Review

Key issues in cross-cultural business communication: Anthropological approaches to international business

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Cultural factors have long been known to influence the communication and success potential of competition. Cultural awareness shapes how business firms behave in cross-culturally reflected international markets. It is broadly recognized that cultural factors act as invisible barriers in international business communications. Understanding cultural differences is one of the most significant skills for firms to develop in order to have a competitive advantage in international business. This paper probes some key elements of cross-cultural issues in international business communication and provides a framework for creating competitive advantage for firms engaged in international business. Culture affects many aspects of international business communication. It impacts free trade policies, localization and standardization strategy decisions, advertising, brand effectiveness, business relationships, international business management, international marketing, international negotiation, and consumer behavior. Seven themes are suggested as guidelines for further research: Cultural impacts of markets, international versus domestic business communication, standardization versus adaptation in cross-cultural communication; cross-cultural dimensions of business communication research, cross-cultural aspects of the business communication mix (advertising, promotion, sales, public relations, trade shows, and commercials), cross-cultural aspects of business communication in the service sector, cross-cultural communication implications of the aftermarket and cross-cultural business communication education and professional training. The paper concludes with a suggestion that business anthropology should be adapted as a tool for the understanding of the effect of cultural differences on international business.

Key words: Cross-cultural communication, business anthropology, business communication, international business.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the most important functions to master in order for any business to be successful in today's increasingly competitive markets, particularly for firms doing business internationally. A firm's profitability is in part determined by its business communication strategies and skills. However, top managers in companies working internationally sometimes neglect the significance of the invisible barriers cultural differences create in business communication. Cultural factors play an important role, functioning as invisible barriers. Even

as the world is becoming globalized, many nations have increasingly voiced their claim to "a right to culture" in international businesses. It is predicted that national culture will be a critical factor affecting economic development, demographic behavior, and general business policies around the world. Such claims at the macro level will be important for making trade policy, protecting intellectual property rights, and creating resources for national benefits. At the micro level these claims could be invisible barriers for firms working in or wanting to enter international markets (Lillis and Tian, 2010).

The last summit of francophone nations in the 20th century called for a "cultural exception" in general

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agreement on tariffs and trade/ World Trade Organization (GATT/WTO) rules governing trade of goods. This type of claim will affect public policy on international trade rules in these nations and might initiate worldwide cultural protectionism for trans-national trading. Footer and Graber (2000) discuss the conflict between liberal trade policies pursued by the WTO and national policies aimed at protecting cultural diversity, culture identity, and cultural heritage. As the voice of cultural rights increases, firms doing business internationally will face other challenges from other dimensions of culture. From a management perspective it is important for companies to realize that markets today are worldwide and cross-cultural. Being aware of and sensitive to cultural differences is a major factor for success in the world marketplace. Failure to put marketing strategy in a cross-cultural context of the countries where a company is doing business will work to the detriment of brands and business relationships (Emery and Tian, 2003, 2002; Tian, 2000a). De Mooij and Hofstede (2010) have taken several of the Hofstede model's constructs which are most relevant to branding and advertising, and have suggested that those constructs be used in the pursuit of a localizing, adaptation strategy with reference to branding and advertising, citing recent studies which have demonstrated that an adaptation strategy is more effective than a standardization strategy. These studies tend to prove that culture does matter when advertising and brands are processed by consumers. De Mooij and Hofstede (2010) also reviewed other studies which have put Hofstede's model to the task of distinguishing cultures for the purpose of advertising and brand effectiveness. In addition, Lowe et al. (2002) report that cross-cultural relationships, is one of the major issues facing multi-national organizations.

If globalization is an inevitable process, then cross-culturalization will also be inevitable. On the one hand, the world is becoming more homogeneous, and distinctions between national markets are fading and, for some products, disappearing altogether. This means that business communication is now a world-encompassing discipline. On the other hand, the cultural differences between nations, regions and ethnic groups, far from being extinguished, are becoming stronger (Lillis and Tian, 2010). This means that global/international business communication, a cross-cultural process, requires managers to be well informed about cultural differences nationally, locally, and ethnically in order to win in global markets. Cross cultural solutions to international business therefore, are increasingly being suggested as a valid and necessary method in enhancing communication and interaction in and between business partners, between companies and customers, and between coworkers.

International business communication is communication that crosses national boundaries for business purposes. Communication among people from

the same culture is often difficult. Therefore, communication between people from different cultures from the point of view of language, values, customers and ways of thinking, will be far more difficult, a degree of miscommunication being almost inevitable (Ferraro, 2002). Business communication literature focused on advertising supports the hypothesis that advertising content differs between countries. International advertising research has confirmed differences in advertising content between countries. The premise upon which these studies predicated is that advertisements, in part, reflect individual countries' social systems (Emery and Tian, 2003; McLeod and Kunita, 1994; Mueller, 1992; Ramaprasad and Hasegawa, 1992; Zandpour et al., 1992).

Research has shown that changing cultural values can be detected by a change in advertising content. Four hundred advertisements in Bengali (India) periodicals, taken from four different time periods ranging from 1947 to 2005, were content analyzed to determine whether advertising appeals concerning cultural values had changed during these years. The findings suggested that advertising trends relating to traditional and collective values had changed over the years by advertising trends that reflected modernization, westernization, and priority of the individual over the collective (Gupta and Sonali, 2007). A study which compared cultural values in Chinese television advertising with American television advertising found that traditional Chinese values were portrayed as expected, but that changes in Chinese culture could be detected in Chinese television commercials. This was especially true of the trend in China towards youth and modernity. These results have implications for the perennial conflict between globalization and standardization. If an advertiser is already advertising in a modern, Western, individualistic culture and other cultures traditionally different are moving towards the advertiser's culture, the advertiser will be freer to standardize (Lin, 2001).

Values, norms and characteristics embedded in advertising messages appear in various cultures to a greater or lesser degree (Emery and Tian, 2003; Mueller, 1992). Therefore, understanding the importance of cultural values in advertising has great practical value in business communication. Determining differences in cultural values should guide the formulation of international business communication strategies (Munson and McIntyre, 1979). Ignoring the cultural meaning embedded in advertising could lead to a misinterpretation of the firm's intended message (McCracken, 1987). Such miscommunication is responsible for many businesses failing in international markets. This paper, from an anthropological perspective, examines cross-cultural business communication issues in "borderless" markets where national boundaries are no longer the only criterion to consider when making international marketing, economic planning, and business decisions.

Consequently, understanding political and non-political borders is important for "culture bound" products and industries and those requiring local adaptation. It probes the implications of a right to culture in international business practice by discussing the affects of cultural values on communications. It will analyze several key cross-cultural matters in international business communication imperatives from an anthropological perspective. It examines several strategies of cross-cultural communication in today's world marketplace. Based on this examination, the authors construct a framework for firms to use to break through the invisible cultural business communication barriers.

CULTURAL IMPACTS ON CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The globalization of the world economies had made it important for marketing managers to understand how to do business in different cultures. The ability of marketers and consumers to communicate cross-culturally is critical for success. Business communication is two way interactive communications. Marketers deliver information to the market, and they gather and collect, interpret, and put the information they gather from the markets to use. Failure to do either may lead to a loss of business. The observation of a young professional businessman in China supports this point (Tian, 2000b). In the late 1980's and the 1990s the Japanese made color TV sets which dominated the imported TV set market in China. In the early 1980s Japanese and European TV manufacturers made comprehensive studies of the Chinese market. Based on their research, the European marketers decided not to market their products in China. They concluded that, given the low gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in China, it was unlikely that the Chinese people would be willing to buy luxuries like color TV sets. The Japanese TV set marketers decided otherwise, based on their research and observations that the Chinese have a cultural tradition of savings being handed down from generation to generation. In addition, the Chinese save money for future consumption, unlike western culture where people spend future money for present consumption. Almost every family in China had been saving for two to three years to realize their dream of owning a color TV set. Moreover, their research revealed that although Chinese companies manufactured color TV sets, Chinese consumers had more confidence in imported products. Accordingly, the Japanese marketers concluded that the Chinese families would buy high quality Japanese color TV sets. As a result, the Japanese color TV marketers profited greatly in China because they understood a facet of Chinese culture that their European competitors did not.

In an intriguing research study, Sheer and Chen (2003) examine the extent to which Chinese and Western international business negotiators note the influence of cultural and professional preferences on the process and outcomes of their interactions. The results of the investigation showed some rather significant differences between Chinese and Western negotiators' expectations and strategies. For instance, westerners expressed more emphasis on adaptation than did Chinese negotiators. Such examples are endless. For instance, Martin reports that to succeed in the Persian Gulf most American franchisers have had to put some adaptability and flexibility in their Middle Eastern operations. American franchisers have had to be culturally sensitive, making sure that their operations and policy are adapted to the culture and flexible (Martin, 1999).

The impact of culture on business is obvious. To study these impacts, we need to study culture itself first. Marketing scholars define culture as that which gives people a sense of who they are, of belonging, of how they should behave, and of what they should be doing. It provides a learned, shared, and interrelated set of symbols, codes, and values that direct and justify human behavior (Harris and Moran, 1987). In marketing and consumer behavior research, the concept of culture has traditionally been minimal; commonly, marketers and consumers have ignored the depth and importance of the concept and its place in analyzing human behavior (Douglas and Craig, 1995; Griffith and Ryans, 1995).

The continuum of culture runs from tradition-based to modern-based. This classification incorporates the related dimensions of economic and cultural boundedness. African, Asian and Middle Eastern societies are categorized as tradition-based, being centralized, cooperative, agrarian, pre-industrialized systems. Economically, modern-based cultures are characterized as market-driven, competitive, post-industrialized economic systems. The United States, Canada, and other Westernized societies are examples of modern-based cultures.

Regarding cultural boundedness, tradition-based cultures emphasize their history, traditions, and established conventions. By contrast, modern-based cultures have weaker ties to their history and traditions. Conventions are ever-shifting (Bandyopadhyay and Robicheaux, 1993; Harris and Moran, 1987). The cultural boundedness of tradition-based societies produces market systems that differ markedly from modern cultures' market systems. Samiee (1993) suggests that economic and social factors influence the development and adaptation, of marketing institutions.

A business' understanding of cultural boundedness (that is, the degree to which a culture is unwilling to relinquish its traditional methods and adopt new ones) is imperative for successful international business communication and for marketing to ethnic populations domestically (Reese, 1998). Research conducted by one of the authors (Tian, 1987) in a minority region in China (a tradition-based culture) demonstrates that culture

influences consumer behavior in the area of product distribution. Tian (1987) noted that the cultural orientation of the ethnic group consumers helped establish and maintain, through vendor loyalty, plenty of small retailers supported by inefficient, multi-tiered distribution networks. This makes the Chinese state-owned retail business and foreign commercial institutions less profitable than they could be.

Similarly, Griffith and Ryans (1995) reports that cultural overtones in marketing operations derive, to some extent, from consumer preferences. They suggest that "the cultural characteristics of a target market will be responsive to certain culturally bound channel structures, such as local stores, or bazaars…" It will be difficult for marketers from Western countries to understand the market system in developing countries. As an instance, Griffith (1998) reports that U.S. marketers were hard-pressed to understand the French government's decision to restrict retail store size and protect local mom-and-pop retailers, especially considering the success of supermarkets there. Griffith (1998) suggests that the government's decision to forego the economic efficiencies of distribution obtained by large-scale retail distribution systems is in part cultural in nature. Unless perceived and understood, profound differences in attitudes, expectations, and unworded messages will frustrate firms' effort to do business with China, a huge and developing market, and elsewhere in tradition-based cultures (Emery and Tian, 2003).

It can be argued that government intervention as in the case of France is intended to protect its society's culture within the existing market system or structure (Griffith and Ryans, 1995). However, in spite of some conflicts, there are societies in which traditional market bazaars and modern, efficient supermarkets co-exist, as in some areas of China. This harmony is achieved only when the two systems become interdependent and supplementary (Tian, 1988). Accordingly, the authors argue that although cultural factors impact marketing, their effects can be minimized when marketers are aware of and sensitive to cultural differences.

Cross-cultural business communication is business communication among consumers or customers whose culture differs from that of the marketer's own culture in at least one fundamental aspect of cultural such as language, religion, social norms and values, education and living style. Cross-cultural business communication demands that firms be aware of and sensitive to cultural differences. To respect the right to culture by consumers in various cultures and marketplaces, marketers should understand that their customers have a right to their cultures. If the marketers want success in cross-cultural marketing they must work in a way to respects the consumer's values and the right to their culture. For example, for Western marketers to communicate in a business setting, it is important for them to respect the Chinese government's claim for guoqing, which means

that they must "consider the special situation or character of China" (Yan, 1994). Business communication is not an independent behavior, but related to all other business or market behaviors. From the anthropological perspective, all market behaviors are culture-bound. Buying and selling take place within the culture (Hamilton, 1987).

Therefore, in order to match marketing with consumer preferences, purchasing behavior, and product-use patterns, marketers benefit from understanding the market's cultural environment. Business firms should not focus on cultural differences only to adjust business communication programs to make them acceptable to consumers. It is to suggest that firms should also identify cultural similarities, in order to identify opportunities and modify standard marketing strategies based on business communication theory informed with cultural information. To skillfully work with these cultural similarities and differences in the worldwide marketplace is an important marketing task for businesses, such as McDonald has done in its international marketing entering strategies.

KEY ISSUES IN CROSS-CULTURAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Cross-cultural business communication requires that firms discover if markets are viable by including the study of the culture in which the company is going to do business in its business and marketing planning. To do this the firms should identify cultural factors that can be employed to support business communication in proposed markets. To succeed the business uses already existing factors and creates new ones that suit the situation. Classic anthropological theory claims that while all human behaviors, including market behaviors, take place within a cultural context, people are able to influence and even change, through their behaviors, the cultural context within which their behaviors take place (Hall, 1976; Hamilton, 1987; Harris and Moran, 1987).

Accordingly, culture influences business communication and business communications influences culture. Firms can be agents of changes within a culture. The interactions between business communication and culture can be examined from three perspectives. First, culture affects consumer behavior, by defining acceptable purchasing and product-use behavior for consumers and business. Based on their analysis of data they collected in Denmark, Great Britain, France, and Germany, Brunso and Grunet found that cross-cultural factors impact people's shopping for food (Brunso and Grunet, 1998). Culture also affects business behaviors, using the practice of giving business gifts as an example, in cultures where a business gift is expected such as in Japan, a host who is not presented with a gift will be insulted. An important feature of business communication will work to the detriment of the company seeking business, in other cultures offering a business gift could

be interpreted as a bribe, inappropriate and would offend the recipient (Arunthanes et al., 1994).

Secondly, culture affects the effectiveness of advertising. Advertising, for instance, is strongly influenced by language, which is one of the key elements of culture. Moreover, advertising budget and structure are based on buying habits and consumption style. These, in turn, are influenced by values and norms, on the media available, and the state of the material culture. Theorists including Albers-Miller (1996), Hofstede (1991), Pollay and Gallagher (1990) claim that culture affects the kind of roles and the choice of themes depicted in advertising. These are related to underlying cultural values and norms; thus, every element of culture influences each facet of advertising, which is a key component of business communication.

Thirdly, business communication influences culture, contributing to cultural borrowing and change. As more markets become global and the marketing mix standardized, the rate of cultural change will increase. Cultural changes in contemporary China illustrate this point. For instance, it was widely believed that gender identity might affect consumption behavior. However, a recent study of masculinity appeal by Emery and Tian (2003) demonstrated that American respondents and Chinese respondents act the same when presented with such appeals, in other words, the masculinity appeal is not as effective as they expected. A possible explanation for this could be that the gender status in Chinese traditional culture has changed. Business communications by Western firms could account, part for such a cultural change. Therefore, American marketers may succeed using the same masculine appeals to the Chinese youth market that they do in the U.S.

Nonetheless, cultures tend to change slowly, and specific products may meet with protracted resistance. Therefore, the primary task for firms is to locate similarities in various markets and strategically make them available for entering into new cross-cultural markets. In cross-cultural communication marketers need to continually adjust their behaviors and marketing programs to suit target markets. However, when entering foreign markets, firms frequently fall into the trap of the "self-reference" criterion, which means their business representatives might be unconsciously applying one's own cultural experiences and values to business communication in another culture. Even more dangerous than self-reference criterion is ethnocentrism, the belief that one's own culture is superior to any other which will ruin efforts at business communication.

Based on his wide experience, Gesteland (1999) identified four paired cultural models that require special attention when doing business in diverse cultural settings, namely: (1) Deal-focused versus relationship-focused cultures; (2) Formal versus informal business cultures; (3) Rigid-time versus fluid-time cultures; (4) Expressive versus reserved cultures. In relationship-focused

cultures, firms do not do business with strangers. In such cultures it is important to develop good contacts with the right people. It takes time to develop a personal relationship.

This is important before entering into business discussions. These features are predominant in most of Asia, Africa, Middle East, and Latin America. In deal-focused cultures, the emphasis is on getting down to business right away, even with strangers.

Rapport between the parties develops during discussions. By contrast, in Germany, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and North America the written agreement is considered most important and constitutes a bond.

Regarding formal versus informal business cultures, in formal cultures, mainly in Europe, most of Asia, Middle East and Latin America, societies are hierarchical, status conscious and follow strict protocols. In informal cultures such as the USA, Australia, and to some extent in Canada, Denmark, Norway, and New Zealand, societies are egalitarian, open, and value individual competence more than connections and status.

Gesteland (1999) also classified the cultures according to their views of time. In a monochronic culture, time is important. Discussions follows agreed upon agendas and move rapidly in linear fashion. Countries having this orientation to time are mainly in North America, West Europe, and North East Asia. In polychronic cultures, business discussions tend to follow their own logic rather than a fixed outline. In these cultures, relationship is more valued than deadlines.

For business firms planning to negotiate in a polychronic culture, it is wise to build a substantial margin of time into agendas. Polychronic cultures are mostly in Africa, Southeast Asia, Middle East and Latin America.

Although what Gesteland suggests is useful and practical, it is good to be aware of the danger of stereotyping people from other cultures. Anthropological theory suggests that it is unwise and short-sighted to project our own behavior onto substantially different cultures (Giovannini and Rosansky, 1990; Hall, 1976; Hamilton, 1987).

People in different cultures have different market values and behaviors. For example, through long observation it has been found that consuming and buying patterns and other social/economic behaviors of Chinese immigrants living in Canada are completely different from the patterns of people living in China.

Therefore, business firms need to have different market communication strategies for each group (Tian, 1999). In some cases, the firms know that cultures are different, but do not know how they differ. Research is the way to find out and to know what levers to use in moving buyers/consumers. We assert that the anthropological approach is an especially effective way to carry out cross-cultural marketing research (Tian, 2000a; Weise, 1999).

IMPLICATIONS OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN BUSINESS

In the 1950s, anthropologist Edward Hall was beginning a career that would be highly influential in business in terms of cross-cultural communication. From 1950 to 1955 Hall served as director of the U.S. State Department's "Point Four" training program, a training program designed to teach technicians who would be working outside North America. Hall clearly understood the significance of the cultural influence on communication effectiveness. Hall built a career in the cross-cultural communication field and eventually wrote several seminal works well in business, in anthropology, communication and in many other fields (Jordan, 2003).

Hall's practice and influence in the fields of cross-cultural communication and intercultural training has been monumental. He clearly understood that errors in cross-cultural communication could destroy a business deal or a peace agreement. In his first book, The Silent Language, Hall explained culture as communication and communication as involving much more than just language. Communication included nonverbal characteristics and had to be understood in cultural context (Hall, 1981). In later books, Hall explored the culturally different ways of conceiving space and time, as well as the implications in business practice. Hall's practice in and theoretical contributions to the business communication generated great impact and international value in terms of cross-cultural factors.

Many other anthropologists, such as Gary Ferraro among others, have continued Hall's work on communication in international settings (Ferraro, 2002). The most famous cross-cultural business communication researcher Hofstede (1991) has created a global model for the purpose of helping business professionals to distinguish the culture differences for individual countries. This most cited cross-cultural communication model is commonly called the four-dimensions of culture model, which contains power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism and masculinity. Moreover, some researchers such as Redpath and Nielsen (1997); Rhodes et al. (2005) among others have added one more dimension into Hofstede model called Confucian dynamism with the special intention for differentiating Chinese from Western cultural values.

The Hofstede model as well as other models has been used in recent research to explore the effect of cultural differences on negotiations. The following are examples of such studies, which explore cultural effects upon negotiation styles, negotiation planning and negotiation strategy. Sobral et al. (2008) described the negotiation style employed in Brazilian culture, basing their description upon the nature of the negotiation activity, the role of the individual, uncertainty and time, communication, trust, protocol and outcomes. Weber et al. (2011) researched the effect cultural differences had on negotiation planning during mergers and acquisitions, as well as the effect on negotiation outcomes. Ott (2011) determined that cultural differences influenced buyer-seller negotiation strategy by affecting initial offers, strategic approaches, the valuation of time, the frequency of rejection and the objectives of the negotiation.

Two recent studies discovered that the religious beliefs of negotiators influenced negotiation strategy. Tu and Chi (2011) compared the negotiating styles of Taiwan, Hong Kong and China, and found that religion had imbued the people of each of those countries with a specific set of values and attitudes, which caused the negotiation style in each country to vary in significant degrees. Farazmand and Daneefard (2011) compared and contrasted the effects of religious orientation on the negotiating styles of Iranians, Taiwanese, and citizens of the United States. The authors discovered that the negotiation styles in the three countries varied significantly depending upon the religious culture of each country. In business practice it is necessary to be aware of the difference in terms of communication, especially when conducting a business negotiation. A recent study by Chang (2003) has concluded that in Chinese society, people emphasize their desire for a "zero-sum game" in most of their business competitive activities. It is suggested that a successful negotiation should create a "win-win" situation. As Thompson (2001) noted, a true win-win negotiation is that any agreement reached by negotiators should cover most interests from both sides. However, it is very difficult if not impossible to improve one party's outcome while simultaneously not hurting the other party's outcome. As such, honesty could be the first step toward a better agreement with the Chinese business community. To be honest about one's intentions, goals and interests can help both to build trust and a positive bargaining zone. Respecting their culture and being patient to wait for their responses will be the second step toward a successful negotiation. Lastly but not finally, an extra service or practical favors will need to be provided in order to show friendship and sincerity.

In a previous study, Emery and Tian (2003) demonstrated that the significance of cross-cultural differences in advertising, one of the most important business communication formats, has become even clearer as we continue to move toward a globalized marketplace. It is important that marketing personnel should not let old stereotypes drive their advertising strategies. This is particularly important in the Asian market, as China and Taiwan become formal members of the WTO. The findings indicate that heuristics such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions are too broad to capture the detailed differences required in launching an effective advertising campaign. While Emery and Tian's findings do not provide unequivocal recommendations for developing advertising, they do provide some general information for marketing practitioners seeking to do

business in China. For example, one should consider the seven appeals (that is, effectiveness, safety, tamed, durable, natural, nurturance and assurance, in descending order of importance). Conversely, those ten appeals (that is, casual, distinctiveness, community, status, adventure, dear, family, untamed, magic and popular, in descending order of least importance) should be avoided. It strongly suggested the need to consider market segmentation and to consult with an expert in Chinese consumer behavior before developing ads for their market.

These recent studies suggest that in the real business world if firms study Hofstede's culture model, accept cultural differences and practice cross-cultural skills in their business communications, results will be optimal. Apparently, there are many factors that affect international business, but a fundamental precondition of any successful international business enterprise is effective communication, which more or less involves business persons' awareness of other cultures. As such, solving cross-cultural problems definitely provides many challenges and opportunities to business firms in the 21st Century.

There are many unsolved problems or issues that need to be solved and discussed by scholars and marketing professionals in theory and in practice as well. In the theoretical area, the following themes and issues need to be probed and discussed:

(1) Cultural impacts of markets: International versus domestic business communication.
(2) Standardization versus adaptation in cross-cultural communication.
(3) Cross-cultural dimensions of business communication research.
(4) Cross-cultural aspects of the business communication mix (advertising, promotion, sales, public relations, trade shows, and commercials).
(5) Cross-cultural aspects of business communication in the service sector.
(6) Cross-cultural factors of e-commerce and online marketing.
(7) Cross-cultural communication implications of the aftermarket.
(8) Cross-cultural business communication education and professional training.

The eight topics or themes listed can be viewed as guidelines for further theoretical studies although they should not be treated as exclusive for marketing scholars. More themes and topics will be discovered as theoretical discussions continue. As marketing professionals, we need to clearly know that although marketing principals will stay the same, there inevitably will be some new challenges to marketing in the 21st Century. The impact of cross-cultural factors on marketing is one such new issue that requires serious study. In terms of marketing

practice, we will suggest the following points as guidelines for marketers to minimize possible cross-cultural marketing mistakes:

(1) Be sensitive to do's and taboos. Develop cultural empathy in terms of business communication.
(2) Recognize, understand and respect another's culture and difference.
(3) Be culturally neutral and realize that different is not necessarily better or worse.
(4) Never assume transferability of a concept from one culture to another. For instance, if local business people in developing countries indicate that they do not like Americans, they may not mean that they do not want to buy American goods. It simply means they are expected to say certain things in public, but that they may operate differently in private.
(5) Get cultural informants involved into the decision-making process. Cultural informants could be local businesspeople or very well trained anthropologists.

From the afore-mentioned claim, the anthropological approach is one of the best approaches to cross-cultural marketing. One of the authors has made some insightful studies on this topic; interested persons can discuss this with us individually. In fact, although the anthropological approach to marketing is by no means entirely new to the business world, it is nevertheless not been used widely in the past. However, it is becoming more popular and is perceived as more reliable by more and more business leaders and marketers. (Jordan, 2010; Bronitsky, 2010) How to apply anthropological approaches into cross-cultural business communication practice is a topic that should be looked at in every theoretical area of business communication. The potential of anthropological approaches to cross-cultural business communication is unlimited. Anthropologists and business communication professionals together should exploit that potential.

Conclusions

The title to this paper suggested that there are "key issues" in "business communication" that cry out for an "anthropological approach." Business communications involve communications from company to customer (such as advertising), internal business communications (such as from senior management to first-line management), and business-to-business communications (such as negotiations). Other business communications include business-to-government communications.

All of these various kinds of communications are fraught with the risk of miscommunication, even when they are inter-cultural. When those communications are carried out cross-culturally, the chances of miscommunication rise exponentially. Therefore, there is a large payback for reducing such cross-cultural

miscommunication.

This paper identified several "key issues" which arise due to the existence of cultural difference between communicators. If the problems arising from these issues were to be solved, then potentially large paybacks can be realized. The key issues identified by this paper (the list is not mutually exclusive) are as follows: Standardization (globalization) versus localization and a "right to culture," international free trade versus restrictions on such free trade arising because of local culture, brand effectiveness for products sold in countries other than the home country of the manufacturer, business relationships (such as business partner relationships) carried on transnationally, international business management relationships (such as employer-employee relationships), international marketing and consumer behavior.

How are these "key issues" arising from cultural differences to be solved? It is our contention that since the science of anthropology was created for the distinct purpose of understanding culture, it is quite reasonable to look to that science, with its special-purpose procedures and methodologies, to attempt to understand the deep cultural processes that inform communication across the cultures in which international businesses must operate. However, this paper merely points the way to the beginning of business anthropological research. Further research should possibly delve into the "key issues" earlier mentioned, and should possibly use the seven-point framework suggested earlier as a guide to initiate research. In addition, even before research is continued, perhaps further discussion should be made concerning the seven-point framework and the key issues. Perhaps another framework would be superior. Perhaps other key issues can be identified. In any case, the adoption and promotion of business anthropology should remain fixed squarely in the forefront of the researcher's mind.

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