is due to their effort to localize their websites. Geissler (2006) suggests that the content on a company website strengthens the relationship between the company and the website visitor. However, there is a fine line between how much information is enough and how much is too much.

In his research Geissler (2006) found out that information could easily be overflowing, which can leave a consumer feeling annoyed and confused. On the other hand the users might get frustrated when they cannot find even the basic information on a company website. Thus he reminds that the company must consider carefully how much information is enough and what can be left out when building a

website because this will then have an effect on the attitudes, buying intentions and attention holders of a website visitor, when they come across the site.

Alasilta (2002) points out that every website and a single webpage within it must have its own purpose. The purpose must be clear in the sense of what is being offered, to whom, and how it will be delivered. Combining Alasilta and Geissler helps a consumer to determine what is offered on the site, to which the site is targeted to and how the supply is executed. At the same time the role of the website within the corporate communication strategy should be defined. Alasilta (2002) also argues that the knowledge of the so-called Internet grammar underpins the site's readability and skim value. Choosing the right active words, links, activated graphics and ensuring that the vocabulary used is coherent can also back up these properties.

Truell et al. (2005), introduce dissemination of company information, maintenance of investor relations, collection of customer data and reinforcement of company identity, company websites can also enhance the company's competitiveness and improve its image (Hill & White, 2000).

Despite the many opportunities the Internet brings to company communication, it does not come unchallenged. One of the biggest challenges according to Truell et al. (2005) is to define a target group for a company website. This definition can sometimes be crucial for website success, as through it the company can define the way their customers get information and move around the world wide web. Alasilta (2002) also pointed this out as one of the cornerstones of successful online communication: in addition to what to communicate, the company should also know whom they are talking to. Still, the heterogeneity of company websites is the reality today, and Esrock and Liechty (2000, p. 330) state *"the corporate site must meet the needs of each audience without simultaneously alienating other groups"*. They also add, that companies can take part in and encourage their customers to a direct discussion on different issues they see as important. Thus, the Internet presents a

challenge to traditional forms of communication, but at the same time it imposes a dynamic format for presenting corporate information (Truell et al., 2005).

Homepage is the front page of a website. The homepage is the first contact the visitor has with the website and thus it has a crucial role of making the first impression of the company (Svinhufvud 2005). If the homepage fails in this task, the visitor might not go further into the website or might even leave and never come back (Geissler 2006). Kortetjärvi-Nurmi, Kuronen and Ollikainen (2003) argue that as to website functionality and ability to create interest, consumers are more impatient online than with more traditional texts: if they cannot find what they are looking for quickly enough, they will move on to another site. This is a real challenge to both technical solutions and content choices. From the technical point of view the logic of navigation, on-site search function, the speed of opening the site and even the font size can be crucial when it comes to getting hold of the consumer.

Askehave and Nielsen (2003, p.19) describe a homepage as being *"a condensation of the most important information on the site"* that serves as a scannable introduction to the site. They point out that a homepage is not required to provide a complete overview of the site, but a pertinent selection of topics to guide the readers further to the information they are looking for. Kortetjärvi-Nurmi et al. (2003) state that when creating content to a website as a whole, one should remember that a web text is different from other types of texts. They further argue that web texts are a separate niche altogether.

Hypertext is probably the most distinguishing characteristic of a web text, as with hypertext the reader can freely choose what, when and in which order to read. This fundamental difference between web texts and traditional forms of text is most commonly realized by links. Askehave and Nielsen (2003) divide links to structural and associative links. The former refers to the hierarchical organization of information on the website, i.e. what should come first and what should come last

and the latter can be defined through association, as what the reader most likely would like to know more about.

Schmidt (2004) has identified 7 different types of links that all manage different things and should be maintained separately. Internal or on-site links point within the site whereas outbound links point beyond the site the link is on. An inbound link points to the site in question from another site while an inbound bookmark refers to the links that are stored on a single PC. These first four are the most commonly used and thus the easiest to understand. The most complex ones are software-embedded inbound links that Schmidt defines as follows: a site-specific software-embedded inbound link is a link that is coded into software, for example a product fact sheet. A non-site-specific software-embedded inbound link is related to files that exist on a website for specific reasons, for example a common robots.txt that is usually included for search engine robots. The last type of links Schimdt mentions is an offline-line link, that refers to links that can be found beyond digital environment, for example URL-addresses on business cards, advertising materials or user guides.

Askehave and Nielsen (2003) looked at homepages in their research and divided the most common links into two categories: generic and specific links. Generic links support the homepage's introductory role and provide access to the main topics of the website. Generic links are commonly situated at the navigation bar where they can easily be accessed and presented without any further explanation of relevance besides the noun link is expressed with. Specific links are just the opposite: they are usually accompanied by a brief description on the subject matter that explain the relevance of the link and give a reader an option to find out more by following the link.

The specific criteria that may make a difference between a successful and a less successful website have been discussed. When starting to evaluate company websites, though, the first action should be to determine what kind of a site is in question. Quelch and Klein (1996) have divided site characteristics into two main

types: the ones that evolve from information model to transaction model and those that do the evolution the other way around. Traditionally large multinational companies have started their web presence by posting basic information and brand image building material online, but with time they have brought more interactive possibilities and transactions to their sites. On the other end, smaller transaction-focused companies have often started off online by bringing their services to the web, and later added more information on the site to build their brand image.

Hoffman and Novak (1997) present another way of categorizing websites: dividing them into traffic control sites and destination sites. The former is built to direct users to other websites, which basically refer to search engines and portal sites, and the latter represents the sites the former direct to. As Hoffman and Novak (1997) point out, a destination site as a concept is very broad, and thus it is further divided into presence sites, online storefronts and content sites. Presence sites are built to reach a broader market or support brand awareness and image. They are very basic sites with limited interactive elements, basically virtual reminders of the company and its products. Online storefronts give control to the consumer by providing traditional catalogue possibilities on the web. By having this kind of a website, a company can reduce transaction costs while building customer relationships and creating emotional commitment to the users.

Content site refers to a site that offers time-sensitive or on- time information. This kind of a site is often hosted by a medium that provides stock market data or other current and quickly changing information. After determining the site character, De Pelsmacker et al. (2001, pp. 422-423) suggest that a website evaluator can move forward to the other factor that is often used to evaluate a website: visitor characteristics. It is relevant to know what the core target group of the website is and what they look for from the site. De Pelsmacker et al. (2001) state that there certainly is a difference in the profiles of the users of a food producer site and a university site. They argue that the users' knowledge and experience of the Internet reflects to his/her

expectations and preferences, which in turn have an effect to the perceived value of a website and further on to user satisfaction.

2.5   Making a First Impression Online

Although making a first impression is mainly a psychological aspect, its importance in business context cannot be undermined. Potential customers that search information online without any personal attachment to a specific company make their initial decision to pursue further than homepage based on their first impression (Han and Mills 2006).

According to Han and Mills (2006) websites have following tools to make a good first impression. Each website is built and in general valued by its audience according to its aesthetic features, informative features as well as its interactive features. Aesthetic features of a website refer to visual items that can raise the interests of online visitors such as pictures, colors and graphical layout. Informative features refer to items that provide detailed information regarding, pricing, services and personnel. These informative items would attract online customers and increase their interests on the service after the initial stage of aesthetic features capturing their attention. Interactive features of a website refer to items that trigger a responsive behavior such as sending inquiring emails. These items allow engaging in some aspects of the decision making after aesthetic features have captured their attention and informative features have increased their interest to purchase.

3. Cross Cultural Communication

3.1   Defining Cultural Differences

In order to understand Cross Cultural Communication, it is essential to understand Culture. According Hofstede (1991) culture can be derived to four dimensions. These dimensions are collectivism-individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and Masculinity-Femininity. In addition to Hofstede's theory there are many others that either derive from a similar thought or then bring in a new method to analyze the subject. I chose Hofstede due to its simplicity. Although Hofstede has been criticized for having a western bias, I still feel that understanding these dimensions of cultures could be a key to better cross-cultural communication.

According to Hofstede (1991) "Power distance is the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally." Cultures that endorse low power distance, such as Finland, expect and accept power relations that are more consultative or democratic. People relate to one another more as equals regardless of formal positions. Subordinates are more comfortable with and demand the right to contribute to and critique the decision making of those in power. In high power distance countries, such as Japan, less powerful accept power relations that are more autocratic and paternalistic. Subordinates acknowledge the power of others simply based on where they are situated in certain formal, hierarchical positions. As such, the power distance index that Hofstede defines does not reflect an objective difference in power distribution, but rather the way people perceive power differences.

Individualism vs. collectivism: "The degree to which individuals are integrated into groups". In individualistic societies, the stress is put on personal achievements and individual rights. People are expected to stand up for themselves and their immediate family, and to choose their own affiliations. In contrast, in collectivist societies, individuals act predominantly as members of a life-long and cohesive group or

organization (note: "The word collectivism in this sense has no political meaning: it refers to the group, not to the state"). People have large extended families, which are used as a protection in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.

Uncertainty avoidance: "a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity". It reflects the extent to which members of a society attempt to cope with anxiety by minimizing uncertainty. People in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance tend to be more emotional. They try to minimize the occurrence of unknown and unusual circumstances and to proceed with careful changes step by step by planning and by implementing rules, laws and regulations. In contrast, low uncertainty avoidance cultures accept and feel comfortable in unstructured situations or changeable environments and try to have as few rules as possible. People in these cultures tend to be more pragmatic, they are more tolerant of change.

Masculinity vs. femininity: "The distribution of emotional roles between the genders". Masculine cultures' values are competitiveness, assertiveness, materialism, ambition and power, whereas feminine cultures place more value on relationships and quality of life. In masculine cultures, the differences between gender roles are more dramatic and less fluid than in feminine cultures where men and women have the same values emphasizing modesty and caring. As a result of the taboo on sexuality in many cultures, particularly masculine ones, and because of the obvious gender generalizations implied by Hofstede's terminology, this dimension is often renamed by users of Hofstede's work, e.g. to Quantity of Life vs. Quality of Life.

Hofstede's model describes cultures and gives indexes to measure various cultures accordingly. Although it gives a kick-start to cross-cultural communication, it does not provide solutions in such. Hofstede's theory on cross-cultural communication helps understand why we need to focus our messages and communicate differently when encountering different cultures. As mentioned earlier, according to (Alasitla; Truell) the importance of to whom we are talking to and what we are trying to communicate. Since online communication is mainly verbal, the chance of the

message becoming meaningless or uninteresting grows large. Since my study is based on first impressions of executives moving to Finland, I feel that understanding the importance role of translation in this context is crucial.

3.2   Significance of translation

Translation is an important ability of language application and an important way for people to understand information originally stated in a different language. In Business context the importance of understanding the original text and being able to translate it into another language with the ability to maintain the context of the text is crucial. Kant (2003) proposed the notion of Schema that is the connections between concepts and perceived meanings. Kant (2003) suggested that when a person encounters new information, concepts, and ideas, they would only make sense if they were connected with the inherent knowledge of his mind. More recently, Anderson and Wilson gave schema a more specific and widely accepted definition: a schema is an abstract structure of knowledge. Zuo Li (2007) stated that it is structured in a sense that it indicates relations between constituent concepts. It is abstract in the sense that one schema has the potential to cover a number of texts that differ in particulars. Therefore, schema theory explains how people's existing knowledge affects the comprehension process.

Schema theory plays an important role in translation. Business English is different from General English, as is Business Finnish from general Finnish. They both have their own features both in lexis and syntactic structures. Towards these features, schema theory strives to find a way out resolving the problems occurring in Business English translation.

Translators serve, as a bridge between the source language and target language, thus making translation is a psycholinguistic process. Readers start with a set of linguistic symbols that have been chosen by writers to express the thoughts that they wish to express. (Wedell, 1995) Business English translation is formed on the basis of General

English translation, so they have lots of relations. But Business English is a kind of English for specific purpose, and it is more professional. Therefore, Business English translation has obvious features that differ from those of General English.

Since Business covers a wide range from commerce, marketing to law and tourism, it makes Business English rich in vocabulary (Xiangyue 2011). Since most of the websites in Finland are in Finnish first then translated to English the role of Lexis grows large. Lexis has a relatively narrow meaning, and is more technical and professional (Xiangyue 2011). This means that many words have multiple meanings. There are still some connections in different contexts. So it is with the word "promotion". Its basic meaning is a move to a more important job or rank in a company or an organization, while the meaning in Business English is activities done in order to increase the sales of a product or service; a set of advertisement for particular product or service (Xiangyue 2011).

4. Concluding the Literature Review and Mapping the Theoretical Framework

Here is the theoretical framework that I introduced in Chapter 1
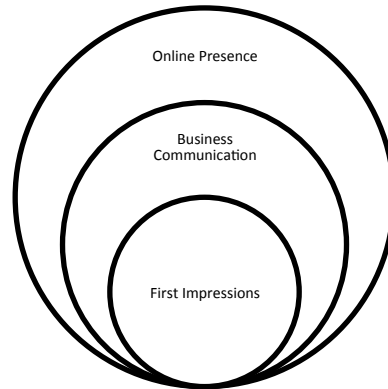
Although the subject at hand might to some degree include topics such as immigration, integration and globalization, I have tried to narrow the literary review to include only those aspects that I feel influence my study the most. I started mapping the literature review by exploring the subject of Business Communication. This is due to the fact that BU is an essential part of my study. However the subject of Business Communications is so vast as a heading that I decided to look at it initially as whole and then bring online communication and presence as a part of Business Communication.

I found that BU includes all the verbal and non-verbal as well as visible and non-visible messages that a company is engaged in. Although some theories state that BU is the process of generating messages it became apparent that anything that a potential customer is able to grasp from a company or its products, whether intentionally by the company or not, can be categorized as Business Communication. This been said, a company cannot decide what people write about it or its products in a social online forum, but they can perhaps influence this. Business Communication in the modern context of Internet has become more difficult and complex than anticipated in the early 90's.

Business Communication in total has become a vast sum of many ongoing happenings online as well as within the company and externally. In the context of my study understanding the online communications is of importance. My study takes 10 executives moving to Finland, and strives to explain their first impressions about services in Finland through 12 websites that provide basic services in Finland. Today the number one source of information is the Internet. And due tot the large number of choices available online, it is more than important to make a stunning impression on anyone who visits your site. Understanding online presence in terms of my study requires understanding the elements of a good site as well as how the information has been presented online. Theories suggest that the amount of information and the way they have been presented is essential to decision making.

Since the issue at hand is about how well a group of people who are not Finnish are able to understand sites that have been targeted to Finns and translated to English later. Thus understanding the context of culture and translation becomes important. Theories suggest that words have no contextual value outside of the person's coherent cultural context. This means that a text translated from one language to another might loose its original purpose and its message might get lost in translation. Theories suggest that translators should more than ever be familiar with the cultural context of the language they have to translate the original text into.

5. Methodology

Due to the narrow scope of my study and the fact that I was trying to understand First Impressions of individuals without generalizing, I chose the Narrative approach. The Narrative approach is of the Empirical methods suitable for my study due to the fact that it takes into account each participant objectively, considering them as individuals who are just explaining observations in the context of their own reality and self (Clandinin and Connely 2000).

Clandinin and Connely (2000) state that, Narrative methods emerged as a discipline within the broader field of qualitative research. It is an approach to understanding/researching the way people make meaning of their lives as narratives, linked fields are narrative analysis, narratology and life writing. Of interest to narrative inquirers is not what happened so much as what meaning did people make of what happened. Narrative Inquiry is a fairly recent movement in social science qualitative research. It has been employed as a tool for analysis in the fields of cognitive science, organizational studies, knowledge theory, sociology and education studies, among others.

According to Hänninen (1999) the narrative approach is suitable for those studies that aim to explain, in an academic manner, what people have perceived to had happened. The narrative approach allows observations to be stated without a listing large number of results instead in the manner of stories. In the Narrative Approach according to Hänninen (1999) each person is allowed to share stories about their side of the occurrences. Thus instead of listing hard facts, Narrative approach requires a deeper understanding and explaining as well as analysis of the results.

According to Häkkinen (1999) the role of the interviewer increases in the narrative method. The interviewer must remain subjective and allow each of the interviewees to express their narration without influence. To ensure this, I avoided questions that would have led the discussion towards my goals.

The material for this study was collected during 2010-2011. In addition to the interviews, a small-scale questionnaire was given out to the participants. The role of the questionnaire was merely to ensure that the participants had a framework when visiting the given websites. The answers of the questionnaire were merely analyzed empirically to show whether the participants had any similar thoughts. The data collected through interviews as well as the questionnaires, was then analyzed according to good empirical methods.

The reliability as well as in some parts the validity of any study in accordance to Eskola et. Al (2008) is whether the academic peers and community accept the study. One method of ensuring this is to certify that the theoretical framework as well as methodology and study material is in line with the study questions. Another important factor that heavily influences the reliability of any study is contradiction. According to Eskola et. Al (2008) contradiction within the study makes it unreliable.

According to Eskola (2008) and Bryman et. Bell (2003), even if the study is conducted in a good academic manner and it is reliable according to the standards chosen, it must also be valid. Eskola (2008) describes validity so that the study as well as its results must be inline with common understanding.

Since my study is transparent and I strive to keep the reader on board with what is happening, in addition to the fact that I have chosen a method that best helps me analyze my results in good academic manners I declare this study to be reliable. Since the results of this study are in accordance with general understanding as well as in line with the initial study questions this study is also valid in its field.

5.1   Participants

Each participant was chosen according to the following criteria's:

1. A person who is migrating / moving to Finland primary to work.
   a. Must be in a management position or a specialist of a certain field.
   b. No earlier experiment of Finland apart from apart from occasional tourist vacations.
2. English language required.

I selected a group of 10 people for this study according to the criteria above. The participants were chosen through the actual business cases I was working on at that moment. All together my company helped 28 managers and executives to move into Finland and start working without further integration problems.

I tried to maximize diversity by choosing participants according to their original cultural background. Figure below illustrates the demographics of the participants.

Origin	Age	Gender	Native	Finnish	English	Family	Position
Brazil	35	Male	Portuguese	None	Fluent	Single	CME
China	29	Male	Mandarin	Poor	Fluent	Wife	MA China
China	33	Female	Cantonese	Poor	Fluent	Single	Head of R&D
England	46	Female	English	None	Native	Divorced	IMD
India	42	Male	English	Poor	Native	4	Director India
India	38	Female	English	Poor	Native	2	HR Director
USA	27	Female	English	None	Native	Single	EGP
USA	45	Male	English	Poor	Native	4	Division Director
Canada	32	Female	English	Poor	Native	Single	Director CSR
France	36	Male	French	None	Fluent	3	Sales Director EMEA

Participants were given instructions to visit 12 websites that are Finnish based companies that provide services in the following categories: Housing, Employment, Healthcare and Banking. The service areas were chosen to reflect the basic needed of a person migrating into a new living inhabitant. These needs were identified by scattering Maslow's Hierarchy of needs Pyramid. According to Maslow, the very

basic need of any human can be identified via 5 levels that are Physiological needs, such as food, water, shelter etc. The second level can be identified through Safety such as security of body, resources, family, health etc. Third level is Love and belonging, fourth level Self-Esteem and the last level is Self-Actualization. According to Maslow bottom levels of the pyramid, Physiological and Safety, reflect eh basic needs of survival (Maslow). Thus I chose the above service areas of housing, employment and healthcare to reflect the Physiological needs and banking to reflect Safety needs of an individual.

Each participant then had to answer the following questions and assess whether they would purchase these services if necessary.

1. Does the company have an English website?
2. What do they sell?
   a. On the Scale of 1-5 are company's products relevant to your needs?
3. Are their services affordable?
4. Would you purchase their services in the near future?

In addition to answering the questionnaire I also interviewed each participant to better understand his or her motives. Each interview was conducted within a week from the time the participant had done his or her own Internet search. The focus of the interviews was to

1. To better understand whether perceptions of what services these companies provide differ according to what culture the person represents?
2. To have a better understanding on how perception of value added by a service differ among the participants?
3. To better understand if culture is a significant factor of communication within participants?

5.2   Companies

When choosing the companies I tried to utilize the same channels as a person moving to Finland for the first time. According to Hälscher and Strube (2000) vast amount of information search is Internet based. Although it is not easy to find the exact information needed, keyword search as well as right search engines may be the key for finding the right information. According to the Alexa.com, one of the worlds leading Internet web traffic statistic sites, Google was the most used search engine in 2011. Thus I also chose Google as my main search engine.

Significance of correct keyword search will determine the end results. Simplest form of keyword search is subject A (AND) subject B (Hälscher and Strube). As the primary search channel I chose Google.com. On the 19th of December 2011 I entered the following key words into Google search engine.

1. Housing and Helsinki
2. Employment and Helsinki
3. Banking and Helsinki
4. Healthcare and Helsinki

The search had many results but I chose the following companies due to their reputation as well as brand value.

Banking: Nordea, Osuus Pankki, FIM

Housing: Sato, Huoneistokeskus, Vuokraturva

Employment: Manpower, Opteam, Barona

Healthcare: Mehiläinen, Terveystalo, Orton

I also encountered several sites that aimed at helping Expatriates moving to Finland. I however decided not to include these sites within the study. Below I have illustrated what information the companies give about themselves in English.

Banking:

Nordea's vision is to be a Great European bank, acknowledged for its people, creating superior value for customers and shareholders. We are making it possible for our customers to reach their goals by providing a wide range of products, services and solutions within banking, asset management and insurance. Nordea has around 11 million customers, approx. 1,400 branch offices and is among the ten largest universal banks in Europe in terms of total market capitalisation. The Nordea share is listed on the NASDAQ OMX Nordic Exchange in Stockholm, Helsinki and Copenhagen. www.nordea.fi

Osuus Pankki: Cooperative ideology, which forms the basis of OP-Pohjola's operations and strategic goals, is also highlighted in the Group's core values: People-first approach, Responsibility and Prospering together.The Group has the mission of promoting the sustainable prosperity, security and wellbeing of its owner-members, customers and operating regions through its local presence. OP-Pohjola aims to be Finland's leading financial services group in terms of market position, corporate image, expertise and corporate responsibility. www.osuuspankki.fi

FIM: We provide both fund asset management and discretionary asset management services. For active investors, we also offer securities brokerage, alternative investments, and banking services that support investment activity, e.g. deposit solutions and credits. FIM has the most experienced team of portfolio managers in Finland: 250 years of asset management experience combined! The team is proactive and takes a stance in its investment decisions for the benefit of our customers. Our securities brokerage operations are based on in-depth investment research that generates trading ideas. Our customers can make direct investments either via a personal broker or using FIM Direct, the most efficient online trading service in the market. Our selection of investment services also includes alternative investments, which allow our customers to invest, at their chosen risk level, in a wide spectrum of various investment instruments, or, alternatively, approach traditional investment instruments from a new angle. Our retail bank offers competitively-priced, innovative

deposit and credit solutions that support our customers' investment activities. www.fim.com

Housing:

SATO is one of Finland's leading corporate investors in housing. SATO owns a total of some 23,000 rentable homes in Finland's largest centres of urban growth and St. Petersburg. Its investment assets have a fair value of over 1.9 billion euros. SATO has set the goal of being the most efficient and progressive player in the market, which facilitates the constant improvement of customer services as well as generating added value for its shareholders. This requires the constant re-evaluation of operating methods as well as the ability to regenerate. SATO's value creation is based on the trend in value of the investment properties and on rental business. Continuing demand for housing fosters the stability of SATO's business. Homes will always be needed. SATO's personnel comprises some 140 professionals in the housing sector. Most of them have a technical, commercial or legal education. As an employer, SATO offers competitive pay, good working conditions and opportunities for professional growth. The average age of the personnel is 45 years. SATO's biggest shareholders are Finnish pension insurers and other insurance companies. www.sato.fi

Huoneistokeskus is Finland's leading real estate agency and has been providing safe and secure real estate services since 1953. Approximately 600 professionals work for us in more than 70 offices throughout Finland. Annually, we broker approximately 12,000 real estate and property deals. Huoneistokeskus is part of Realia Group. Huoneistokeskus is the number one choice of real estate agents in Finland. Our extensive sales network, effective marketing and solid expertise are the strengths that help us sell property quickly and get the desired result. The best services - the best result. www.huoneistokeskus.fi

Vuokraturva is a real estate agency that specializes in mediating rental apartments and buying investment apartments. We are a strong market leader in our business

field. Whether you are an applicant, lessor, property investor or you already live in a home mediated by us, we are here to serve you. We have 10 years experience in providing people with new homes and looking for reliable tenants. Dependable rental apartment mediation is our number one priority. Come to us for the professional service that only a market leader can give! www.vuokraturva.fi

Employment:

Manpower is a leading international employment agency that specializes in outsourcing HR services. www.manpower.fi

Opteam is one of Finland's largest Personnel Service Companies. Opteam is known for its various international project such as HOK-Elanto, in which Opteam hired 15 professional cooks from the Philippines to work in HOK-Elanto Helsinki region. www.opteam.com

Barona serves clients in a versatile way. Their expertise covers solid process management recruitment and service production as well as the implementation of demanding strategic change initiatives right up to outsourcing projects.Company culture supports the implementation of innovations in all our operations. A good example of this is BaronaCV, i.e., the use of videos in applying for work and recruitment. www.barona.fi

Healthcare:

The **Mehiläinen** Group is the best-known and most respected provider of private health care and social services in Finland. The Mehiläinen group is active in various sectors of the market for privately funded health care services and publicly funded health care and social services. Currently, Mehiläinen's nationwide service network of privately funded health services consists of a total of 26 medical centres, occupational health centres which augment the service network, and 9 hospitals. On the publicly funded markets the Mehiläinen group consists of 8 elderly care centres, 12 child welfare units, 21 mental health rehabilitation units. Since the

beginning of 2009 the group has also offered basic healthcare and home care services in Karjaa, an area in Raasepori. In May 2009, Finland's first private psychiatric hospital for children was opened in Hyvinkää. Mehiläinen is a part of the Ambea Group, which is the largest private healthcare and nursing services provider in the Nordic countries. www.mehilainen.fi

Terveystalo is the largest healthcare service company in Finland. The company offers versatile healthcare, occupational healthcare, medical and examination services in more than 60 towns around Finland. Terveystalo's clients include private people, companies and organizations, insurance companies and the public sector. Terveystalo has over 2,900 employees and over 3,000 private entrepreneurs working in its premises. We work in a harmonized manner, implementing our nationwide concepts locally. Terveystalo's total sales for 2011 amounted to EUR 366 million. Terveystalo is owned by the private equity firm Bridgepoint. www.terveystalo.fi

ORTON Orthopaedic Hospital is a centre of excellence in Helsinki, specialising in orthopaedics. Using modern and reliable examination and treatment methods, we offer help for even the most challenging musculoskeletal complaints affecting the back, hip and legs or the hand and shoulder area. Chronic, life-restricting complaints can be overcome. Our specialists will find the best and most appropriate treatment for your complaint. Simply call our outpatient clinic. www.orton.com

6. Results

6.1 Starting with Survey

The purpose of this survey as stated earlier was to ensure that the participants had visited the websites and had put some effort on getting acquainted with the sites. Due to the Narrative method of this study and the role of interviews, I included only questions that would ensure some memory trail about the site. I did not want the questionnaire to influence any impression that the company might have made.

1. Did the company have an English website?

Company	YES	NO
Nordea	X	
OP	X	
FIM	X	
SATO	X	
Huoneistokeskus	X	
Vuokraturva	X	
Manpower		X
Barona	X	
Opteam	X	
Mehiläinen	X	
Terveystalo	X	
Orton	X	

Apart from Manpower, every other company had an English site for Finland. The participants were able to find the English sites easily. The general response was that the English sites were easy to find.

On the scale 1-5 are company's products relevant to you?

Company	Low	Median	High
Nordea	2	3	5
OP	3	4	5
FIM	1	3	4
SATO	3	4	5
Huoneistokeskus	2	3	5
Vuokraturva	3	4	5

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Manpower	1	1	1
Barona	2	3	4
Opteam	2	3	4
Mehiläinen	4	4	5
Terveystalo	3	3	5
Orton	4	4	5

Manpower does not have an English site and thus the participants were not able to relate how well Manpower's products relate to them. Orton ranked the best and it had more four grades (8) than any of the other companies. During the interviews Orton was mentioned the most. Also Sato was appreciated. It had a clear presentation of their products and it felt reliable.

Q: Are their services affordable?

Company	Yes	No	Not able to respond
Nordea			10
OP			10
FIM			10
SATO	10		
Huoneistokeskus	10		10
Vuokraturva	7	1	2
Manpower			10
Barona			10
Opteam			10
Mehiläinen			10
Terveystalo			10
Orton	4	6	

Apart from Sato, Vuokraturva, Huoneistokeskus and Orton, none of the other companies had prices on their websites. However according to the interviews conducted post questionnaire, each of the participants stated that in the banking service Nordea and OP probably would be affordable. FIM seemed expensive to everyone else apart from one. One participant believed that although no price information was given on FIM's site its services would still be affordable.

Q: Would you use their services in the near future?

Company	Yes	No	Not able to respond
Nordea	2	3	5
OP	4	3	3
FIM	1	6	3
SATO	7	3	
Huoneistokeskus	6	4	
Vuokraturva	4	3	3
Manpower			10
Barona	4	6	
Opteam	3	6	1
Mehiläinen	2	8	
Terveystalo	6	4	
Orton	5	5	

SATO got the best response in this question. During the interviews the respondents raised the issue that accommodation and housing is the most important issue for them. In this field Sato seems to be a good service provider. Employment wise the question seemed bizzare and irrelevant since most of the participants already have a good international position within their firms.

6.2   Narratives about Websites

As stated earlier this study is a narrative approach to what a group of Executives moving to Finland can grasp through online websites. These narratives are accurate and word-by-word to ensure that the story is written as told. I will use these Narrations to analyze what these executives have grasped by visiting these sites.

Q: Did you find the English sites:

"The English sites were easy to find and I had no problem finding the right link". "I just typed in the actual link you provided and looked at the right upper corner, because that is where English sites are usually situated". "I had no problems finding the English site". These were answers of almost all of the participants. The navigation of the English sites in generally was according to normal practices of web design.

This question acted also as an icebreaker and gave the interviewees a good laugh. *"Did you honestly think anyone would have a hard time finding the English site? I hope not. But I do get your point, at least in my company website I want everything to be understandable at one glance"*. *"Although we had a good laugh over this issue, it is still of major importance whether the company is able to steer its online visitors to the right sites and help them navigate and find what they are looking for."* *"Nothing is more frustrating than not finding the right information in a shortest amount of time"*. *"To be honest I was actually surprised that almost all of the sites had at least English and Swedish sub sites."* *"In addition to English, most of the companies had even Russian and Estonian sites. If I have understood correctly, Finland is bi-lingual country and thus explains the need for a Swedish site, but the rest seemed as a good bonus."*

Linguistic diversity of the Finnish sites did surprise most of the participants in a good manner. There is perhaps a cultural aspect to this as well. *"Where I'm from, we don't need to have any other languages. Almost all of our customers speak English"*. *"Apart from companies that are localized, such as Nike, automobile industry etc. I had not seen this much effort to be put on various sites."* *"In the global context I had seen fortune 500's having to localize their sites, but I guess it is good that Finnish companies make an effort in English as well."*

To conclude this question: according to the narratives regarding did participants find the English sites the general answer was yes. Many other issues were raised regarding this topic though. It seemed that there is a practice within web design that situates localized sites on the top right corner of the sites. Also the participants felt amused by the question. It seems that there is a norm among the participants that revolves around understanding web sites. The participants seemed to be well aware of how a site works and there seemed to be a general understanding of how to locate information.

Q: What was your general opinion on the aesthetics of the site? Did you find them generally appealing?

"In general I found the sites fairly boring and informative. I did not really grasp like them visually. The Banking sites were boring and I felt that they are just Login-sites to ones account". "The Housing sites were interesting. I felt so outside, since I did not see an image that would have represented my family and me. I guess Finland is not that diversified?" "Man the sites were boring. No offence but if I wanted to purchase banking services I would have loved to see earn more – pay less – invest in this. But none of that was apparent on the sites." "The sited had too much Information on them. I had a hard time following the text. Visually they were boring too. Sato had nice pictures and I this that I could move into one of their houses". "I liked Orton for some reason, maybe, because I have a problem with my knee, and they seemed like a good place to get it fixed. However the sited were boring. No interaction." "Why would I want to like your company on Facebook, when my immediate reaction to your sites visual aspects were like what?" "Come on Finnish companies, you can do better than this. Are you stuck in the 90´s. I don't want to know what you sell I want it to speak to me."

In general the participants did not find the web sites visual aspects as appealing. All of the interviewees felt that the sites were boring and too informative. When I asked them to give me a benchmark to what they would have liked to seen the immediate responses were *"It has to speak to me as an individual. Id rather see pictures of the final results rather than read about it". "To be honest, I am a fairly busy person, if someone tells me this is a good service I check their site and contact them. I don't have the time to go through text and decide if this service is suitable for me." "My wife and I checked out the Housing sites and she knew how it worked better than I. She actually liked Sato probably the other ones if she could have pronounced their names correctly.*

Another issue that was raised frequently within the context of this question was the lack of story and illustration. "*In my country, companies attract customers through catchy stories about themselves.*" "*Our companies usually illustrate what they do, in Finland it seems that you want to say what you do and put it words.*" "*I had a hard time understanding what the companies do by just glimpsing at their sites. I would have wanted more illustrations and less text.*" "*As I said earlier I did not manage to create a personal relationship with the site. For instance banking services, why should I change my bank, the company has provided me with some account etc. and to be honest I didn't find a competitor through the sites you provided.*" "*I would have liked to know a bit deeper about who these people are, what they do and how they do it. Who are their customers and why are they still their customers.*" "*If there was a story to these companies, it had been lost in text. To be honest I don't even remember the sites you asked us to go, I just remember images here and there.*" "*Honestly, tell them to illustrate what they do and build a story around it*".

Aesthetically the sites seemed to be a disappointment. Issues that rose above all were too much data in a form of text and not enough information that would have been appealing. Story telling as a part of attracting customers and building a personal relationship seemed to be missing in the Finnish context. Lack of illustrative context seemed to be the reason behind this disappointment.

Q: How did you perceive English on the sites?

"*I was surprised that to see how well you have translated the sites.*" "*I had a hard time understanding the meanings.*" "*I felt that the Finnish sites had just been translated without a real context.*" "*Can someone explain IT-personnel outsourcer? I found this word one of the sites. I don't know what it means but could you explain?*" "*I read that your son will make your knee better, on one of the sites. I have no clue what it means. Also IT-personnel outsourcer was an interesting term.*" "*At parts it seemed like the site had just been translated into English using Google-translate. In fact I did try it and inserted a small paragraph into Google-translator and results were*

amusingly similar to the text I found on the English site". "My English is not the best in the world. But I did have trouble reading the text. That is unfortunate." "The contents are good English but they seem to have no substance and the meaning seems to be lost in translation." "It was hard to distinguish between the terminology. Some of the words such as cooperative etc. have no meaning for me."

It became apparent that the participants had a hard time understanding some of the text. Especially translations seemed to have created problems. This is according to our literature studies a major problem, which companies should take into consideration.

Q: If someone asked you what these companies do what would you answer?

"I would definitely dodge the question. I visited the sited last night and the only one I can even remember was the Nordea, because it was close to Nokia." "I remember Sato rented out houses and they had some nice locations. FIM also stuck into my mind, and I think they had good houses as well. But I still would choose Sato." "Barona seemed like a Finnish Spanish collaborative and since I am studying Spanish it stuck to my mind. I think they were in the category of employment?" "Orton seemed like a good hospital. The other two I don't remember. I preferred FIM for my financial services, but I'm not sure if they handle regular cash operations as well". "If someone asked me this question I would probably just say no. I have a hard time even remembering these company names. All I can say is that here is the list Ali gave me, go ahead and visit them.

It seemed that this question perhaps shed some light on how well the Finnish companies are doing in terms of English Business Communications. None of the participant's felt that they could have even remembered yet alone tell another person what these companies do.

7. Conclusions

7.1 Findings

The original research question was through Narratives understanding what 10 executives moving to Finland were able to grasp from online content of 12 Finnish companies. In general the study gave indications that there is something wrong with the current way the chosen companies were communicating about themselves online.

The first major finding was that in general the company websites were perceived to be very boring. According to Han and Mills (2006) the company should be able to make a good first impression online. One of the tools that they suggested was the aesthetics of the company website. Including their web design and page layout. Alasilta (2000) also suggested that websites should be informational but not overflowing. According to the narratives these companies failed at this issue.

Second major finding was that the websites failed to create a personal relationship. According to Geissler (2006) and his research the way information is presented on site is more important than how much information is made available. The participants pointed out the lack of stories and illustrations. This fact made it in some cases impossible for a participant to truly understand what the company was trying to sell.

Third finding was the fact that the participants' felt like the true meaning of the sites was lost in translation. According to Xiangyue (2011) the role of a translator in the Business Communication context is crucial. If the translator is not able to translate text via its original cultural context the text will easily become vain and meaningless in the new language.

These findings helped me understand what these Executives were able to grasp from the websites that thy visited. It seems like none of them were able to explain to me what the company was trying to sell after their initial visit. They all seemed to have

problems with understanding why they should purchase these services. This made me wonder what did they then understand? It seems as if the time they spent online visiting these sites was impractical usage of their valuable time.

7.2   Conclusions

As I set to understand What a group of foreign executives moving to Finland were able to grasp from online presence of 12 Finnish companies I wished that I could have had a different conclusion.

My study showed that the chosen companies mainly had poor English sites that either had been translated from Finnish without a context or then they were too informational. The study showed that these companies were poor in telling their customers in English what they were selling and why should this person purchase any of these products.

7.3   Discussion

The real question to be discussed in this section is whether there is a need for better Business Communication skills in English for companies in Finland that mainly operate domestically. Is there going to be a large enough group of potential customers that would actually make this effort worthwhile financially? Or should those who do not speak Finnish just e happy with the current situation?

Globalization through online is not in the hand of Finnish executives or politicians. We need bigger ideas and grand executions. During the past year Angry Birds have prove to the world that simple ideas, simple logistics and brilliant marketing can turn a small company into a giant. These are all because of the new medium and platform on Internet.

I feel greatly that although we are not experiencing vast immigration, we should still make sure that our services are available to this e who might find us from the other side of the globe. Right now I can go online and buy a batch of printed T-Shirts from India. Are we providing our expertise in the same manner? I don't think so. This study

made it apparent that we are still thinking in terms of Finland and not globally. Thus limiting our own potential.

7.4   Further research

I would suggest that this study should be conducted in larger scale. One point of view could be comparing what the company wanted its customers to understand through their web presence and what the potential customers understood from their communication. Also another research topic could study and find Finnish companies that are exceptional in their English Business Communication skills

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