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## **LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF DOING BUSINESS IN MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT**

JAZYKOVÁ A KULTURNÍ SPECIFIKA OBCHODNÍHO JEDNÁNÍ V MULTIKULTURNÍM PROSTŘEDÍ

### **BACHELOR'S THESIS**

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**Jazyková a kulturní specifika obchodního jednání v multikulturním prostředí**

## POKyny PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:

Cílem této práce je popsat problematické aspekty obchodní komunikace v multikulturním prostředí s ohledem na specifika různých kultur, jako např. společenská hierarchie, komunikační strategie, pojem času, apod. Tato práce by měla poskytnout ucelený obrázek o specifických oblastech obchodního jednání v různých kulturách.

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## **ABSTRACT**

With the increasing amount of global business models, the matter of language in cross-cultural communication has become increasingly important. This bachelor thesis provides an overview of some of the languages and the way they are used by the native speakers, while defining the influence of the mother tongue. It also explores culture and its definitions, while describing cultural models, namely the Lewis model and the Trompenaars' model. The theory is subsequently applied on the two subjects of the thesis, England and Japan.

## **KEY WORDS**

Cross-cultural communication, culture, language, cultural model, England, Japan

## **ABSTRAKT**

S rostoucím množstvím globálních kulturních modelů se problém jazyka v mezikulturní komunikaci stává stále významnější. Tato bakalařská práce poskytuje přehled některých jazyků a jejich užití rodilými mluvčími, přičemž definuje vliv mateřských jazyků. Práce pojednává také o kultuře a jejich definicích, zatímco popisuje kulturní modely, zejména Lewisův model a Trompenaarsův model. Teorie je následně aplikována na subjekty této práce, a to Anglie a Japonsko.

## **KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA**

Mezikulturní komunikace, kultura, jazyk, kulturní model, Anglie, Japonsko

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V Brně dne .....

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(podpis autora)

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# Introduction

The main goal of this bachelor thesis is to analyze and contrast two nations, specifically England – an Anglo-Saxon nation, and Japan. Prior to that, however, it is necessary to present the reader with the established cultural models which precisely define the categories and types of culture in terms of business communication, offering the necessary theory which can be subsequently used in the analysis to achieve the major aim of the paper.

With the increased cross-cultural travel and business, it is very important to outline some examples of categories which should be taken into consideration when one encounters a different culture. Understanding how each culture and nation uses its language to communicate their ideas inside and outside of business is essential in today's international environment.

These studies are helpful for the business of the companies, making it less difficult for them to connect with their foreign counterparts and successfully finalize their business. The aim is to describe these models in detail to give the reader some theoretical knowledge regarding the matter of cross-cultural business, while subsequently use it to analyze the specific examples.

As for the personal goals, knowing other cultures and learning about them seems to be incredibly important nowadays. Travelling has become more accessible, many people go abroad for their studies, etc., therefore the world is becoming more intercultural and one never knows who they are going to meet.

This topic attracts me because it gives me the opportunity to learn more about how to communicate and conduct business if I ever come across someone who has a completely different cultural background.

# 1 General Definitions

## 1.1 Definition of Culture

*Culture*, or a *culture system*, is a complex phenomenon defined as a construct of implicit and explicit patterns, where traditional ideas and values form the cultural core. These values differ not only across continents, but also across the borders, sometimes even across the country.

According to Guirdham, when it comes to the difficulty of differentiating between the cultures, anthropologists often draw a distinction between *surface culture* and *deep culture*. (1998, p. 48)

## 1.2 Surface Culture and Deep Culture

*Surface culture* are apparent differences easily seen by the foreigners visiting a foreign country. Things such as clothing, gestures, art, architecture are all part of surface culture and the differences can be seamlessly distinguished by the tourists, who often compare their own cultures when visiting another one. This type of culture is often defined by the local habits, which, at times, are defined by the local religion. For example, it is very essential for the Vietnamese to have a pond in their surroundings since in their *culture* it symbolizes happiness. One could therefore say that if there are many ponds in the neighborhood, it would be reasonable to assume that it is a Vietnamese part of town. *Deep culture* is the opposite of *surface culture*. Hidden under the surface, outsiders cannot see it unless they are living it or are explicitly told about the daily routines. Philosophical ideas and views are often part of the deep culture – for example, Native Americans have a different relationship to nature than Euro-Americans, they believe they are united with nature, whereas the Euro-Americans believe that the World is human-centered. This is referred to as *worldview*. (Guirdham, 1998, p. 50).

Cultures also differ in language, which can express the same idea differently depending on the language it is being explained in. In other words, it consists of day-to-day habits and customs which are very common among the people who live in the area but not among the people who are there only for a visit.

### **1.3 Definition of Communication**

The authors of “Intercultural Communication for Everyday Life”, define communication as:

*...the process of creating and sending symbolic behavior, and the interpretation of behavior between people. And intercultural communication occurs when culture impacts the communication between two or more people enough to make a difference. (Baldwin, Coleman, González & Shenoy-Packer, 2014, p. 5)*

### **1.4 Cultural Differences**

Models of cultural differences have been defined and used to describe styles of communication across the whole world.

There are several models or theories, which are used in practice, for example Hofstede’s theory of cultural dimensions, as well as The Lewis Model. Each of these theories introduces different sights of cross-cultural relationships.

For the purpose of this project, one of the two cultural models introduced is the *Trompenaars’ model*, which divides the culture into seven categories, in particular: *universalism vs. particularism; individualism vs. communitarianism; specific vs. diffuse; neutral vs. affective; achievement vs. ascription; sequential vs. synchronic; internal vs. external control*. These dilemmas provide a comprehensive insight and they cover the majority of the distinctions that are drawn between the contrasting cultures.

## 1.5 Examples

### 1.5.1 West

Western culture is stereotyped to be focused on the individual. It is, in some sense, a style of life where everyone is “out to create” their own fortune, every man is for themselves, etc. However, there is a different spectrum of cultures on the Western hemisphere. While there are some values and habits shared and the differences might not be easily distinguishable, they might still heavily differ in terms of communication, specifically in business and the way they handle “deals”, meetings, and other aspects associated with conducting business.

For example, Germans, Swiss and Austrians tend to be on point when it comes to time management. They dislike if their counterpart is not on time, the reason being that it can show that they do not respect and value them as a peer. Action, or in this case inaction, is also a way of communication. They do not mix their personal life with business. According to the previously mentioned model, this type of culture is called a *specific* culture. These nations are also a part of the category called *neutral* cultures – they do not let their emotions interfere with their judgement, declining their moods to hinder their professional lives. (Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2003)

### 1.5.2 East

On the other hand, people in southern parts of Europe, e.g. Italy, France, Spain are much more emotional and thus fall under this category. Even from real experiences, one can see they are very temperament and ‘hot-headed’, whereas Germans are very calm and neutral. This sets an example that cultures can differ heavily across the neighboring borders. Eastern hemisphere tends to be quite different in many of the aspects held by the Westerners. As has been mentioned previously, individual is often the focus in the West, whereas, e.g., the Japanese have a habit of working in teams, meaning they are team-oriented. It is rooted into their day-to-day lives and it is part of *the deep culture*, which means it is defined by their history and it is not apparent on the outside. (Guirdham, 1998; Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2003)

This quality is highlighted in their technological and societal advancement, mainly in the terms of electrical engineering. When a member of the team makes a mistake, the whole team will take the fall. However, in contrast, if this were to happen in Europe, it is very likely that the particular individual would be the one held responsible.

## 2 Language Across Cultures

There are almost two hundred nations in the world, many of which have their own cultures, own habits and most importantly, their own *languages*.

A mother tongue defines the way someone speaks and the way their ideas are communicated. In today's multi-cultural atmosphere, English is becoming a global standard for anyone, who would like to carry out an international business venture. In that case, it is important to take this fact into consideration and learn the ability to decode and understand what someone else is saying, because people, who use English as their second language, might be using it the way they would be using their first language.

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly cover some of the common worldwide languages, the way they are used by the native speakers and the contrast between these languages.

### 2.1 English

First and foremost, in order to understand how English, as a second language, reflects non-native people's first language, it is necessary to establish its original meaning and its use by the native speakers.

#### 2.1.1 The United Kingdom

*"The English use their language differently—to its best advantage, certainly, but they are not quick to attack with it." (Lewis, 2006, p. 63)*

Lewis makes a comparison between English and French, where the latter is suggested to be rather swift and fierce, a language one can use as a weapon during an argument. The former, however, is used subtler and the natives prefer to choose their words more carefully, as to avoid a possible argument. The way they convey their disagreements is at times nebulous, meaning one cannot often tell whether they actually disagree or not.

Quietness is essential to the English character, which tends to be rather polite in the business world. (Lewis, 2006, p. 63-64)

To summarize, citizens of the Great Britain intend to use English vaguely in negotiations and arguments to maintain the image of an English professional, namely his/her calmness and politeness.

### **2.1.2 The United States**

Americans are energetic in their use of English. They like to dramatize and be very theatrical in their speech to further motivate their subordinates or their colleagues. They use this method to make their ideas and orders more intelligible. Many of the citizens of the United States do not like to overwhelm others with too much information, unlike Germans, they do not make it complicated and they use the simplicity of the language and their conveyance to their advantage. (Lewis, 2006, p. 74)

## **2.2 German**

It is well known in the West that Germans are very careful in their decisions. The same applies to their language and the way they converse with others. They come prepared very well into negotiations, they tend to create a strategy beforehand in case they get themselves into an argument. (Lewis, 2006, p. 64, 72-73)

*“In business situations German is not used in a humorous way, neither do its rigid case-endings and strict word order allow the speaker to think aloud very easily.”* (Lewis, 2006, p. 73) Their language is very orderly, and because of its structure, where the verb usually comes at the end of the sentence, people are therefore forced to listen closely for full comprehension. German is especially efficient at specifying the information by using gender specific articles and the pronoun *Sie*, which they use to formally address a person, usually one who they know only on the professional level, which is fairly common in the business world. (Lewis, 2006, p. 72-73)

## **2.3 Japanese**

Japanese is structured in such a way that it is difficult to come across as impolite or rude. Their verbal style and their language are rather vague. They use this aspect of their language to their advantage during negotiations, for example. By being neutral in the conversation, they hardly lose face, maintaining their composure, even for the sake of lying, for example. Indirectness is also a major part of the language, which also adds to the politeness it conveys in general. (Lewis, 2006, p. 75-76)

When compared to U.K. and their use of language, English, as well as its users, might be more direct than the Japanese, which does not necessarily say that the English are impolite, but that their Asian counterparts are heavily influenced by their own language to be well mannered.



### 3 Cultural Models

As touched upon in the previous chapter, cultural models outline certain categories to further describe the qualities of a given culture. These categories cover a certain spectrum of qualities, which can be applied subsequently to virtually any country around the globe which undergoes the necessary research. There are several viable cultural models to choose from, but for the purpose of this thesis, the following models are used: *The Lewis Model* and the previously mentioned *Trompenaars' Model of Seven Dimensions*.

#### 3.1 The Lewis Model

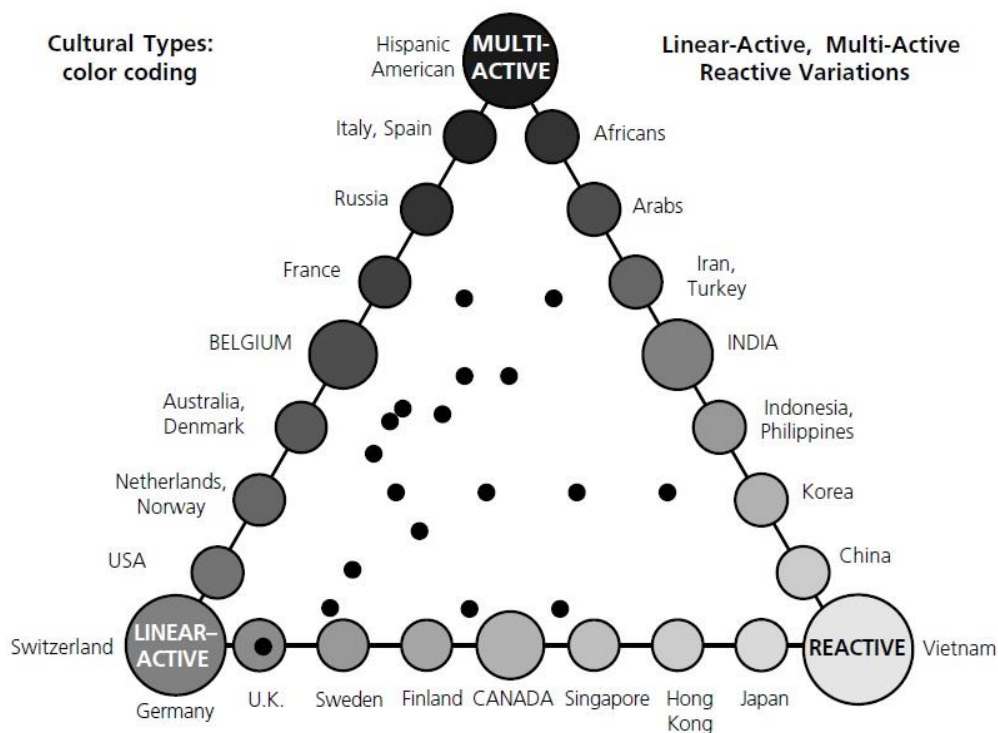


Figure 1. Cultural Types Model. Reprinted from Lewis (2006)

The great amount of cultures and nationalities sprawling across the world now are hard to keep track of when it comes to their attitudes towards business and the communication that goes with it.

Thus, to make these observations simpler, Richard D. Lewis has outlined three categories: *linear-active*, *multi-active*, and *reactive* (see Figure 1). These categories form a model more commonly known as *The Lewis Model*.

It can roughly describe almost every nation and it approximates how they work in the business environment, but also in a day-to-day life.

According to Lewis, if two *nationalities* experience friction, but fall under the same *category*, they are more likely to come to an understanding, that is, even if their values differ. (2006, p. 27)

### **3.1.1 Linear-Active Cultures**

*Linear-active* cultures can be for example found in the northern parts of western Europe (i.e. Germany, The Netherlands, U.K.). They use a *linear-active* time system, which means they mostly focus on one task at a time (hence the name) at a certain order according to their schedule– it makes them efficient and they tend to achieve near-perfect results.

*Linear-active* people are very introverted, patient, and they like to work in a quiet and peaceful environment. These traits indicate they are also rather private, adding to the fact they dislike discussing personal matters with others to keep it strictly business. They are very professional and try not to let emotions get a hold of them, because then one could risk “losing face”, meaning one could be humiliated in front of others. When it comes to the way they work in business, getting their facts straight and obtaining them from a credible source is a critical factor, while also requiring their counterparts to do the same. Rules and correct procedures are sacred among these businessmen. (Lewis, 2006, p. 29-32)

### **3.1.2 Multi-Active Cultures**

The *multi-active* population, on the other hand, is not very punctual when it comes to their time-management. They do not mind switching between activities even if they are in the middle of one, because what is happening in the present is more important to them than being on point with their schedule. (Lewis, 2006, p. 29-32)

They do not like to leave their conversations unfinished, meaning if the opportunity arises, they do not hesitate to pause an activity to finish it.

The traits shared by multi-active cultures are exactly opposite to the ones shared by linear-active cultures. People of multi-active cultures are very outgoing, they like making friends first before going to the point and talking business. They like to get to know others and they have no issue with sharing their own personal life. (Lewis, 2006, p. 29-32)

They are emotional in their communication and they do not hesitate to interrupt others to respond immediately. Since they are prone to rely on their emotions, they risk losing face in front of their peers. They do not stick to statistics and facts as much as linear-active businessmen do. This type of culture is represented namely in Latin, Arabic and African countries, but there are exceptions, such as Chile being more linear-active than multi-active. (Lewis, 2006, p. 29-32)

### **3.1.3 Reactive Cultures**

Last, but not least, cultures of the *reactive* nature are something one would get if they were to average or mix the two previously mentioned cultural dimensions.

When it comes to communication, the *reactive* population is often praised for its patience and its exceptional listening skills. They use these skills to their advantage during business conversations, where they are keenly focused on the information given by others. They do not let themselves get carried away by random thoughts while in a meeting, adding to their impeccable concentration. After the other person is done speaking, they do not respond right away. They wait for a minute while taking in the information given, and then they formulate a thought-out response. (Lewis, 2006, p. 32-38)

Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan are culturally *reactive* while slightly leaning to the linear-active scale, whereas China, Korea and Indonesia/Philippines are also reactive, however they lean more to the multi-active nations in terms of traits and characteristics. The most reactive country, according to the figure, is Vietnam. (Lewis, 2006, p. 32-38)

## 3.2 Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions

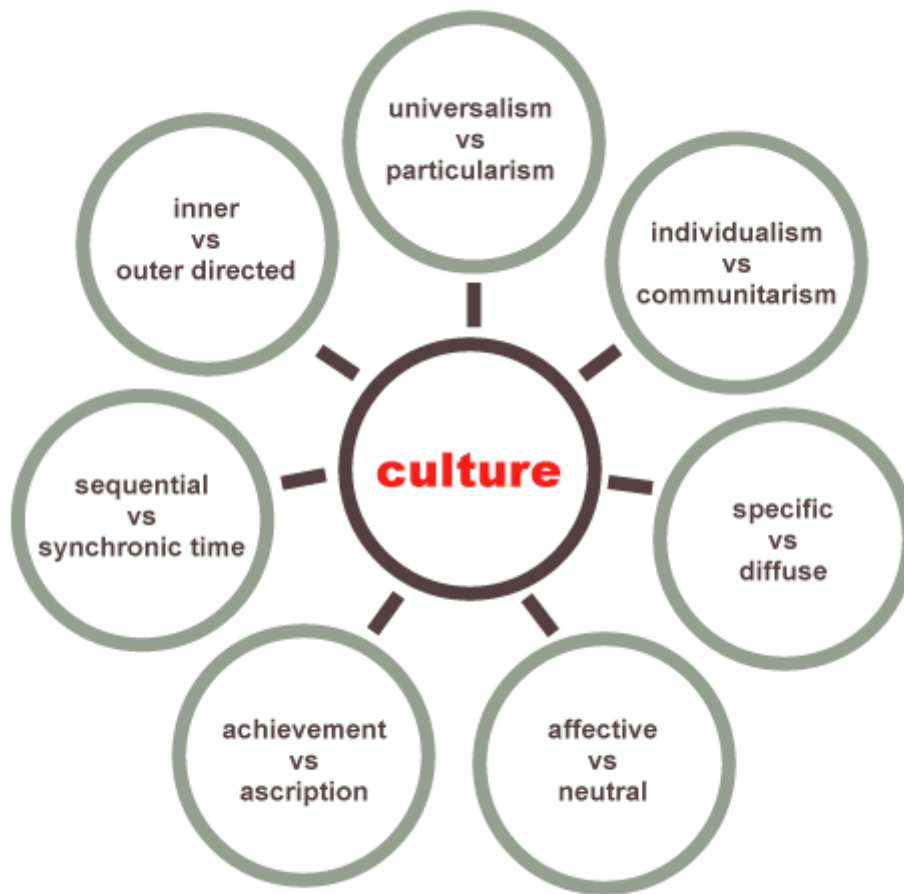


Figure 2. Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions. (2013)  
(taken on 5.11.2018 from research-methodology.net)

Trompenaars introduced his dimension model (*see Figure 2*) to characterize different issues encountered in cross-cultural communication and business. It is divided into seven dimensions, each of which describes a specific clash or a disagreement between cultures of opposite values.

These disagreements are more specifically called *dilemmas*, which are defined as follows:

*We define a dilemma as “two propositions in apparent conflict.” In other words, a dilemma describes a situation whereby one has to choose between two good or desirable options. For example: On the one hand, we need flexibility, whilst on the other hand, we also need consistency. So a dilemma describes the tension that is created due to conflicting demands. (Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2003, p. 30)*

This part of the chapter will closely describe these dilemmas and then offer an answer to what can be done to come to a compromise if the two given opposing cultures meet in a real setting.

### **3.2.1 Universalism-Particularism**

#### **3.2.1.1 Explanation**

The disagreement of this dimension boils down to the question of whether the culture is always more likely to obey and follow pre-defined rules or whether it is more likely to choose flexibility when an unexpected situation arises.

*Universalists* tend to think their manners and opinions are the right ones, in some cases they even try to impose them on others. Rules are very sacred among these cultures, to a degree where if their friend (or even family) is in trouble and they have an opportunity to help that person by disobeying a regulation, they choose to obey it and consequently leave the other person to deal with their issue on their own. Changing formulas is also out of the question – they tend to apply one standard across their market to make it more comprehensive and clearer when there are amends and adjustments to be made. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 33-39)

*Particularist* cultures, on the other hand, prefer to keep their relationships intact even if it means breaking rules. In that specific example, they probably would not hesitate to risk disobeying a rule to help the person in trouble. Assessing the nature of procedures, they are not reluctant to adapt to different markets by introducing different templates of marketing, e.g. the use of language in advertising for the specific culture. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 33-39)

#### **3.2.1.2 Compromise**

The ultimate option of compromise to any of the following dilemmas (including the one at hand) is to carefully choose and apply the essential and key solutions from both sides – in this case, the *universal* and the *particular* cultures. The solution mainly lies in the approach to make a business program which applies the local perception but also maintains the global standard.

An example would be to promote a product in a way that it evokes a feeling of the local culture (e.g. by devising a new brand name in the language of the target consumers), but still preserves the essence of the country of its origin. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 40-43)

## **3.2.2 Individualism-Communitarianism**

### **3.2.2.1 Explanation**

The question presented asks about the importance of the group and the individual respectively. The *individualist* thinks it is for the best if one focuses solely on themselves, resulting in self-improvement and a higher overall quality of their life. The *communitarian*, on the contrary, believes helping others, even if it means to sacrifice one's own freedom, improves the situation towards the greater good and thus is beneficial to everyone. It is an endless circle and there is not a right or wrong answer. Circumstance dictates which is more beneficial for the situation at hand. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 47-52)

### **3.2.2.2 Compromise**

If there is a situation, when *individualists* and *communitarians* need to work together, the matter of question is, whether it is superior to be highly competitive and to focus on one's individual tasks or whether it is better to leave the competition out and work together as a team.

The ideal answer is that they should stay relatively competitive, but they should cooperate at the same time. If a French team of colleagues were invited by a Canadian company to work on a shared project, the latter could not expect that the former would adhere to the individualistic nature just because they are in Canada. To achieve an exemplary result, both teams will need to sacrifice some parts of their own habits and create a mixture which would be ideal in both, terms of companionship and individualism. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003)

### **3.2.3 Neutral-Affective**

#### **3.2.3.1 Explanation**

Emotion is the main subject of this dilemma, which asks whether the people are more *affective* and whether their emotions are reflected in their language used in conversations, or whether they are more *neutral* and emotionless.

*When our own approach is highly emotional we are seeking a direct emotional response: "I have the same feelings as you on this subject." When our own approach is highly neutral we are seeking an indirect response: "Because I agree with your reasoning or proposition, I give you my support." On both occasions approval is being sought, but different paths are being used to this end.* (Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2003, p. 53)

#### **3.2.3.2 Compromise**

Affective cultures, namely the ones which are highly passionate, will deem the *neutral* ones very distant. On the other hand, the seemingly distant *neutral* cultures consider their counterparts to be unmanageable, thus it is essential to take the origin of the subject into consideration and avoid the judgment based only upon the conveyance of their feelings. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 55-58)

### **3.2.4 Specific-Diffuse**

#### **3.2.4.1 Explanation**

The main point of this dimension is concerned with the question of the person's different aspects of life – their mutual associations and their influence on the relationships.

People of the *specific* culture tend to leave their professional identity inside their employer's premises. If a person has a title of "Dr.", for example, they are greeted as "doctor" inside the hospital, but once they are outside, they are simply greeted by their name and their professional status has no influence on their life outside of work.

If this person is greeted as a doctor outside of work, the talk shifts to a *diffuse* culture. The aspects of life of the diffuse population are neatly intertwined. They are easily insulted; for example, if there is a negative criticism aimed towards their work, they tend to take it very personally, since they associate their work with their personality or, one could say, they think it mirrors who they are as a person. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 63-68)

Americans, who are very *specific*, are very open on the other hand and it is very hard to insult them. This boils down to the degree of privacy inside these opposite cultural types. Many areas of life, which would be considered private by the *diffuse* person, are there for everyone to see when it comes to the specific person. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 63-68)

#### **3.2.4.2 Compromise**

To find the exact middle ground is especially difficult, since some individuals (shoppers, customers, clients, etc.) are more sensitive when it comes to their privacy. With today's technology, it is more comfortable for the *diffuse* person to purchase products online without having to interact with a real person (a clerk, a fellow shopper, etc.). The possibility of never leaving one's property/home is more than real nowadays, since almost anything, from groceries to gym equipment, can be delivered to them. Nevertheless, there are cultures, where men and women prefer to buy goods personally, they favour human contact over buying things online. They do not mind the occasional conversation with others. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 70-71)

It is critical for the company to adapt to the market in terms of this dilemma. For example, businesses, who sell goods, need to ask themselves a question, whether it is better to have an online shop or a real shop, with a real cart and clerks you can talk to. If the business needs to make a compromise, they usually need to have both, maximizing their sales potential. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 70-71)



## 3.2.5 Achievement-Ascription

### 3.2.5.1 Explanation

*Achievement*-oriented cultures are the ones where the people need to do well in order to get into a higher position. They earn their status based upon their achievements, performance and skill. A person can work through the ranks to get a better position. *Ascription*-oriented cultures are those, where achievement and performance are not very important when it comes to determining the next leader or promoting someone. The basis of promotion and higher status lies in the question of “who you are”. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 71-75)

To explain simply, people are picked and promoted based on which school they went to, which family they were born into, what their race and gender are, etc. The breaking point of this dilemma is that the former lets the person influence their status, whereas the latter is decided when the person is born. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 71-75)

### 3.2.5.2 Compromise

According to Trompenaars and Woolliams, both sides of the dilemma go hand in hand when it comes to their reconciliation.

*Those who start by ascribing usually exploit their status to get things done and achieve results. Those who start by achieving usually begin to ascribe importance and priority to the persons and projects that have been successful.* (Trompenaars & Woolliams, 2003, p. 75)

One may deduct the relationship of both sides is naturally symbiotic. Trompenaars and Williams argue that the title of the position an employee is *ascribed* can have a substantial effect on their results and *achievements*. (2003, p. 75-77)

This shows a recurring theme, where the principal aspects of both cultures can make it beneficial for everyone, both the achieving and the ascribing population.

## 3.2.6 Sequential-Synchronic

### 3.2.6.1 Explanation

*Sequential-synchronic* is focused on how the culture views time. If we take into consideration the previous (Lewis) model, we could say that the *sequential* cultures are equal to the linear-active ones. The businessmen of this nature use schedules and are very precise when it comes to their time-management. When they say the meeting is at 10:00 in the morning, they will be there right on time. They are also used to doing one thing at a time or hold one conversation at a time. The *synchronic* cultures have a different perception of time. They tend to do many activities at once. They do not adhere to their schedule as much as the sequential population does. Another strong resemblance to the Lewis model, in this case, the multi-active category. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 77-80)

It also applies to the way they handle conversations. South Americans are very comfortable with holding two or three conversations at once, basically they do not mind when three people are talking over each other, they can still make sense out of it and respond accordingly. Germans, Swedes and other *synchronic* nations are usually overwhelmed when they are spoken to by two or more people. They focus on one task (in this case – a conversation) at a time. If they were forced to tackle more than one problem at the same time, it would make them nervous and therefore very inefficient. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 77-80)

### 3.2.6.2 Compromise

According to Trompenaars and Woolliams, if businesses are eager to achieve the ultimate outcomes, a combination of both cultures is their best option to do so, while citing the Japanese *Just-In-Time* manufacturing technique, where they have a schedule (*a sequence*), which they adapt and amend while on the run to suit the conditions. They produce and deliver the goods *just-in-time* – never too late, never too soon. (2003, p. 89-90)

## **3.2.7 Internal-External Control**

### **3.2.7.1 Explanation**

Environment and nature are either in control or are under control. This all depends on the person and the kind of culture they live in.

Citizens of the U.S., for example, tend to believe they are in control of their environment and that the change comes from *within* themselves. They essentially adapt the mentality of “*nothing can stop me*”. The societies of *external-control* are rooted in a more orthodox philosophy of life. They do not rush things and they are at peace with the thought that one is unable to change the circumstances and conditions of their own existence. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 91-94)

### **3.2.7.2 Compromise**

Companies, which are rooted in the *internal-control* cultures, tend to influence and control the market and the consumers by various ways, namely by technology, whereas on the opposite side, businesses are influenced by the consumers and their demands, therefore they invent products and technologies based upon the external world. (Trompenaars & Williams, 2003, p. 96-97)

Trompenaars and Woolliams write that it is essential to combine both (again), by being aware of what products the market may want, slicing the dilemma somewhere in the middle. (2003, p. 96-97)

## 4 Applying the Theory

The necessary theory of cultural models, which can be applied to make a theoretical analysis of differences between specific nations, has been established in the previous chapters.

The goal of not only this chapter, but also this thesis, is to present a pair of nations, and show how the businessmen act in their work environment, while showcasing their linguistic and cultural aspects. These aspects will be dissected with the help of the Lewis model and the Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions. Afterwards, the aim is to compare the two subjects from the language and communication standpoint – find their respective similarities and distinctions.

The inquired nations of this section of the paper are going to be Japan and England.

### 4.1 The Lewis Model

#### 4.1.1 England

According to the figure (*Figure 1. Cultural Types Model. Reprinted from Lewis (2006)*), England is a linear-active country with a very slight lean towards the group of reactive cultures. They are a part of the United Kingdom, which comprises other nations, such as *Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales*, each one having negligible nuances in their cultural categorizations.

This category indicates that the people are “*highly-organized planners*” (Lewis, 2006, p. 27), and the culture is oriented towards one task at a time, rather than being focused on multiple issues simultaneously. Division of labor and energy to target a specific problem allows the people to be more precise in their execution.

When it comes to one of the main topics of the thesis – *communication* – Lewis states that “*the communication mode [of the linear-active cultures] is dialogue*” (2006, p. 35). According to this categorization, these businessmen are not keen on listening to a monologue in business negotiations, on the contrary, they like to interrupt each other, make inquiries, all in a polite manner to show they are listening. (2006, p. 35).

As was already touched upon in the second chapter, the English are often very polite in their delivery. When it comes to their style of arguing, they are quick to defuse the situation right from the start of the quarrel. In his book, Lewis states the following:

*The English will use a quiet tone to score points, always attempting to remain low key. Scots and the Northern English may emphasize their accents in order to come across as genuine, sincere or warm-hearted, while the Southern English may use certain accents to indicate an influential background, a particular school or good breeding. (2006, p. 64)*

### 4.1.2 Japan

*Figure 1. Cultural Types Model. Reprinted from Lewis (2006)* shows that the culture of this Asian nation is highly *reactive*, with only a minimal lean towards the linear-active cultures.

*“Reactive cultures listen before they leap.” (Lewis, 2006, p. 35)*

Their ability to listen might be the main strength of their communication skills. They usually wait for the proposition of their opponent, and then they *react* accordingly, hence the name of the category. Lewis argues their *communication* style lies in carefully thinking their responses over, since they do not like to reply right after their opponent has finished speaking. They pause for a minute to contemplate their thoughts, and then they present their notion to their counterpart in a polished manner. However, most of the time before these notions are even made, questions are asked by these businessmen, so they can be certain there are no misunderstandings that could hinder the future partnership of both parties. (2006, p. 32, 35)

To put it simply, their *“preferred mode of communication is monologue—pause—reflection—monologue.” (Lewis, 2006, p. 35).*

A conversation held by a Japanese (a reactive person) will often revolve around the context, whereas the speaker assumes that the listener is rather knowledgeable about the topic at hand, therefore they do not need all the information. In a way, this can be rather flattering. Japanese also use the language to their advantage when it comes to diverting blame, since they tend to be indirect, e.g. “one of the pieces was stolen”, they do not use names (in this example, to indicate the perpetrator of the theft).

The style of their communication has its downsides, however. If they are met with a person of a multi-active culture, their avoidance of eye contact will lead to confusion, where the multi-active person, who thrives on locking eyes with others, is led to believe they are not worthy, interesting or that they are unpleasant. (Lewis, 2006, p. 36)

## 4.2 Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions

There is more depth to this model than the one Lewis has created, since there are seven dilemmas with a set of two sides each, which makes it fourteen. One can use this model to more precisely specify the categorization of a given cultural subject.

To make the work more objective, this subchapter will focus on a different resource of information regarding the given nations. The presented details of the countries will subsequently be compared to the definitions of the dilemmas, after which, it may be determined or argued, which side of the dilemma the given culture takes. One could say it would be wiser to continue with the material the theory was extracted from (*Business Across Cultures*), however, the particular hurdles, such as – insufficient details about the given country, or, on the contrary, too much information – made it rather difficult to make the literature the main reference of this subsection.

The main resources in this section are going to be *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands*, written by Terri Morrison and Wayne A. Conway; *When Cultures Collide* by Richard Lewis, and *Communicating Across Cultures* by Maureen Guirdham.

The first book is a simple summarization of how to behave in more than 60 countries, among which Japan and England (in the U.K. section) can be found. The second book offers short summaries on many countries in terms of language and communication, among which both cultures can be found. The last book refers mainly to Hofstede's cultural dimensions and his study, which is very similar to the models already presented in this thesis.

As was already mentioned a handful of times, there are seven dimensions, which can categorize a culture. Some of these dimensions overlap because of their very similar character, therefore there is a high chance, that if one category fits the narrative of the culture, the other one will, based on the kindred points, fit the description as well.

## **4.2.1 England**

### **4.2.1.1 Universalism**

When it comes to the first problem, *universalism vs. particularism*, the following quote – “*The English will appeal to laws or rules rather than looking at problems in a subjective manner. There is a conceptual sense of fairness— unwritten, as is the constitution—but no less vital. Company policy is followed regardless of who is doing the negotiating.*” (Conaway & Morrison, 2006, p. 538) – suggests that this culture is rather universalistic, mostly because of their rule adherence. These rules give them a sense of order. One should not, therefore, during negotiations, try to make them change their rules. This can make the English anxious, even though their faces tell otherwise, and it can be the breaking point of the discussion.

### **4.2.1.2 Individualism**

The second dimension, *individualism vs. communitarianism*, asks the question whether it is more important to develop and focus on one’s self as an individual, or whether it is more worthwhile to work together as a team, to achieve great results through companionship. According to Conaway and Morrison, the English are “*highly individualistic*” (2006, p. 538). Showing one’s capability and attaining great results is encouraged, which leads to a production of confident leaders. They are resolute about their opinions, and they have no issue refusing or not agreeing with one, which makes them more assertive. (2006, p. 538-539)

Guirdham also agrees, commenting that not only England, but Great Britain is in the top six countries when it comes to individualism. (1999, p. 53)

### **4.2.1.3 Neutralism**

*Neutral vs. affective* is the third dilemma of the model, which focuses on whether the user of the language uses it in a subtle way, while suppressing their emotions, or whether they are using it affectively, actively trying to show their emotions through words.

If one takes into consideration the extract – “*many do not display their anxiety; traditionally emotions are not shown in public.*” (Conaway & Morrison, 2006, p. 539), one could say the majority of the English are *neutral* when in conversation, disallowing to show their affection in a negotiation.

#### **4.2.1.4 Diffusion**

The *specific vs. diffuse* dispute lies in having multiple identities in each aspect of life or in having just one identity. The problem also discusses the degree of privacy.

One could argue the English are a rather *diffuse* culture, since they like to keep physical distance from other people unless they know them. (Conaway & Morrison, 2006, p. 543) They usually use the honorary title to address a person, even outside of work – “*Rather than “sir,” you should use the title of the person you are addressing (i.e., “Yes, Minister,” and not “Yes, sir”).*” (Conaway & Morrison, 2006, p. 542), which further confirms the argument that the English are a *diffuse* culture.

#### **4.2.1.5 Achievement-seeking**

The next dilemma is that of *achievement vs. ascription*. There was a mention of the English being achievement seeking when discussing their *individualism*. Conaway and Morrison argue that the English prioritize results and equality, so everyone is given the same chance when it comes to work opportunities, for example. (2006, p. 538-539) However, it is not virtually possible to completely neglect the factors, which can make it much easier to be more successful. If one has more financial means, they have access to better education, which can improve their position most of the time.

#### **4.2.1.6 Sequential**

*Sequential vs. synchronic* is a dimension which, for the most part, deals with the way time is handled. From the point of view of the Lewis model, England is a linear-active nation, and these nations are very similar to *sequential* cultures, when it comes to the way they manage their schedule. They tend to focus only on one thing at a time. This does not only concern the activities, but also conversations.



They do not like to talk to many people at once, since the conversation may become disorderly, which is not a desirable outcome for them.

#### **4.2.1.7 Internal control**

The last dilemma comprises *internal vs. external control* cultures. Trompenaars and Woolliams state that “*Western cultures share extremely internally- controlled orientations. It is obvious that most Western managers are selected on the competence (false or not) that essentially any environment can be controlled, any market created, and any problem overcome by one’s own doing.*” (2003, p. 94)

One could conclude England is an internally-controlled nation, which comprises strong leaders, who are looking for change from within. This overlaps with their achievement seeking character.

## **4.2.2 Japan**

### **4.2.2.1 Situational universalism**

It may seem that the Japanese are more *universal* than they are *particular*. Their everyday life consists of abiding many small rules and mannerisms, which are not only essential in the day-to-day activities, but also in business and other professional circles. However, they do not stray from developing and changing their plans on the go, but, since they act as a group (a team), they discuss these proposed decisions with each other properly before revealing the answer. These discussions take time, and outsiders should not expect the Japanese to make these decisions during the first meeting. (Lewis, 2006, p. 512)

### **4.2.2.2 Communitarianism**

The previous paragraph suggests that they are a *communitarian* culture – relying on one another. They are very intertwined, expecting help from each other in most circumstances. Many decisions need to be agreed upon collectively. Lewis states “*The Japanese will discuss and discuss until everybody agrees.*” (2006, p. 515)

Guirdham (or Hofstede) would call this “collectivism”, arguing that the Japanese “*are strongly collectivistic*” (1999, p. 66), despite their emphasis on the result-seeking nature where one needs to fight for themselves if they want to become successful.

#### **4.2.2.3 Neutral vs. affective**

Japanese tend to be rather *neutral* in their language, although subjectivity usually wins over objectivity when it comes to making important decisions. (Conaway & Morrison, 2006, p. 281) Their emotions are relied upon, but they almost never lose face during a negotiation. They are taught to hide their affections, because they want to avoid embarrassment. Their tongue is very vague and impersonal, which makes them polite in general. However, these affections are hidden just under the surface, so the first step for the visiting businessmen is to be likable, to be well-mannered, otherwise it might be over. (Lewis, 2006, p. 513-514)

#### **4.2.2.4 Diffusion**

Trompenaars and Woolliams argue that “*A diffuse culture is recognized by indirect communication.*” (2003, p. 67). The indirectness of the culture has already been established while discussing the previous dilemmas – neutrality and communitarianism – which could prove the culture’s *diffusive* nature. Added to that, age and rank are crucial in Japan, inside and outside of the work environment. (Lewis, 2006, p. 509-510)

#### **4.2.2.5 Achievement-seeking**

Compared to the English, the Japanese appear to be more *communitarian*, which makes them helpful towards their fellow contemporaries. *Ascription* seems to be preferred compared to the *achievement* seeking nature. A person is more likely to climb up the ranks based on which group of people they belong to, rather than through the individual development. (Lewis, 2006, p. 509) However, Guirdham argues that the Japanese are one of the most competitive nations in the world according to the masculinity/femininity scale, which determines the zealously of the culture.

He states that:

*In high-MAS societies people tend to believe that matters of material comfort, social privilege, access to power and influence, status and prestige, and ability to consume are related to ability and that with enough opportunity any individual who wants these benefits of society can have them. (1999, p. 54)*

#### **4.2.2.6 Reactive time-management**

If one takes into consideration Lewis' theory, Japan is a reactive culture. Reactive cultures are somewhere in-between the linear-active and multi-active cultures in terms of their time-management. The Japanese have already been investigated in this matter closely, as they have been used as an example of compromise while explaining the *sequential vs. synchronic* nature of the Trompenaars' model. Their time-management works reactively, they adjust it to their needs. If they need to, they will undertake many tasks at the same time, but given their pondering nature, if there is enough time, they arguably prefer to complete them one at a time.

#### **4.2.2.7 External control**

The culture of Japan is opposite to the cultures of the U.K. when it comes to the *internal vs. external control* dilemma. Where the English strive for the individual development, attaining the "nothing can stop me" attitude, the Japanese live in harmony with each other, knowing that not everything can be changed, and that sometimes, the person cannot control what happens to them. In other words, they are in peace with the nature of things, knowing that everyone has their place in the "network".

## 5 Language and Communication

Now that the general cultural norms have been discussed, this section will provide a closer look at how the two nations use their language and how they communicate. The work will try to be specific, while putting the emphasis on how they present themselves mainly in the business world.

### 5.1 England

The English, among other Britons, start out the business meeting very politely at first. They use first names only after they have met the other party a few times. However, after some time, their behaviour and language are very relaxed, as if they were out with a friend. (Lewis, 2006, p. 197)

When it comes to the atmosphere of the conversation, jokes and stories might be the ultimate weapons to get the English businessmen to like their visitors. They use irony and sarcasm, so one should pay close attention to what they are saying, and whether they actually mean it. (Lewis, 2006, p. 197)

The way they express the disagreement of a proposed idea varies, but it is usually vague. One should be able to read between the lines and look out for the “*hidden signs of disagreement*” (Lewis, 2006, p. 198), which might sound something like:

- “It sounds good, **but...**”
- “While it may be a good idea, **we are not sure...**”

Many countries with a high score of *uncertainty avoidance (UA)*— “*extent to which a culture prefers to avoid ambiguity*” (Guirdham, 1999, p. 54)—would interpret these reactions as rather vague. According to Guirdham, Britain is one of the lowest ranking countries on the *UA* scale, which further proves the use of obscurity in their statements. (1999, p. 54)

The decision is usually not made during the first meeting. They are very likely to ask for some time to contemplate the ideas. One could argue this is somehow similar to how Japan handles their final decisions.

Giving out direct orders is something which is not frequently used. Instead, they are very likely to make a suggestion or hint what needs to be done, but one should not expect a direct apprehension in this aspect of communication. For example, consider a sentence:

- *“This might need better formatting.”*

It might be indirectly aimed at someone and mean *“Improve the format!”*, but as a suggestion, it does not sound quite as aggressive as the latter option but is clear enough for the addressee to understand the message.

*“The British do not often reveal excitement or other emotions; try to keep yours restrained as well. They also traditionally underplay dangerous situations.”* (Conaway & Morrison, 2006, p. 540)

The English businessmen will often be very neutral in their delivery; therefore, one should also constrain their affections as that can result in losing face. If there is a dislike of an opinion, one should either say it very delicately, or maybe just keep it to themselves.

Regarding the language itself, Conaway and Morrison have several suggestions for different situations/contexts, which should generally apply not only in the business communication, but also the day-to-day conversations.

When it comes to meeting someone, a handshake is a very common form of greeting. The English are used to asking, *“How do you do?”*, or something in that manner instead of replying *“Nice to meet you.”* when being introduced to someone. The visitor should use an honorary title when addressing someone. Business titles are not commonly used. First names are also a possibility; however, one should only use them if they are invited to do so. (2006, p. 542)

A major part of communication are gestures. One should not be discouraged if they are not being looked at when they are talked to by an English or a British businessman, since they are rather indirect when it comes to conversations, and since they like to *“maintain a wide physical space between conversation partners”* (Conaway & Morrison, 2006, p. 543), which, one might argue, also includes the eye contact.

To point fingers is considered rather rude and impolite. Making too many gestures is also not recommended, since it could look very affectionate. (Conaway & Morrison, 2006, p. 543). Although, Lewis suggests one should not be too stern, since the English do like to be laid back at times, not trying to take things too seriously. (2006, p. 200)

## 5.2 Japan

First and foremost, one should prepare themselves to meet many people during their business stay on the Japanese islands. This subchapter is supposed to present the necessary summary.

Lewis argues that the members of the culture like to “*negotiate in teams*” (2006, p. 513), where they have specialists present for each aspect of the agreement that is being negotiated, along with a senior executive, who, however, may stay silent most of the time during the meeting, since the inquiries will mainly be made by the specialists.

In Conaway’s and Morrison’s section of *Tips on doing business in Japan* (2006, p. 277) in *Kiss, Bow or Shake Hands*, the reader can find out general suggestions, such as:

- It is for the best to avoid showing emotions, because “*The Japanese dislike strong public displays of emotion.*” Insufficient self-control is something they do not tolerate easily, on the contrary, they put great emphasis on not losing one’s face, so one should be careful about using affectionate and direct language when discussing business with them.
- Hierarchy is important in the Japanese culture, which can be seen in the meetings as well. Conaway and Morrison argue that: “*Their real job will be to go out drinking with the Japanese team’s young executives at night. The Japanese like to convey important information (e.g., “Our boss was very angry at your offer today”) via junior executives.*” This behavior shows they are very indirect about their decisions during the meetings, where a visitor from a direct culture could very well be confused.

- One should expect to be inquired on many topics, because it is very important to the Japanese to use the right title, or generally, to know how to address the other person, since their language is rather sophisticated. Once they are familiar with the person, they are able to determine the language they shall use.

Where the English are more diplomatic, Japanese tend to rely more on their affections. However, as has already been mentioned, they avoid losing face, therefore they try to keep the conversation neutral.

For the opposite side, Lewis suggests if there is a disagreement, one should keep it to themselves. They do not like when their opponent forces them into an unpleasant position, which could make them lose their face, and basically cause them a public humiliation, since their culture is rather sensitive to this behavior. Again, it is obvious and more advisable for the guest to be indirect and vague, even if it means repeating everything multiple times. (2006, p. 519)

A Japanese company JETRO has created a very helpful guide to doing business with the culture, called *Communicating with Japanese in Business* (1999).

Several points from the guide have already been covered, although there are still some crucial details, which one should not omit when doing business in Japan.

It is common today to conduct business in English in many parts of the world, including Japan. The Japanese do not have much confidence when it comes to speaking English, even if their knowledge of it is more than sufficient. (Dickey & Sasaki, 1999, p. 18)

If a Japanese businessman says, “*It’s difficult for you to understand Japanese culture, but...*”, it is with high certainty that they do not mean to be rude, they just try to put their habits and manners into perspective that there are many differences to get a grasp on, which could be to an extent considered an apology. (Dickey & Sasaki, 1999, p. 25)

As the Japanese are not native English speakers, there are certain translational issues, however, before presenting them, it is necessary to point out that they are not necessarily limited to them only. Many foreigners, including the people of Japan, make mistakes when using a different language than their own. Therefore, it is possible that several mistakes or unique words may be encountered during a business meeting which they hold in English.

According to Conaway and Morrison, the Japanese might reply “Yes.” to negative questions. They provide the following example:

“...a question such as “Doesn’t Company A want us?” will be answered “yes” if the Japanese thinks that Company A indeed does not want you.”  
(2006, p. 283)

Grammatical mistakes tend to happen from time to time. There are many examples, one of which might be, according to Dickey and Sasaki, the distinction between “by” and “until”. They might say “I will be in England **by** March 12th.”, but they might really mean that they might be there **until** the 12th of March. It is very important to double check this information, just to be sure. One should not worry about insulting them, because they do not consider it to be impolite. On the contrary, they are glad when they are asked to clarify, since it shows interest in the matter.

Mistakes such as these tend to happen, and they can definitely influence the flow of the conversation and the meeting at hand. They might say “I am difficult to understand.”, which seems like they are criticizing themselves. However, it is possible they actually had the intention of saying that *it is difficult for them to understand*.

This type of sentence can get lost in translation without much difficulty. If a businessman sitting across the member of the Japanese company interpreted that sentence as it should be, it might happen that the English-speaking person will continue to speak as they did, not trying to adjust their language according to the needs of the foreign listener. (Dickey & Sasaki, 1999, p. 28)

There is a chance that a Japanese person will use a French or a German word in an English conversation. Dickey and Sasaki present a few examples, such as the use of the French word “*enquête*” (questionnaire), and the German words “*arbeit*” and “*thema*” (*work* and *topic*, resp.). (1999, p. 26)



Abbreviations of some English phrases are common as well, for example:

- A “*pasokon*” is an abbreviation of “personal computer”. If one is asked “*Do you like your new pasokon?*”, they are inquired about their new computer.
- “*Sekuhara*” is short for “sexual harassment”, so one should beware if the word comes up in conversation, because this topic may raise concerns, since it can mean there has been a possible misconduct.

(Dickey & Sasaki, 1999, p. 27)

Foreign businesspeople are advised to pay close attention to what their Japanese contemporary says, since their intentions are hidden under several layers of politeness, which could misrepresent the original idea in mind. It is okay to ask questions to get clarification if one is not certain about what was *actually* said.

Lewis also presents some examples of the Japanese communication gap:

- “I have split up my boyfriend.” = *Me and my boyfriend split up.*
- “My father is a doctor, my mother is a typewriter.” = ...my mother is a *typist.*
- “I work hardly 10 hours a day.” = I work *hard* 10 hours a day.

(2006, p. 66)

## 6 Comparison

The main aim of the whole thesis is to compare a set of nations—in this case, Japan and England. The matter at hand requires these countries to be put into contrast from the perspective of language and communication and show how different (or similar) they are in the business sphere. Since English is becoming the lingua franca, it will be used as the main language in these theoretic negotiations between the two subjects.

The chapter will be divided into three sections of how a meeting would play out in the respective countries—*first impressions, negotiation, and parting ways*—through several hypothetical scenarios.

### 6.1 First impressions

Both countries have very different languages, therefore they also have a distinct way of greeting new people. The English use simple phrases, such as “*How do you do?*”, while referring to the other person by their first name, while the Japanese use a different approach, most of the time. If the Japanese introduces themselves in their style (“Hello, my name is Haruki Murakami.”), the English may regard them as too official/formal. (Conaway & Morrison, 2006, p. 542)

It might make for a wonderful first impression when a foreigner tries to greet a Japanese person in the language of their culture. They might use some of these phrases:

- “**Hajimemashite.**” – “*Hello, pleased to make your acquaintance.*” is the meaning of this phrase, its only use comes when one meets the other person for the very first time.
- “**Smith desu.**” – it roughly translates to “*My name is Smith.*”, although it is more informal, but easier to execute for the foreigner, in comparison to “*Watashi no namae wa Smith desu.*”

Japanese also tend to bring each other gifts when making acquaintances. This is considered a very polite gesture, and in combination with the former approach of learning some of their phrases, it may increase the chance of a good relationship.

It is also advisable to distinguish the phrases for “*good morning*”, “*good day*”, and “*good evening*”. The Japanese greet each other “*Ohayogozaimasu*” in the morning before 10AM. “*Konnichiwa*” is used between 10AM to 6PM, and “*Kombanwa*” is used after 6PM in the evening. (“*Doing Business in Japan*”, 2017)

## 6.2 Negotiation

For both sides, the negotiation may start with an informal conversation about a mundane topic, through which one can show interest in the nation they are visiting to impress the opposition, for example, or maybe just to lighten the mood with a regular small talk.

When compared, the Japanese and English communication styles both share many similarities, although there are arguably some important differences which could prove crucial in negotiations. There are certain areas both representatives should omit to prevent misunderstandings which could get in the way of doing business without any impediments.

Due to these hurdles, one of the areas for the Englishman to avoid is humour. As mentioned, they tend to use sarcastic language, often uttering something ironic in conversations. The same applies to the professional world. Theoretically, there are two ways the Japanese may react to this kind of quality. They could either ask questions to clarify, which might “kill” the joke, if it needs to be explained, or they could take it the wrong way, which could ultimately lead to a misapprehension.

*The JETRO manual* provides readers with a very interesting snippet regarding the Japanese laughter. One type of laughter is called “*Aisoo-warai*”, which basically means “polite laughter”, or maybe “fake laughter”, depending on the situation. The Japanese may use this laughter to express that they do not understand the other person’s utterance, after which they might expect some kind of clarification. A very peculiar scene could therefore unfold. (Dickey & Sasaki, 1999, p. 30)

**Scenario:**

*Imagine a meeting where the English businessman accidentally spills coffee over himself, and exclaims: “Well, that’s just fantastic.”*

The Japanese are quite restrained, and they may take this exclamation literally, which, however, would probably make them think that the other person is acting strange, since it is not common for anyone to be happy to spill a hot beverage over themselves. The Japanese might produce the polite laughter, but the English person may not find this funny at all and may consider the gesture rude.

They probably do not know that the laughter might very well have expressed confusion over their statement rather than genuine amusement.

It would be advisable for the English person to restrain themselves from using irony or sarcasm during the meetings to keep it professional. They may use the humor to their advantage later in the evening, when they will be dining out with their Japanese contemporaries. The visiting person should consider using silence, which the Japanese are highly accustomed to, to their advantage throughout the meeting. (Gallois, Liu, & Volčič, 2015, p. 30)

When it comes to the use of language itself, both cultures seem to use the indirect verbal style, which is mainly because of their indirectness and vagueness, although it may be that the English are more informal compared to their Asian contemporaries, since they come from a lower context culture, whereas the latter come from a very high context culture. From their point of view, the English businessmen may seem very direct. (Chung, & Ting-Toomey, 2012, p. 124-126)

Therefore, visiting an English company might be a difficult task for a Japanese person who is accustomed to a more polite way of conducting business.

**Scenario:**

*Imagine that a Japanese person proposes a solution which needs to be executed immediately, “This is urgent.” The English executive reacts: “It will be done.”*

In this hypothetical example, the Japanese businessman asks for an immediate execution of their plan. However, the perspective of time might differ across the board. “*This is urgent.*” may imply that the matter needs to be taken care of in an hour, whereas for the other side, it may mean that it needs to be done in a day. Since both participants are of a vague and polite nature, they should be more specific in matters such as these, because then the business could crumble due to insufficient communication and incorrect language use. (Dickey, & Sasaki, 1999, p. 23)

### **6.3 Parting ways**

When it comes to parting ways, there are a few rules, and few language suggestions for both sides of the room.

According to the guide, the English executive who hosts the negotiations is usually the one who adjourns the meeting, so the visitor should be aware not to prematurely conclude the negotiation. (Conaway, & Morrison, 2006, p. 540)

A common parting phrase in the British and English business world is “*Thank you for your time, (name), we are looking forward to...*”.

The Japanese are also similar in their behaviour and language when it comes to saying farewell. One of the phrases they use, or the foreigner might use, is, “*Domo arigato gozaimashita.*”, which roughly translates to “*Thank you very much for your time.*” (“Doing Business in Japan”, 2017)

## 7 Conclusion

The goals and aims, as well as the personal goals of this thesis were established in the *Introduction*.

The first chapter provided brief answers to what culture is and how it can be divided, as well as the definition of communication. Introductory cultural differences of East vs. West were also mentioned, stating some of the views which the general public might hold towards cultures and their distinctive characteristics.

The second chapter teaches how different nations communicate when they are using the nature of their own languages – e.g. Germans with their unique order, reflected not only in their tongue and grammar, but also in their lives. The intention is to show and describe these distinctions between languages, because it is important to understand how influential the mother tongue really is. It influences the way people talk and act, even when they are speaking a second language.

The third chapter discusses different cultural models—*the Lewis model and the Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions*—which focus on the behavior, the polarizing views of societies and their possible reconciliations and compromises.

The fourth chapter applies the established theory on specific countries, Japan and England, providing the basic overview of how and why the said country behaves the way it does.

The penultimate chapter analyses the countries from the language standpoint, providing the general rules and possible interpretations of their utterances.

The last chapter theorizes a direct comparison of the Japanese and English cultures, while dividing their theorized meeting into introduction (*First impressions*), core (*Negotiation*), and conclusion (*Parting ways*).

Cross-cultural communication is a vast topic, and this thesis only scratches its surface. However, by providing examples of how a language influences international business, as well as introducing the cultural models and describing the theory behind them, the thesis successfully meets the goal of describing the specific examples of cultural categories.

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