



## Intercultural Awareness in Business Communication

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Chennai**ABSTRACT**

*English is more a common language now in communication. This has led to a significant change in language teaching. The objective is no longer to enable the student to attain native-like competence but rather to make her/him able to communicate fluently, understand the other speaker. In addition, it gives participants the opportunity to analyse business dilemmas from an ethical perspective. The overall objective is to enable course participants to develop the English skills needed to communicate effectively in the international business environment. The term inter-cultural communication exploring the meaning of 'culture' and its effects on perception and understanding. Both macro and micro cultural differences will be examined and the danger of cultural misunderstanding will be explored. The paper portrays at the inter-cultural communication and how culture impacts on business relationships. The paper also examines the ever growing need for inter-cultural communication, its competence and the various ways to increase.*

**KEYWORDS :****DETAILED PAPER**

Intercultural communication indicates how culture impacts on business relationships. It examines the meaning, significance and impact of intercultural communication as it applies individually, nationally and globally as well as in groups and organizations. The term competence itself examines the meaning, significance and impact of intercultural communication as it applies individually, nationally and globally as well as in groups and organizations. The impact of cultural differences will be examined and its effects will be explored.

In addition, it gives participants the opportunity to analyse business dilemmas from an ethical perspective. The overall objective is to enable course participants to develop the English skills needed to communicate effectively in the international business environment. Students will be able to define in appropriate English inter-cultural terminology related to the business cultures on the syllabus and basic guidelines for ethical reasoning related to the dilemmas on the syllabus. Students will be able to contrast and analyse cultural differences by applying the relevant theoretical frameworks within a business context. Furthermore, they will be able to provide ethical justification for decisions taken in business settings. In both cases the responses will be written in an appropriate, professional letter/report/essay-writing style. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of intercultural awareness and ethical reflection, for instance by showing sensitivity, insight, balanced judgement, professionalism and/or appropriate register in their written application of course-related material.

An overview of the factors, changes and trends may have an impact on the status of the English language, as lingua franca now-a-days and in the near future. It presents the new phenomena and concepts of 'functional native' and 'Global English' together with the change they bring about in the practice of language teaching, and gives an account of those areas where English continues to play a leading role (e.g. international business as dominated by multi-national companies, the Internet, the international market of higher education). The role of English as a world language was illustrated with three concentric circles, where the innermost circle included native speakers of the language (those speaking English as the first language, e.g. the inhabitants of Great Britain, the USA, Australia, etc.). In the middle circle, those were put who speak English as their Second Language (the inhabitants of former English colonies). In the outmost circle, there were those speaking English as a Foreign Language (here belong e.g. China, Russia, but also Slovakia or Hungary).

In our present, globalised world, the borderlines between these three traditional categories is increasingly disappearing: irrespective of their birthplace and nationality, those around 500 million people belong to the innermost circle who speak English with native-like competence. They are regarded to be functional natives. Instead of having two distinct outer circles, other speakers of the language are put on a scale according to their level of competence. It is also a relatively new

phenomenon that traditional language examination systems are losing importance. The English language plays a key role in the labour market and employers are less and less satisfied with some document – rather, they themselves test the applicant's language proficiency in real life situations. As languages come into contact, they get mingled in many interesting ways. The notion of one language as an independent system is only an imaginary creation. This has become increasingly obvious in Asian English studies, where cross-linguistic analysis is a key to a better understanding of a wide range of new patterns.

Another important point is Social aspect – international business people have a need to make contact with others whom they have never met before, or know but not very well. Meetings are often very short, because business people are always short of time. There is a need for an internationally accepted way of doing things so that people from different cultures and different mother tongues can quickly and successfully interact and feel comfortable with one another. One more key point is need of Clear Communication – it is very essential that information to be conveyed with minimum risk of misunderstanding, because ambiguity can cause different problems in the future. As it is known that business people around the world conduct business meetings in English even though English may be a foreign language to all parties. The language they use will not be rich in vocabulary and will not be culture-bound compared with the language used by native speakers.

The matter is that businesspeople do not always need to know complex structure of grammar and idioms. We, as teachers, aim to teach appropriate language and develop learners' understanding of the role that culture plays in communication. This is called "Intercultural Training". Every time one of our learners uses English it is likely to be with someone from a different culture, be at different national culture or a culturally different organization. There are two ways of thinking about what it can achieve. The first is called "dealing with diversity" or "culture-general" approach, encourages learners to understand what culture is, gain awareness of how their own culture works, and appreciate that the way they do things is not necessarily the only way. The idea is to break down prejudices, look at the pros and cons of stereotyping, and to recognize that people have points of view that are as valid as your own. The aim is to provide learners with strategies that they can use to cope with diversity, and ultimately to create value of that diversity. The second approach focuses on preparing people to work with specific cultures/contexts and is often called culture-specific training. Sometimes learners will only need to deal with one or two cultures.

The objective of "The Business" is "to help you learn two things: how to do business in English and the language you need to do it". The modules of Student's book are: about business, grammar, vocabulary, management skills, writing and case study. Management skills and Case study modules are the core parts for intercultural training.

With management skills learners can develop important skills and techniques together with relevant language. Case studies provide an opportunity to apply all the language, skills and ideas of the covered book unit. Also they present authentic intercultural problem-solving situations similar to those in real business.

English is the basic language of the Internet and electronic communication, too. The role played by the English language in the media can well be illustrated by referring to global CNN, BBC Worldwide, Associated Press or Reuters. On the basis of the aforementioned, it can be stated that despite the challenges it faces, the role of English as a world language will not be endangered in the near future as its hegemony cannot be questioned in the fields dealt with although it will have to fulfil its role in a multilingual and multicultural environment. As most Asian countries recognize English as an indispensable language for intra-national or international communication, they are increasingly committed to strengthening and improving English language teaching (ELT).

As for "Market Leader", it has been developed in association with the Financial Times, of the world's leading sources of professional information to ensure the maximum range and authenticity of business content. Due to its international coverage the Financial Times has been a rich source of business information. The strong task-based approach of this book encourages students to use their own experience in order to maximize involvement and learning. A typical unit sections are: Starting up, Vocabulary, Reading, listening, language focus, skills, case study. Here in terms of intercultural training we can focus on Skills and Case Study sections. Skills section helps learners to develop their communication skills in the key business areas of presentations, meeting, negotiations, telephoning and social English. Case studies are based on realistic business problems or situations and learners can use the language and communication skills they have acquired while working through the unit.

In parts of Asia where English serves as an official language and ELT expands and succeeds, people start speaking English among themselves. Wherever this happens, a set of indigenous patterns develop, the kind of patterns people find easier to handle. The same situation can develop in 'English as an international language' countries, too. We need to fully understand these aspects of present-day English if we are to deal with their various ramifications. The concept of English as a multi-cultural language is based on the fact that English is here to stay as an indispensable language for intranational and/or international communication in Asia and other parts of the world. The language of Business English depends on the general and specific contexts and communication skills play a major role. It has to be admitted that a significant role of communicative competence in learning process is effective and that there are many different ways to approach intercultural issues.

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