

Cultural differences between Finland and Japan in communication style

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Abstract

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Title of the thesis Cultural differences between Finland and Japan in communication style		
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Abstract <p>The main objective of this thesis was to study the communication styles and cultural differences between Finland and Japan in intercultural business communication. The need for intercultural communication skills arises whenever people from different languages and cultures come into contact.</p> <p>Theories of culture value, language and contextual culture were used in designing a suitable theoretical framework for the study. In order to study the cultural differences dimensional frameworks and contextual culture framework were introduced and cultural factors affecting communication were examined. The cultures and contextual culture of Finland and Japan were also covered more explicitly.</p> <p>In the empirical part of this study focuses on one company and studies the differences in communication styles and cultures between Finnish subsidiaries and Japanese-owner of group companies from the perspective of members of Finnish organizations. In particular of the case of this study, it is assumed that communication is in English and that most communication is conducted in a situation where there is a physical distance. As Japanese companies expand into Finland, opportunities for communication between organizations in both countries are increasing, like as this case study.</p> <p>Main findings are language skills takes an important role of between two organisations. Individualism-Collectivism, power distance contrasts between Finland and Japan and this difference appear in the relationship between superiors and subordinates in both countries effect communications in those two organizations and it may also influence decision-making. The concept of contextual culture can be a hidden issue, as most members are unaware of the differences.</p>		
Keywords Intercultural communication, cultural differences, communication, contextual culture, Japan-Finland communication, communication language		

Foreword

In all those crises, the future depends on man's being able to transcend the limits of individual cultures. To do so, people must first recognize and accept the multiple hidden dimensions of unconscious culture, because every culture has its own hidden, unique form of unconscious culture.

Edward T. Hall 1989, 2

The topic of this thesis, differences in communication styles and cultures, have been always close to me. By recognizing, understanding and adjusting the hidden differences, we may be able to communicate better.

I want to thank for Principal Lecturer Minna Ikävalko for advising and guiding me during my studying term and thesis work.

I am sincerely grateful for all the people who helped me, especially the interviewees from The Switch Oy for your support and cooperation.

I would like to thank my husband Esa - for your support and love, thank Sara and Mira – my lovely daughters – for accompanying and cheering.

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Appendix 1. Interview topic and themes

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In recent years, according to data from M & A research institute (2020), Japanese companies have been aggressively acquiring 672 overseas (cross-border merge & acquisitions, thereafter M & A) companies (total number of M & A by Japanese companies: 3,050) in 2017, 777 (3,850) companies in 2018 and 826 (4,088) companies in 2019. It has been pointed out that; not only is the Japanese market saturated, but the size of the market is clearly shrinking due to the declining birth-rate and aging population, so major domestic companies are conducting cross-border M & A with the aim of entering the market on a global scale (M & A research institute, 2021, author's translation).

Recently the COVID-19 crisis had a significant negative impact on M & A activity but comparing the second quarter of 2020 with versus same period a year earlier, Finland's M & A activity fell by only 27%. Also, the share of cross-border transactions remained high. This suggests that despite the COVID-19 crisis, international buyers continue to trade in a relatively active manner. (pwc Sep/2020, 5.)

It has been 100 years since Finland and Japan have had diplomatic relations, and cross-cultural exchange between the two countries is flourishing not only in character brands such as Moomin, but also in tourism and education. While globalization and internationalization are being called for, companies go abroad, and Japanese companies expand into Finland as well. Over the last decade, Japanese companies have been actively acquiring (cross-border M&A) even Finnish companies or European companies located in Finland. There are 212 Japanese companies in Finland in 2018 (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, author's translation). For example: Murata machinery (Cimcorp Oy, 2014), Yaskawa electric corporation (The Switch engineering Oy, 2015), Mitsubishi Materials corporation (Luvata special products/Luvata Pori Oy, 2017), also a Swedish company instead in Finnish but it is located in South-Karelia (Imatra) Finland, is acquired by Nippon steel (Ovako AB, 2018).

Therefore, corporate strategies include cross-border acquisitions, joint ventures, and alliances, increasing opportunities to interact not only internally but also between these organizations as partners. In the additional, with globalization, trade in goods, services, technology, capital and knowledge is taking place across national borders.

Cross-border M & A and related cross-cultural communication are important themes for many businesses and stakeholders. Already, the lack of a shared language within the enterprise has become an important issue, and topics on this are being studied and pointed

out that the biggest and most lasting barrier to intercultural communication was the lack of a shared language (Peltokorpi & Clausen 2011, 517). In a company with multiple organizations across national borders, each organization has a physical distance, but the values and policies of the organization are shared by a large framework. In such relationships, cultural backgrounds and linguistic differences are likely to affect communication within and between organizations.

1.2 Objective and research questions of the study

The purpose of this study is to study the communication styles and cultural differences between Finland and Japan. Specifically, the empirical part of this study focuses on one company and studies the differences in communication styles and cultures between Finnish subsidiaries and Japanese-owner of group companies from the perspective of members of Finnish organizations. In particular of the case of this study, it is assumed that communication is in English and that most communication is conducted in a situation where there is a physical distance. As Japanese companies expand into Finland, opportunities for communication between organizations in both countries are increasing, like as this case study.

Regarding the cultural position of abroad subsidiaries of Japanese companies in general, abroad subsidiaries lie in both cultural context of a multinational corporation and local sociocultural context. While such cross-cultural settings sometimes bring specific merits to subsidiaries, other times it does demerits. (Nakagawa et al. 2017, 21-30.)

This study takes the position of intercultural communication based on what Gudykunst (2004) explained that intercultural communication is communication between people of different cultures and includes all aspects related to the study of culture and communication, and cross-cultural communication is a sub-domain of intercultural communication (Browaeyns & Price 2015, 329). In addition, this study is positioned as a continuation of future studies and as a reference for those involved in Finnish and Japanese organizations.

The studies' point of view, there are numerous studies related cross-cultural or intercultural communication between Western and Asian (Japan): Hall (1989), Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2012), Lewis (2005), Hofstede et al. (2010). There are also some International business (IB) studies between Finland and Japan that include cultural and linguistic (English) elements (Koivisto 1998, Karhu 2005, Peltokorpi & Clausen 2011), but have not been widely studied.

Both cultural values and language tend to influence on intercultural communication in foreign subsidiaries and also influence the way people behave and perceive things (Peltokorpi & Clausen 2011, 510 and 523). Language is one of the important elements in intercultural

communication. The barriers created by the lack of a shared language have been well reported in previous studies (Marschan-Piekkari et al, 1999; Wright et al, 2001; Goodall and Roberts, 2003; Peltokorpi, 2006, 2007, 2010; Mäkelä et al, 2007, according to Peltokorpi & Clausen 2011, 521). Also in many cases, the shared language used for business with Western countries will be considered English. English is the most widespread language in international business, nevertheless, do not assume that everyone understands it or speaks it the same way (Bové & Thill 2008, 76). In this study, also English is their shared language between both organizations, when communicate each other. Also language is important not only in verbal part but also in non-verbal part, but the importance of each depends on the culture. Cultural values probably affect the way how individuals communicate in various ways, and also because different cultures use different communication styles, so when individuals from different cultures interact, even if it is used a shared foreign language, misunderstandings often happen (Peltokorpi & Clausen 2011, 514).

Culture is in myself, around us, and in and around others. Culture should not be judged as good or bad, but there are similarities and differences between your own culture and that of others. This study agrees with Morgan's (1996, 129) opinion: It is a mistake to speak of any country as if it had an integrated and homogeneous culture, but there are certainly/definitely significant national-country differences, especially when societies are moving to so culturally diverse. By understanding these differences, people will be able to have a better appreciation of "foreign" practices and people simultaneously can understand ourselves much better. Also, Hall (1959) wrote a comment on the before page of the content on his book: *To my friends and colleagues from foreign cultures who taught me so much about my own culture*. When people visit other cultures, they become more aware of own culture and this awareness is important to leading effectively in the international context and to overcome the "fish out of the water " syndrome (= dysfunction due to ignorance of cultural differences) (Lane et al. 2014, 36).

This study focuses on the following three" differences" that may have effects on communication between Finnish and Japanese organizations.

1. Language
2. Cultural value
3. Communication style

The main research question is:

How are the cultural differences perceived and influenced by members of the Finnish organization in business communication with members of the Japanese organization?

In order to answer this research question, it is necessary to find answers to several sub-questions.

- How does language skill affect the communication?
- What are the general cultural differences between Finland and Japan?
- How intercultural communication can be affected by the cultural differences between those involved in this case?

In this study, as general ways of message transmit between companies, includes telephone and video conferencing as oral communication that is also influenced by non-verbal language, and as well as documents or email as written communication that are less influenced by non-verbal language.

Cultural factors and communication style are perceived as differences when communicating in a second language in remote environment. In this study it is researched how do Finnish organization members perceive as different styles or Japanese styles when communicating with members of Japanese organizations. Studying is there a different phenomenon from the intercultural communication mentioned in many previous studies.

1.3 The delimitation of this study

In this study, communication is set to take place in the business scene as an organizational member, not in the private scene, and is limited to communication subsidiary and the parent company. In other words, it limits the general communication scenes and communication partners, but not the communication scenes related to a particular activity.

The focus of the study is on cultural differences and communication style differences between Finland and Japan, no other countries are included. The point of view is from the Finnish organization, Japanese organization side is not covered. The purpose of this study is not to describe the absolute best communications practices, but to emphasize the differences in cultural and communication style and how communication between organizations in general could be improved by acknowledge of differences.

Empirical data will be collected from interviews and collected only from employees currently working in Finnish organization. However, since communication consists of sending and receiving to each other, investigating both parties of the communication can tell us exactly

if the communication is established or if there is a misunderstanding or lack of information. This empirical part is only from the perspective of Finnish organizational members, but it can be still confirmed some of the misunderstandings and lack of information by interviews. In addition, this empirical study supplements some of the cultural differences by interviewing Japanese people who are currently working in Finnish organizations.

This study contrasts the cultural differences and communication styles between Finland and Japan, but the focus is on whether the differences in Japanese cultural values and communication styles are perceived by members of the Finnish organization. The members of the Finnish organization are originally multinational. The nationality of the interviewee is not necessarily Finnish. Non-Finnish nationals (excluding Japanese) are employees who have worked long enough for this Finnish organization and most of their careers have been cultivated in Finnish organizations are interviewed. Culture is always a shared experience, because it is somewhat experienced with people who live or lived within the same social atmosphere, which is where it was learned (Hofstede et al. 2010, 6). Moreover, from the perspective of Hall's (1976,1981) communication style, Japan is a much higher level of high-context culture than any other culture. Gudykunst (2004) illustrates that to understand cross-cultural communication, understanding intercultural communication is a prerequisite (Browaeys & Price 2015, 329). Also the cultural definition characteristics are most often thought of as changing pressures or tendency, which may or may not appear in a specific individual or context (Singelis et al 1995, 243). Therefore, for the interviewees in this research, nationality does not matter due to the above conditions.

This study focuses on communication style base on Hall's (1989) context culture and Hofstede et al. (2010) cultural dimension, with emphasized the importance of the communication language and how it effects the communication.

1.4 The definitions and theoretical framework

1.4.1 The key definitions

Culture

Culture is everything that people have, what they think and do as representatives of the society (Ferraro 2006, 19).

National culture

According to Hofstede et al (2010), national culture is: *the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others.* (Hofstede et al. 2010, 6).

Thus, *the collective programming of the mind, acquired by growing up in a particular country* (Hofstede et al. 2010, 520).

Organizational culture

It also referred to as corporate culture. In this study, organizational culture refers to the range of values and strategies that an organization jointly holds, as well as common principles of conduct.

Communication

Communication as the exchange of meaning, this involves the transmitting and receiving of information between a transmitter and a recipient. This happens not only using words, but also through non-verbal element. The message can be vastly different when a receiver received, from the message was sent by a sender. (Gibson 2005, 9.)

Common language

The language or system enabling the transfer of knowledge, value and experience from one supply of common knowledge to others and a source of icons, with installed company values and encodes attitudes and behaviour that the company wish its employees to share (Holden 2002, 315).

Intercultural communication

In intercultural communication a person understands what is immersed in one's image of self and one's role; personal needs, values, standards and expectations all are culturally acclimatized. The person also recognizes the influence of cultural factors on behavioural communication and is knowledgeable of variations in other partaking in human interaction, specifically with person from a foreign culture. (Harris & Morgan 1993, 10, according to Karhu 2005, 6.)

Cross-cultural communication

The term cross-cultural communication is used interchangeably with intercultural communication at times. Cross-cultural communication research focuses more on the comparisons of different cultures. In this study cross-cultural communication is sub-domain of intercultural communication (Browaeys & Price 2015, 329).

International communication

It also referred to as global communication or transnational communication. Communication that occurs across international borders, over the borders of nation-states (Fortner 1993, 6).

Business communication

Business communication classifies the operating in any organization that outcomes in valuable marketing of a company, productive internal relationships among the employees in an organization and effective customer service outcomes (Pardillo 2019,18). In this thesis more simply that it is exchanging information in order to promote an organization's goals, objectives, aims, and activities, as well as increase profits within the group of company.

Mergers and acquisitions (M&A)

In this report, mergers and acquisitions (M&A) as term of corporate finance. M & A is a transaction in which ownership of a company, other business organization, or those business units is transferred or integrated with another entity.

Glocalization

The term of it refers to “the interpenetration of the global and the local, resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas” (Robertson 2001 in Ritzer 2007, 13, according to Chaney & Martin 2011, 5). It seems to be related to the strategy of this case company.

1.4.2 Previous studies

This chapter will review the most important theoretical previous studies related to the topic of this thesis. In the introductory chapter the focusing on the general literature that building the actual theoretical framework of this study. Because this study concentrates on the encounter and their communication of different culture utilizing with foreign language, an intimate consideration of both cultural and communication theories is essential.

Hofstede et al (2010. 9) described culture as an "onion-diagram model" and explains that culture is formed by three visible levels "Symbol", "Hero", "Ritual", and invisible level "Values". Values are broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others. Levels of culture will be found in chapter 2.3.

The most popular and widely used model of cultural differences is Hofstede's six value dimension model (Hofstede et al. 2010) based on the assumption that different cultures can be distinguished based on differences in what they value. Another study of national culture is Trompenaars's (2012) seven dimensions of culture model, it is the theory of people's behaviour and relationships. It focuses on differences of across cultures that are relation with others, time, and environment. Hofstede's six value dimension model and Trompenaars's seven dimensions of culture model will be found in chapter 2.5.

Language is culture element, and communication tool. Role of language in intercultural communication and those studies will be found in chapter 3.2.

Previous intercultural communication close to this research theme, related to the cultural differences between Finland and Japan and linguistic point included the shared language of business communication, is also being studied.

Koivisto (1998) studied cultural heritages and cross-cultural management between Finland and Japan. The theoretical part of his research is rich contents in cultural background, including the languages, religions, and history of Finland and Japan. The empirical part is a case study on the perceptions of synergy and friction in Finno-Japanese management interaction. Its data was collected by interviewing Finns and Japanese who are frequently involved in Finno-Japanese foreign subsidiary management, in either Finnish companies' subsidiaries in Japan or Japanese companies' subsidiaries in Finland.

Karhu (2005) focused on the cultural differences that affect the claim processing process and perceived quality in the Finnish and Japanese paperboard businesses.

A study by Peltokorpi & Clausen (2011) investigated the causes and consequences of linguistic and cultural barriers to intercultural communication at a Nordic subsidiary in Japan. Interviews with 30 Nordic (included Finland and other 3 Nordic countries) expatriates and 29 Japanese employees show that the main linguistic barriers to intercultural communication were lack of a shared language and low motivation to improve foreign language proficiency, and the main cultural barriers were collectivism and also status and power differences. When it should be noted in their study is language ability creates the informal power within an organization. Due to the language barrier, expatriates often relied on Japanese managers with linguistic competence and these language nodes have become valuable to the expatriate president and his subordinates. As explained, the ability of the language nodes to possess, allocate, hoard and filter information is an important source of informal power. Also their study mentioned that influenced by collectivism and power-status differences, Japanese communication is described as context-sensitive and ambiguous and there was similar ambiguity in written communication, making it difficult for expatriates to understand local employees. (Peltokorpi & Clausen, 509, 519-520.)

How much context people need to consider about in communication varies greatly from culture to culture? Edward T. Hall (1989) who is American anthropologist and cross-cultural researcher has categorized the types of language communication around the world into high-context culture and low-context culture. In high-context culture communication, implicit areas tend to be accepted as communication rather than what is actually expressed as words. In communication in low-context culture, the content expressed in words has an

informational meaning, and the content that is not expressed in words tend to be not transmitted. Therefore, even if the same expression is used, the way it is received is completely different because of this high- and low-context culture. More discussion of high/low context culture and communication style will be found in chapter 3.3.

After summarizing both the cultural and communication aspects of the great scholars, the cultural and communication style differences between Finland and Japan discuss chapter 4.

1.4.3 The theoretical framework

This chapter introduces the theoretical framework of this study utilizing two models of intercultural communication points. The framework of this study is drawn from these.

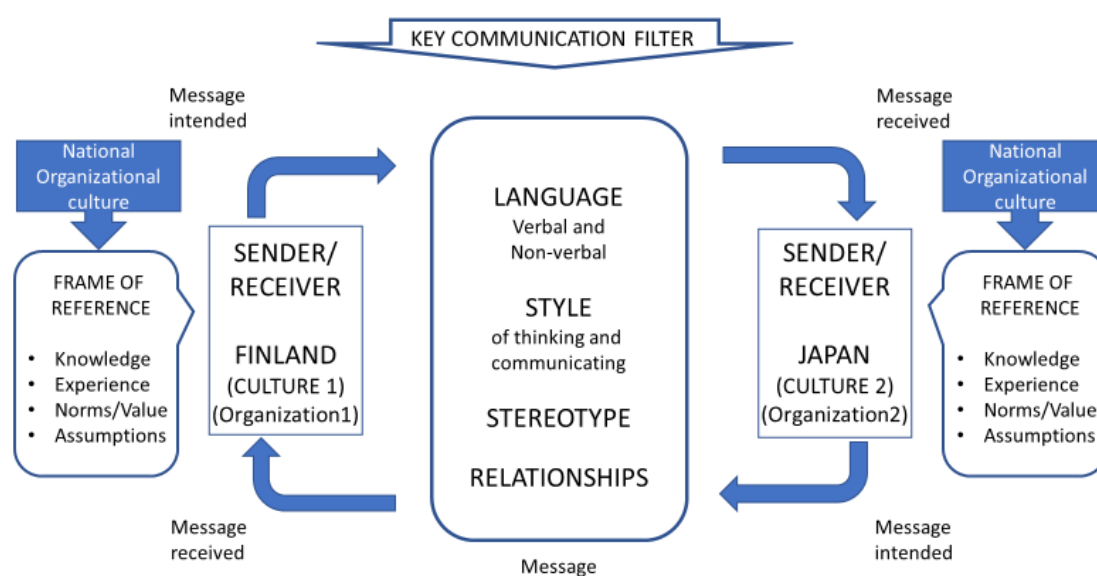


Figure 1. Model of intercultural communication (Browaeys & Price 2015, 330, adapted by the author)

This study focuses on differences in Finnish and Japanese cultural values, communication styles and communication languages. This model is adopted as the framework for this study because it clearly covers communication processes between two (countries/organization), including each communicator's reference frame utilized and the key filters that must be passed when a message is sent or received.

According to Browaeys & Price (2015, 330), when communicating, both sender and receiver unconsciously refer to a framework consisting of the following elements.

Frame of reference

- Knowledge (of the subject under discussion)
- Experience (in professional or individual terms)
- Norms (of society in which people live)
- Assumptions (what is taken as fact and believed to be true)

Scollon and Scollon (1981) viewed virtually all professional communication as intercultural (Guirdham 2005, 86). The culture people identify with most closely in a given situation influences that set of assumptions and values people prioritize in that situation (Lane et al. 2014, 35). However, this study considers the bottom two items from frame of references above as cultural values.

Communication filter

If the sender / recipient does not share the same culture, the particular filters that the message passes through can be led not only to incomprehension of the message, but also to their distortion and misunderstanding like as barriers to communication (Browaeys & Price 2015, 330).

- Language: Part of culture elements, and part of communication main tool. The language has both verbal and non-verbal elements. (Browaeys & Price 2015, 330.)
- Style of thinking: How people think and express their thoughts is determined not only individually but also socially and culturally. i.e., What is recognized as a problem and the approach to problem solving are also different. (Browaeys & Price 2015, 331.)
 - Context: High vs Low- context styles of communication, how to handle information other than perceptible spoken words (Browaeys & Price 2015, 331).
 - Directness: Direct vs Euphemistic expression and communication (Browaeys & Price 2015, 331).
 - Face: Facial expression or saving face, which is important for maintaining the relationship (Browaeys & Price 2015, 331).
- Stereotypes: Those are conviction based on generalizations made about another group of people or their individual member. It may take some time to generalize, so

the stereotype may not match the current situation, or the original information may be incorrect. (Browaeyns & Price 2015, 332.)

- Relationships: This has to do with how those communicating perceive each other's social standing. A range of factors may be involved, including the degree of (in)formality, respect and intimacy considered appropriate by one or the other, and the way this is reflected in the interactional behaviour. Hierarchical considerations can also come in to play. It means that status may be a barrier in communication between two employees from different hierarchical levels and cultural backgrounds, when they have to work together. (Browaeyns & Price 2015, 332.)

Communication in the workplace needs to be efficient. The following model of effective intercultural communication describes communication skills, especially assuming communication in a foreign language, and will be used to understand this study.

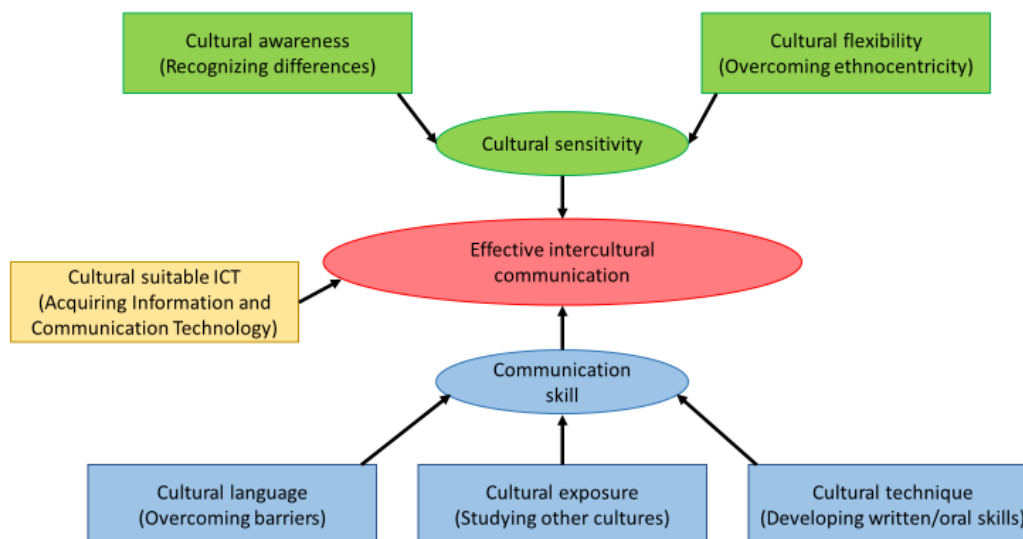


Figure 2. Model of “Component of successful intercultural communication” (Bové, Thill & Schatzman 2003, 62), adapted by the author.

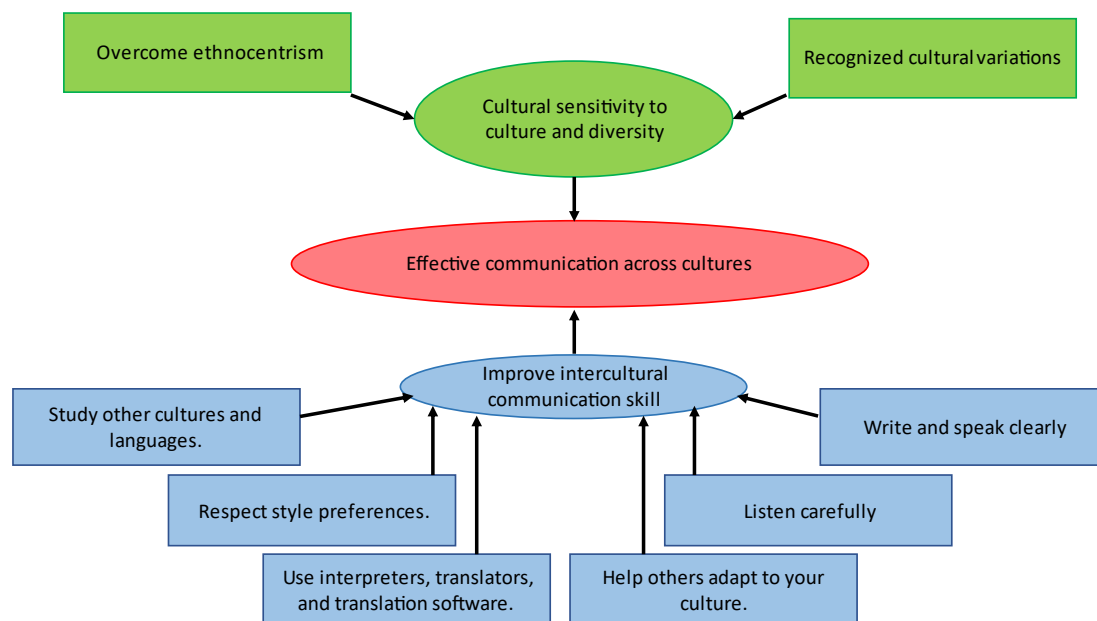


Figure 3. “Effective communication across culture” (Bové & Thill 2008, 75).

These two frameworks are very similar to those published in books of the same title (2003 and 2008) written by the same main authors. Therefore, the figure 2 (Bové et al. 2003, 62) model simpler and focuses on cultural awareness, and also because this study does not touch on cultural diversity, and the author prefers to use it in this thesis. However, this bottom part of figure 3 “improve intercultural communication skill” is more concrete of tips for the communication skill and so it is beneficial to the case company. And some may have already been done by them, so it can be utilized for the analysis part.

According Bové et al. (2003, 55-74), there are two parts that need to be understood for effective intercultural communication. The first is cultural sensitivity, which is a psychological approach to culture, and the secondly is communication skills, which is a practical approach to culture. As figure 2, cultural sensitivity is built through culture awareness is recognizing the cultural difference that can be contextual, legal, ethical, social or nonverbal, and Cultural flexibility is overcoming ethnocentricity, which happens by admitting distinctions, avoiding supposition and judgments. After cultural sensitivity part, focusing need to be on improving the intercultural communication skills. Cultural language skills, including overcoming language barriers due to the existence of different languages around the world. Cultural exposure can be gained by actively studying other cultures and developing cultural language skills. Cultural skills refer to the development of writing / oral skills that are essential for intercultural communication.

In addition to their model, this study added the use of modern-era communication technology. Technology, especially computer-mediated communication, is welcomed as a major force in creating cultural coming together around the world and promoting the diffusion of international business (Leung et al. 2005, 360). This is because the communication technology used (preferred) differs depending on the development of technology and culture.

This is a model (Map bridge integrate) for improving individual cross-cultural communication skills. This model also introduces that "starting by recognizing cultural differences, communication that takes into account the differences can have a direct effect." Also, the keyword of this study is cultural and communication style "difference". And how that perceived difference affects communication. Because this study does not set specific situations, so that reason this model does not be used. Even so, it can be thought of as a framework for thinking about individual intercultural communication skills as well in similar topic as this study.

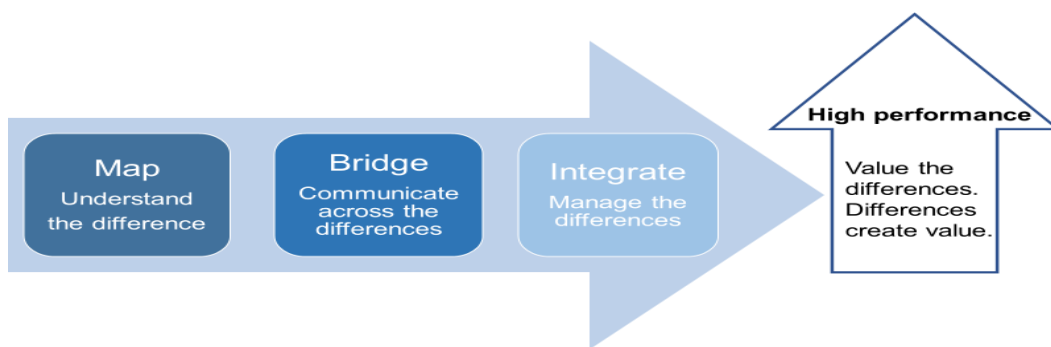


Figure 4. MBI (Map bridge integrate) model, Interpersonal Skills for International Management: The MBI Model for High Performance (Lane et al. 2014, 73)

The basic idea of this model is to understand the cultural and other differences as during the "mapping" stage. And by taking these differences into account, you can communicate effectively. Here it is called "bridging". "Integration" is to bring together different perspectives, build on them, and have a direct effect. When these three skills are successfully implemented, the interaction between individuals or team members results in high performance. If bridging is successful, the integration will continue almost naturally. If bridging is not successful, integration may not occur. Moreover, no matter how skilled or well-meaning the parties are, bridging cannot be performed without proper mapping. In other words, the relationship between these three skills is an interrelationship that does not lead to results if any one of the skills is missing.

Mappings help people respect each other's values and perspectives and suggest to people how to better use each other's ideas. The difference between stereotypes and maps is that

the map is revised as new data becomes available and is always tested as a hypothesis rather than taken for granted as the truth. Maps should be viewed as a window to the complex realm of human beings, a tool to enter different perspectives, and a tool to actually see the people in them. The main part of this study is the stage of this mapping and bridging skill. (Lane et al. 2014, 73-74.)

1.5 The methodology of this study

This research analyses the phenomena perceived by Finnish organizational members in communication between organizations from the viewpoint of cultural values, communication style, and language. Therefore, in theoretical part covers a wide range of cultural, communication and linguistic content. The empirical part research the member of Finnish organization's perceptions of the cultural values and style differences that underlie communication behaviour by interview.

According to Hall (1989), the high-context Japanese communication behaviour depends on the communication environment and relationships. Especially in high-context communication, it is easily affected by places and relationships, so a case company is set in the research of the empirical part. The relationship between the case company and the communication partner in this study is based on the capital relationship between the Finnish subsidiary and its Japanese parent company.

Qualitative researchers are concerned with the meaning people attach to things in their lives (Corbin & Strauss 2008, according to Taylor et al. 2015, 18). Also Central to the phenomenological perspective and hence qualitative research is understanding people from their own frames of reference and experiencing reality as they experience it (Taylor et al. 2015, 18). Qualitative methods are in most cases utilized when variables are complicated or impossible to measure, or when the researcher aims to examine people's opinions thoroughly (Shirayev & Sobel 2016, 40). Qualitative research should dictate the methodological approach that is used to conduct the research, and also it allows researchers to get the experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover rather than test variables (Corbin & Strauss 2008, 12-13). Erna Szarbo suggested in her report that qualitative work theme focused interviews enable an understanding of the "meaning, enactment and context of participation across countries" (Cassell 2006, 164). Therefore, this study chose interview as research method in the empirical part.

When conducting a semi-structured interview, the interviewer prepares an outline of the topic, issues, or theme in advance, but the interviewer may change the wording and order

of the questions from interview to interview. The major advantage of semi-structured interview is that while the tone of the interview is considerably conversational and informal, the material is rather systematic and comprehensive (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 82). Because of perceptions of cultural differences can vary from interviewee to interviewee, but still the material needs to be systematic and comprehensive for analysing. Therefore, this thesis also chosen a semi-structured interview as method of collecting data, design an interview based on a topic or theme overview and put it in a "conversation" mode with variations in the wording or order of the questions. In addition, if the interviewee makes a statement that is in line with the topic or theme, a question may be added during the interview. This is because some interview responses may lead to new discoveries or digging up existing concepts.

All interviews are recorded and transcribed and are carried on web meeting, utilized ICT. In qualitative research, which studies the meaning of subjective experience, the language used in the study must also be considered. The relationship between subjective experience and language is a two-way process as language is used to express meaning, but conversely, language influences how meaning is constructed (van Nes et al. 2010, 313-314). Excluded a Japanese interviewee, the language used is English, which is the common language for the interviewer and interviewees, but it is not native language for either. van Nes et al. (2010) give some recommendations aimed to potentially reduce the loss of meaning and thereby to enhance the validity of cross-English qualitative research. Talking and reading in English also leads to thinking in English as well (van Nes et al. 2010, 315). In one view, considers language to be an aid to thinking. However, when analysing in a language other than one's own language, it can be said that there is some influence. Therefore, English is the most reliable language that can be used as a common language for both interviewers and interviewees in this study, although the potential influence of this native language cannot be ruled out.

Also van Nes et al. (2010, 315–316) recommend that: To avert possible drawbacks, using the original language whenever possible in the analysis. For translation of the most important language part of the research, the researcher operates as a translation mediator in collaboration with a professional translator. To explain and discuss in research articles how the translation was done, in line with cross-language research literature. Abundant descriptions using participant citations are deemed to contribute to the credibility in qualitative research.

This study is an intercultural study between Finland and Japan, though only members of the Finnish side organization are the subject of the empirical study. Therefore, in the theoretical part utilizing also previous Japanese studies as references, to deepen cultural understanding and clarify contrasts between the two cultures. Contrary to recommended by van Nes et al. (2010), professional translators cannot be used in this study, but the author handles the translations carefully when using previous studies written in her own language, for example, translation will be done after fully understanding the meaning of the original language, and also writing in a side-by-side wording with English and original language, as well as needed.

1.5.1 The case company and interviewees

The empirical data consists of interviews with employees who are working for one Japanese group owned company in Finland, as a case company in this study.

Company information

The Switch Engineering Oy is established in 2006 located in Finland, three main business is Wind power business (generator / converter), Marine business (motors, generators, converters), Industry business (high-speed motor). The head office is located in Vantaa, and also productions are in Lappeenranta and Vaasa. 214 employees, sales 72.6 million euro in 2018. (YASKAWA Electric Corporation Corporate 2018, 11, author's translation.)

The Switch Oy and Yaskawa Electric corporation signed a business alliance agreement for purpose of mutual supply of products in September 2013 and have already collaborated. Yaskawa Electric corporation has agreed to acquire all issued shares (excluding treasury stock held by The Switch) of Finnish wind power generation electrical equipment manufacturer The Switch Engineering Oy and concludes a contract in 2014. (Nihon M&A Center Inc. 2014, author's translation.) A key point of the acquisition is to complement the services of both companies. Yaskawa's global network enables The Switch to increase its international presence while providing megawatt-class power generation for renewable energy applications. (HelsinkiBusinessHub, 2014.) In 2017 The Switch Oy became Yaskawa Environmental Energy Division/The Switch and part of Yaskawa Europe GmbH.

Their group owner company is Yaskawa Electric Corporations, established in 1915, main business is motion control, robot, and system engineering. The head office is located in Fukuoka (prefecture), Japan, group total employees 14,632 (including temporary employees) in 2017, total sales 394.9 billion yen (JPY) which is the consolidated fiscal year from 21 March 2016 to 20 March 2017. (YASKAWA Electric Corporation 2018, 2, author's trans-

lation.) Yaskawa Electric is expanding its business globally, with business bases in 30 countries and production bases in 12 countries. They operate a “glocal” (combines global and local) business, which is adapted to each region’s characteristics. It is management style defined by both a global management mindset and best local support capabilities anywhere in the world. (Ogasawara 2021, author’s translation.)

Information of interviewees

The criterion used in the choice of the interviewees were as follows: They are businessperson who are working at Japanese subsidiary (The Switch Engineering Oy) in Finland.

The selection criteria for interviewees are as follows: The criteria for selection as interviewees are very simple: businessperson working for The Switch Engineering Oy who are communicating with Japanese organizations. There are total of 5 interviewees, including 2 Finns and 3 other nationalities. One Japanese of the three nationalities has been working for a Finnish organization as an expatriate at the time of the interview. Two others have been working for The Switch Engineering Oy in Finland for quite long and their working experiences have been cultivated in Finnish organizations rather than in their home countries. Positions are not the management of whole organization, but they are important and responsible positions in each job.

1.5.2 Analysing the result.

The raw data collected in the interview will be written by transcription app, and the contents will be confirmed by the investigator herself. The researchers then assign them to thematic, cultural, communication, and language categories, which are then subdivided and analysed with reference to audio / written data. Depending on the content, one answer may be duplicated between themes. As it is necessary, field notes written during the interview will also be used.

The analysis method is similar to grounded theory, but the text is not subdivided for analysis. This is because different interpretations can occur depending on the context. In addition, some themes of semi-structured interviews may be expanded depending on the interviewee.

Reliability issues are related with establishing some degree of uniformity in the study in the sense that other researchers can reproduce the study and come up with comparable findings (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 292). To make a survey more reliability, researchers need to demonstrate that similar results would be found if it were conducted a research on a similar group of respondents in some defined similar context (Cohen et al. 2011. 199).

Validity refers to the extent to which conclusions drawn in research give a precise description or explanation of what happened (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 292), and that research findings are valid is to say that those are true and certain (Schwandt 2001, according to Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 292). An unbiased procedure must be successfully applied for acquiring validity (Holstein & Gubrium 2004, 145).

This study was meant to research the perceived of the cultural and communication style differences of Finnish organization members when communicating with Japanese organization member. The interviewees discuss their own experiences and subjective theme of culture experiences in their communication, so the validity can be presumed to be acceptable.

1.6 The structure of this study

This thesis is roughly divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the theoretical study of topic, and the second part explores the empirical study within the case company.

Also, in the empirical part of this study, only members of the Finnish organization were interviewed. Therefore, to supplement the "differences" they perceive, the theoretical part of this study is structured to have sufficient content on Japanese, cultural, and contextual features based on previous literature and customs.

In chapter one the study is introduction. The research objectives and questions are discussed. The appropriate theoretical framework is pointed out and previous studies about the topic examined.

A The theoretical study consist of chapters from two to four. Chapter two presents different definitions of culture and how it has been studied in general and what kinds of dimensions have been formulated to understand the culture differences. Chapter three studies the concept of communication, intercultural communication (i.e., contextual communication style) and language. Chapter four introduces the special features of Finland and Japan culture which related to this study.

The empirical study is the chapter five, presents the empirical findings from the perspective of the members of the case company on cultural and communication style differences, as well as analysed the findings base on the theories. Conclusions of the study are stated in chapter six.

2 Culture

It is known that there are various countries and various cultures in the world, but it is not very common how they actually differ and vice versa. Also, when considering about unit of culture, it is not only a country, but also a regional, an organizational, a professional, a generational, a gender, or a global scale, etc. There are many different perspectives on them. Therefore, there are various ways of considering and research in the study of intercultural communication. This chapter 2 summarizes the cultural aspects necessary for this study, focusing on the structure and elements of culture, national culture and organizational culture.

2.1 The definition of culture

“Culture/ Kulttuuri/ 文化 (bunka)” meanings of each languages from dictionaries. Clarifying the basic meaning of the word “Culture” is a starting point for studying cross-cultural communication. Culture is derived from Latin word “colere” which means “plow” and was originally used to mean “cultivating land”, but in English it came to be used to mean to “cultivate the mind”. The meanings of culture vary slightly from language to language.

English, Culture (Concise Oxford English Dictionary 2006, 349)

The arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively. A refined understanding or appreciation of this.

The customs, ideas, and social behaviour of a particular people or group.

Finnish, Kulttuuri (Kielitoimiston sanakirja, author’s translation)

The community / the totality of the spiritual and material achievements of all mankind; education. developed and established ways of thinking and acting within the community.

Japanese, 文化-bunka (Japanese dictionary Daijirin, Daijisen, author’s translation)

The overall behaviour or lifestyle that is learned, shared, and transmitted by the people who make up society. Specific examples include languages, customs, morals, religions, and various systems. In cultural relativism, each human group has its own culture, and each culture has its own value, and there is no difference between high and low and superiority or inferiority. Those that were created mainly from spiritual activities such as learning, art, religion, and morality. It shows “Culture” is a general term for customs, traditions, thinking methods, values, etc. of people and societies, and means what is passed down through generations.

The definitions of culture in the above three languages have many of the same meanings. The characteristics of the meaning of Finnish culture specify the abilities and skills acquired. Also, it is said to be a system of separation that establishes identity. The general term of culture in Japanese includes customs and the meaning of something that will be passed down to future generations.

2.2 Elements of culture

In this section, by looking at what kind of elements culture is composed of, it is clarified what kind of things should be attracting attention when considering about culture. According to Czinkota et al., culture is comprised of nine elements, both material (such as tool) and abstract (such as attitudes) (Czinkota et al. 2003, 36).

Language has been described as the mirror of culture and itself is multidimensional by nature. This is true not only spoken word but also of what can be called the **nonverbal language** of international business. People involved in international business need to also analyze and become familiar with non-verbal language/ hidden language. Five key topics, time, space, material possessions, relationship patterns, and agreements in business, for example, in some countries, extensive social relationship the institution of appropriate personal rapport are essential in order to do business. The sense is that you must know your business partner on a personal level prior to dealings can happen. (Czinkota et al. 2003, 36-39.)

Most cultures find in **religion** a reason for being. Religion may have a major impact on certain things such as food, beverages, and the role of women. **Values** are shared beliefs or group norm, and attitudes are evaluations of alternatives based on these values. The more rooted that values and **attitudes** are in central beliefs (such as religion), the more cautiously the international business manager has to move. Attitudes toward change are basically positive in industrialized countries, whereas in more tradition-bound societies, change is viewed with great suspicion. (Czinkota et al. 2003, 39-42.)

Altering transpiring in **manners** and **customs** must be meticulously observed, particularly in instances that seem to show a narrowing of cultural distinctions between people. (Czinkota et al. 2003, 43) For example, even in Asian countries where people usually eat with chopsticks, manners of it varies from country to country. Also another example, according to old Chinese tradition: 送巾離根 (Sòng jīn lí gēn), giving a handkerchief means breaking the relationship. In Japan it slightly has the similar meaning as China, but in modern era this meaning is not so important, people more considering varied contextual. Hand-

kerchiefs are sometimes chosen as gifts in Japan, but in doing so, it usually needs to consider the colour, design and the recipient (e.g. do not mislead to the person who continues the relationship/whether the recipient is married or not/ etc.).

Material culture describes to the outcome of technology and is precisely related to how society manages its economic activities. **Aesthetics** refers to each culture making a clear good taste, as conveyed in the arts and in the particular symbolism of colours, form, and music. (Czinkota et al. 2003, 46-47.)

Education, either formal or informal, plays a major role in the succession and distributing of culture, and educational levels also affect various business function especially in international business context. **Social institutions** like as family and reference group which affect the way in which people relate to each other. (Czinkota et al 2003, 47-48.)

2.3 Levels of culture

Several scholars (Hofstede et al. 2010, Hall 1989, Schein 2004, 2009) have defined culture as having levels and illustrated those several different shapes. However basic ideas are same as these common concepts, culture is composed of an invisible level of unaware root part and other recognizable levels of layer. Regarding the level of Schein's three Levels of culture, he applies similar ideas to organizational culture (2004, 26; 2009, 21), so it will be introduced in the section on organizational culture chapter 2.6.

2.3.1 Onion diagram model

Hofstede et al. (2010) and other several authors have defined culture as having distinct layers. Hofstede et al. (2010) depicted it as an "Onion-diagram model" and they described culture as having visible and invisible layers, which are those three visible layers: "Symbol", "Hero", and "Ritual" and invisible layer: "Values". "Symbols", "heroes" and "rituals" are grouped together as "practices".

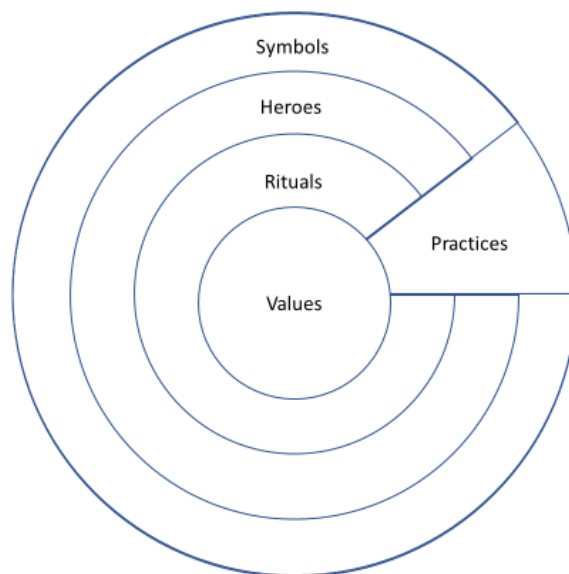


Figure 5. Onion-diagram model: Manifestations of culture at different, Levels of depth (Hofstede et al. 2010, 8)

"Symbols": Those are the most superficial concepts of culture. It is a "symbol" that has a special meaning only to people who share the same culture. New symbols are easily created, and old symbols disappear. A symbol of one culture can become a symbol of another culture. That is why the symbol is at the top of the culture. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 8.)

"Hero": A longing person who represents that culture is a "hero". Heroes can be real-life characters such as athletes and historical greats, as well as the protagonists of superhero movies, anime, and fairy tales. The most highly regarded person in the culture and the model of people's behavior is the "hero". (Hofstede et al. 2010, 8.)

"Rituals": Those are activities that members of group naturally take in a culture, but it does not help to achieve a specific purpose. Rituals include the use of language in discourse, texts and dialogues, daily exchanges, and communication of views. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 9.) Rituals are considered an integral part of society for those who belong to that culture. In most cases, they are doing it for ritual rather than for something useful. For example, in Japanese business practice, it is one of the ritual actions to show respect by holding out a business card with both hands and treating it carefully, but people with different cultural backgrounds do not always take the same action.

"Values": Values are wide-ranging trends to favour certain conditions to others. For example, "Dirty \Leftrightarrow Clean", "Good \Leftrightarrow Bad", "Reasonable \Leftrightarrow irrational". The standard for judging such things is "values". (Hofstede et al. 2010, 9.)

Values are one of the first things people learn, and generally said most children are acquired basic values by the age of 10. Values are programmed and strengthened as more people come into contact with them, such as in schools and communities. Since it is formed very early in life, people are unaware of it and internalize their values. In other words, it cannot be seen from the outside. And it is said that once you wear your values, it is difficult to change them afterwards. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 9-11.)

The challenges faced by global talent when working with people who has different background and abroad are sometimes brought about by different values. For example, hidden under the iceberg is "value". Judging only by the shape of the visible iceberg, there is a great risk when sailing. In the field of global business, it is possible to make a big misunderstanding or mistake if you do not understand the true meaning due to the difference in observable surface culture. But the values are invisible. People also act unconsciously about what values they have. In other words, it is difficult to convince people of different cultures why they act.

2.3.2 Iceberg Model

There are several iceberg models exist. Hall (1989) developed an analogy of the iceberg culture model. Hall (1989) inferred that if the culture of society were like an iceberg, there would be most of it hidden beneath the surface of the water, rather than some aspects visible above the surface. Therefore, the external or conscious part of culture is what we can see, which contains actions and some beliefs. The inner or subconscious part of culture is below the surface of society and contains some of the beliefs, values and thought patterns that underlie behaviour. There is a large difference between conscious and unconscious cultures. Funakawa (1997) deemed that that successful business relationships in the presence of cultural differences require the common elements of trust, honesty, and integrity (Chaney & Martin 2011, 13).

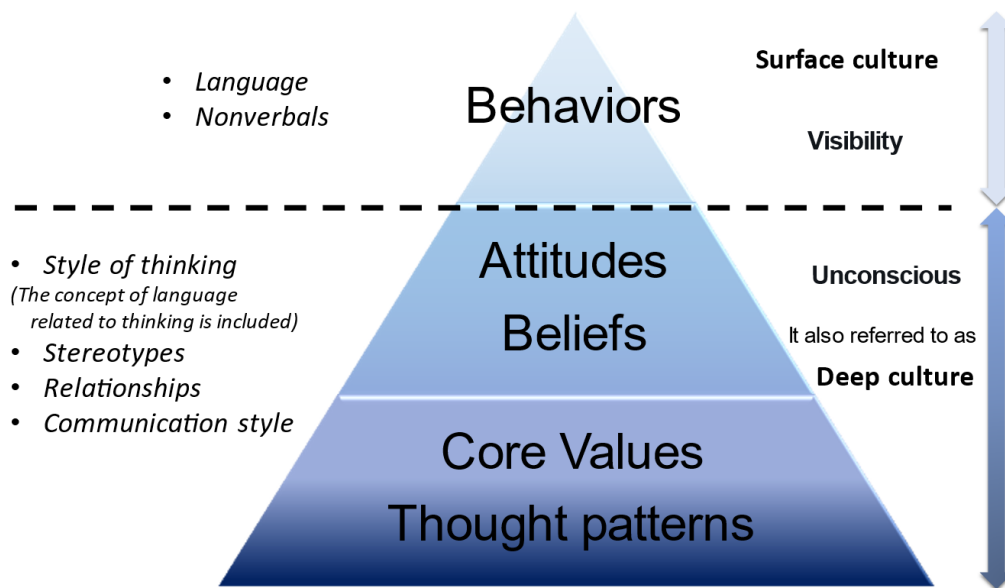


Figure 6. Cultural Iceberg Model (Hall 1989; Chaney & Martin 2011, 13, author adapted)

2.4 Layer of cultures

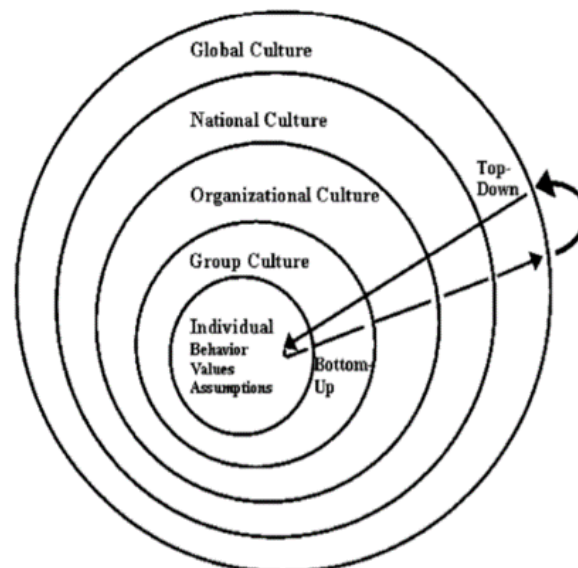


Figure 7. The dynamic of top-down–bottom-up processes across levels of culture. (Leung et al. 2005, 363)

Generally national culture and organizational culture are having effect on each other; however, those are studied separately. This study focuses on communication between people who are part of Finnish organization and Japanese organization, from prospective member of Finnish organization. In this case, the meaning of organization(s), those organizations are gathered with the task group (corporate policy), it means the members who might be part of different department, but it is in same group company. These organizations and members which do business globally need to have a global organizational structure. The global organizational structure needs to implement common rules and procedures to gain better understanding and communication with the shared language. Also, having a real shared language helps it. Because the cultural layer is complex, communication between cross-border organizations requires certain rules of common understanding. Here utilizing the figure 7, introducing culture layers from global point.

The model in figure 7 consists of two building blocks. One is a multi-level method that presents culture as a multi-level structure, ranging from the macro level of global culture to nesting each other through national, organizational, group and cultural values at the individual level. Second, based on Schein's (1992) culture model, the most external layers of observed deliverables and behaviors, deeper levels of value that can be tested by social consensus, and invisible and taken for granted that is considered as a multi-layered structure consisting of the deepest levels of basic assumptions. (Leung et al. 2005, 363.)

Under the global level are amassed organizations and networks at the national level, where the culture of the region changes from one country or network to another. In the figure 7 is depicted, down is a local organization, all of which share some collective values of their country's culture, but they also represent the type of industry, the type of ownership, the value of the founder, the "common language". In the bottom of this structure are individuals who receive the cultural values conveyed to them from higher levels of culture. Individuals in the same group have the same values that separate them from other groups and create a group-level culture through a bottom-up process of adding shared values. Organizations that share similar values create an organizational culture through the process of sharing, and local organizations that share similar values create a national culture that is different from other national cultures. (Leung et al. 2005, 363.)

According to Leung et al. (2005, 363), both top-down and bottom-up processes reflect the dynamic nature of culture, with changes happening at any other level above or below the top-down process. Explaining how different levels of culture are shaped and reshaped. Comparably, changes at each level are affected by the top-down process at the lower levels and the higher levels by the cumulative bottom-up process.

This effect of across bottom-up and top-down cultural levels can be similarly considered among cross-border organizations in global companies. Global organizations and networks are formed by engaging local-level organizations in the Global Arena. This means that there is a continuous interjects of reformation and remodeling at both levels. These global rules and values are trickled down to the local organizations that make up the global company, forming the local organization over time. Mutually, joining a local organization to a global company can make changes to the global company, as it must work efficiently through various cultural borders. (Leung et al. 2005, 363.)

2.5 National culture

The term "culture glasses", coined by American anthropologist Franz Boas (1858–1942), refers to the recognition of both home and other cultures through some sort of "lenses." Culture is *the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the member of one group or category of people from others* (Hofstede et al. 2010, 6). As opposed to organizational cultures, national cultures operate at a much deeper level, as these beliefs, norms and values are learned earlier on.

Similar concept as Hofstede culture value dimensions had already surveyed by American sociologist Alex Inkeles and psychologist Daniel Levinson in 1954 published. They suggested that some issues qualify as common basic problems worldwide, with consequences for the function of societies, of groups within those societies, and individuals within those group:

1. Relation to authority
2. Conception of self, in particular the relationship between individual and society as well the individual's concept of masculinity and femininity
3. Ways of dealing with conflicts, including the control of aggression and the expression of feeling. (Inkeles & Levinson 1969, according to Hofstede et al. 2010, 29-30.)

Hofstede carried out research about national cultures twenty years later, and his empirical results covered well this study areas predicted by Inkeles & Levinson. Also from early Hofstede's studies, the world has been changing politically and economically, and what is even more problematic, organizations worldwide are implementing and promoting totally new work values, highlighting cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and expedite empowerment and localization (Holden 2002, 34-35).

2.5.1 Hofstede's six value dimensions model

Hofstede's model (Hofstede et al. 2010, 28-33) is based on the assumption that different cultures can be distinguished based on differences in what they value, and it called value dimensions. Based on the cultural anthropological idea that "all human beings have a common problem, but the solutions differ from society to society," Hofstede extracted the differences in the solutions of each country in the following areas. Hofstede's cultural and management research and models are said to be important guidelines for cross-cultural understanding. The survey targeted 116,000 people in 50 countries. Respondents are IBM employees, and IBM employees are similar in many ways, except that they are of different nationalities. That is why the answers obtained here clearly show the differences in national culture. He defined these four problem domains as the dimensions of cultural analysis, and factored and scored quantitative data, which is the result of a survey of country-specific problem-solving methods. In other words, each country's score was shown from 0 to 100 in each of the four problem areas. Original four dimensions are: Power distance, Individualism and collectivism, masculinity and femininity, and uncertainty avoidance. It showed the cultural differences between countries empirically and quantitatively. Thirty years after his first research, his original four dimensions have now increased to six dimensions.

Cultural dimensions:

POWER DISTANCE INDEX (PDI)

The distribution of all kinds of power in the world, such as wealth, power, physical ability, and intellectual ability, is unequal. But how people deal with that reality depends on the country. Power distance can thus be specified as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is dispersed unequally. Hofstede defined it as "power inequality; the extent to which weaker members anticipate and accept an unequal distribution of power in each country's institutions and organizations." The root issue here is how a society handles inequalities among people. People in societies which have a large degree of power distance accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place, and which is generally accepted. In societies with low power distance, people try to equalize the distribution of power and demand justification for inequalities of power. In the large power distance at workplace, superior and subordinates consider each other as truly unequal; the hierarchical system is based on this existential inequality. Small power distance at workplace is vice versa, the hierarchical system is just an inequality of roles, established for convenience, and roles maybe changed, so that someone who today is my subordinate may tomorrow be my superior. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 61 and 73-74.)

INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS COLLECTIVISM (IDV)

Individualism can be defined as a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families. Its opposite, Collectivism, represents a preference for a tightly-knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular ingroup to look after them in exchange for unconditional loyalty. A society's position on this dimension is reflected in whether people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" (Individualism) or "we" (Collectivism). (Hofstede et al. 2010, 90-94.)

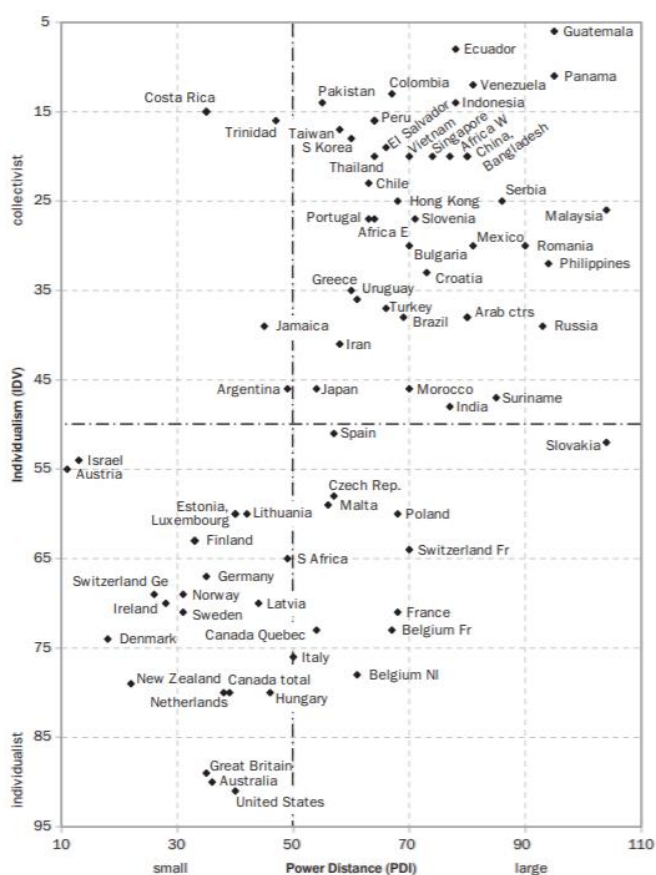


Figure 8. Power distance versus Individualism (Hofstede et al. 2010, 103)

This figure 8 by Hofstede (2010) shows the correlation between power distance and individualism-collectivism. They describe this relationship as follows: The two dimensions the power distance and the Individualism tend to be negatively correlated, many countries that high score on the power distance index have low score on the individualism index, and vice versa. In cultures in which people are dependent on in-groups, these people are usually

also dependent on power figures. Most in-groups have patriarchal structures, with the head of the in-group exercising strong moral authority. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 102-104.)

Masculinity vs Femininity (MAS)

The masculinity side of this dimension represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material rewards for success. The masculinity society at large is more competitive. Vice versa, femininity side stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life. The femininity society at large is more consensus-oriented. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 138-139.) In the business context Masculinity versus Femininity is sometimes also related to as “tough versus tender” cultures.

Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)

It is related to the level of stress in a society when facing of an unknown future. Uncertainty-avoiding cultures try to evade ambiguous situation. People in such cultures look for structure in their organizations, and relationships that makes events clearly definable and predictable. Ambiguous is a situation in which anything can happen, and we have no idea what. As soon as uncertainty is expressed as risk, it ceases to be a source of anxiety. Rather than leading to reducing risk, uncertainty avoidance leads to a reduction of unknown. Uncertainty avoidance is not the same as risk avoidance. Uncertainty is to risk as anxiety is to fear. Both are diffuse feeling. Focused on an object in the case of fear, and an event in the case of risk. Risk is often expressed as a percentage of probability that a particular event will happen, but uncertainty has no probability attached to it. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 188-198.)

Long Term vs Short Term Orientation (LTO-CVS)

It is related to the choice of focus for people's endeavours: the future or the present and past. All societies have to maintain some connections with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and the future and prioritize these two existential goals differently. Societies who score low on this dimension, prefer to maintain time-honoured traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion. Those societies with a culture which scores high, take a more pragmatic approach, for example, which is they encourage thrift and efforts in modern education as a way to prepare for the future. In the business context, this dimension is referred to as “(short-term) normative versus (long-term) pragmatic”. In a long-term society, invest in education, and sparing resources, for future success. Focus is on market position, and importance is future growth and profits. Thinking is synthetical. In a short-term oriented society, there is a clear guideline for what is good and what is evil, and if one is truth, the other cannot be true. This society pressure toward consumes, and people make efforts to get immediate results. In the business, the focus is on

final profit and loss, and on profits for the year. Thinking is analytical. In the business context, this dimension can be called "normative vs. practical, (short-term vs. long-term)." (Hofstede et al. 2010, 240-251 and 364.)

Indulgence vs Restraint (IVR)

Related to the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life. Indulgence represents tendency of a society in which the basic and natural human impulses associated with enjoying and enjoying life can be relatively freely satisfied. Restraint is a society that curbs the fulfilment of needs and controls them with strict social norms. IVR shows a weak negative correlation with PDI, indicating that more hierarchical societies tend to be less lenient. The relationship of LTO-WVS with IVR shows a clear regional pattern. Which is the most common pattern high indulgence plus short-term orientation groups are included five northern European. The next most common pattern restraint plus long-term orientation groups include East Asian countries. There is a positive relationship between indulgence and national wealth, important but weak. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 280-286.)

2.5.2 Trompenaar's seven dimensions of culture

Trompenaar's Seven dimensions of culture is according to a Dutch organizational theorist, management consultant Trompenaar et al. (2010), and a British management philosopher, Hampden-Turner (1998). The model focuses on variations in both values and personal relationships across cultures. According to Trompenaar what differences in national cultures are also results from every society determining specific solutions to certain universal issues. The first cultural five dimensions focus on relationships among people, while the last two focus on time management and society's relationship with nature. The orientations of the five values have a major influence on how people do business and manage when faced with a moral dilemma, and how they respond.

Cultural dimensions:

Universalism vs. Particularism

People's behavior that how to determine whether to treat others equally based on rules or whether there are differences between others based on relationships. Universalist is rule-based, their behavior tends to be abstract. It also tends to imply equality in the sense that all persons categorized under the rule should be treated the same. Particularist tend to far more attention is given to the obligations of relationships and unique circumstances. (Trompenaar et al. 2012, 11 and 41-43.)

Individualism vs. communitarianism

This aspect is the difference in the tendency of people to consider themselves primarily as individuals or primarily as part of a group. It also has to do with whether to prioritize individual or community wishes. Individualism tends to decisions are made on the spot by representatives, and people ideally reach goals by oneself and assume personal responsibility. Communitarianism tends to decisions are referred by delegate to the organization, and people ideally reach goals in groups. In more communitarian cultures, those at meeting are delegates, bound by the wished of those who sent them. So, when facing to unexpected demands, they will wish to confer with their own group. If the main group which including decision making member is not consulted first, an initial yes can easily become a no later. (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 11, 76-77 and 85.)

Affective vs. Neutral

Different cultures have different levels of acceptance of significant emotional differences. This aspect depends on whether the nature of our interaction should be objective and decoupled, or whether expressing emotions is acceptable. Degree of noticeable emotion differences culture to culture. Neutral people do not show what they are thinking or feeling. Affective people show their feelings plainly, they attempt to find immediate outlets for their feelings. People should be discreet in not overinterpreting such differences. Those aspects of the differences between affective and neutral approach may lead to variety of issues to intercultural communication. (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 11, 87, 90 and 93.)

Specific vs. Diffuse

Closely associated to whether we show emotions in dealing with other people is the degree to which people take on others in specific area of life and single levels of personality, versus diffusely in multiple areas of life of personality at the same time. Specific orientated people's connection is direct, to the point, and purposeful. In the business they prefer to be quick, to the point and efficient. Diffuse oriented people form of connecting are indirect, circuitous, and seemingly purposeless. In the business, they take time, and remember there is more than one way of doing something. (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 101-102 and 123.)

Achievement vs. Ascription.

All societies give certain of their members higher status than others, for example based on age, gender, social connections, education, and profession, signalling that usual recognition should be concentrated on such people and their activities. Achievement based status means being evaluated on the basis of recent accomplishment and records. Ascription based status means that your status is attributed to you not only by birth, relatives, gender, or age, but also by your contacts and educational records. Achievement oriented respects

for superiors in the hierarchy is based on how effectively they perform their jobs and how high their expertise is. Ascription oriented respect for superiors in the hierarchy is seen as a measure of people's commitment to the organization and its pursuit. (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 12, 125 and 145.)

The other two cover people's attitudes time

Relative focus on the past/present/future and structuring time in daily activities. Those are subcomponents: 1. Whether time is sequential (a series of linear passing events) or synchronic (can working on task parallel). 2. The duration of thinking time. 3. A priority between deadline or quality, when people have to choose. (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 13 and 147-154.)

Relationship with nature environment

Which people believe that they control the environment, or it controls them. Societies who conduct business have developed two major orientations toward nature. 1. The either believe that people can and should control nature by imposing their will on it, or 2. They believe people are part of nature and must be go along with laws, directions and forces. (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 13, 173 and 189.)

2.6 Organizational culture

Generally speaking, organizational culture refers to the general culture within a group of people called an organization, which exists not only in companies or in non-profit organizations. In the case of a company, the term corporate culture is sometimes used to describe the culture within the organization. This culture, just as individuals in a culture can have different personalities while sharing many things in common, so do groups and organizations. And it is this phenomenon that is perceived as a corporate culture (Morgan 1997, 129).

Culture serves two key elements for the group of people or organization. First, the action is simpler and more efficient. For example, business and social interactions occur quickly and easily when people know what to prioritize and how to interact. Second, culture provides its members with a valuable source of social identity. Humans have a fundamental need to belong to a social group and belonging to a culture (acting according to the norms and values of the culture) brings safety and security from the group. (Lane et al. 2014, 35.)

According to Schein (2004, 17; 2009, 27), who introduced the culture in three levels: culture is the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration,

and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

Organization culture can be observed by considering oneself as an outsider. Awareness of the patterns of interaction between individuals, the language used, the images and themes explored in conversation, and the various rituals of everyday work gradually reveal the characteristics of this organizational culture. Patterns of such belief or shared meaning, fragmented or integrated and supported by several operating norms and rituals can exert a decisive influence on the organization's overall ability to deal with the challenges it faces. (Morgan 1997, 129-130.)

Organizational culture refers to a set of common values, traditions, and beliefs that influence the behavior of an organization. Schein introduced the culture in three levels: Artifacts, Espoused values, and Basic assumptions. The surface of culture is the level of artifacts, including phenomena and creations that can be perceived as differences when groups with two different cultural backgrounds encounter each other.

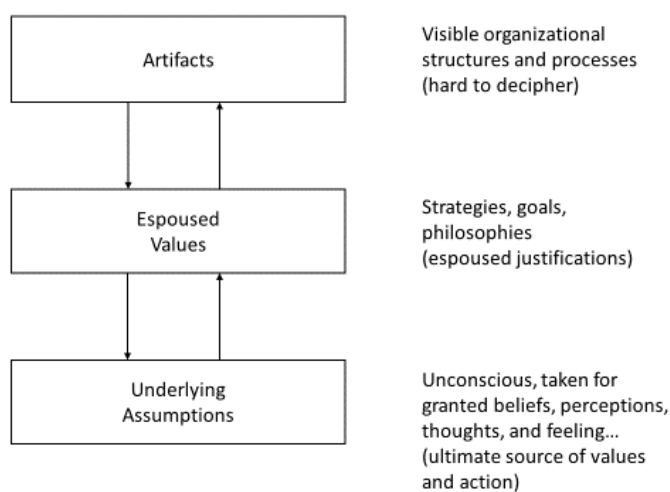


Figure 9. Three Levels of Culture (Schein 2004, 26; 2009, 21)

Even since the rise of Japan as a leading industrial power, organization theorists and managers alike have become more and more aware of the relationship between culture and management (Morgan 1997, 119). For example, the Japanese concept of work and the relations between employees and their organizations is very different from those common

in the Western countries. The organization is considered as a collectiveness to which employees belong rather than just a workplace made from separate individuals. The supportive spirit of village or commune often infuses work experience, and there is considerable emphasis on interdependence, shared concerns, and mutual help. (Morgan 1997, 122.) This is an example of collectivism, which is one of the characteristics of Japanese national culture described by the researchers representing Hofstede et al. (2010), and can be seen within the organization.

3 Intercultural communication

3.1 Communication

First of all, the etymology of communication is stated. Definition of communication is from Latin communicationem (nominative communicatio) "a making common, imparting, communicating", noun of action from past-participle stem of communicare "to share, divide out" (Online etymology dictionary) Therefore, "Communication" includes the meaning of "information sharing" and also "information transmission."

Here before considering about cross-cultural communication, first studying the general communication process. The Shannon and Weaver model is a linear model of communication that is a framework for explaining how messages are sent and received.

The Shannon and Weaver model

Shannon is an American mathematician, electrical engineer, and he is known for establishing information theory in his 1948 paper "A mathematical theory of communication." And Weaver is co-authored of it. According to Shannon, the root problem of communication is that of replicating at one point either the same or almost the same message selected at another point (Shannon 1948, 1).

According to Shannon (1948, 2), by communication system it means a system of the type indicated schematically. It forms of essentially five parts:

- 1 Information source: information source that produces a message or sequence of messages of various types that are communicated to the receiving terminal.
- 2 Transmitter: A transmitter that conducts a message in some way to produce a signal suitable for transmission over a channel.
- 3 Channel: The channel is just the method used to send a signal from a transmitter to a receiver.
- 4 Receiver: The receiver typically performs the opposite of what the transmitter did, reconstructing the message from the signal.
- 5 Destination: The destination is the person (or thing) for whom the message is meant.

It also suggests that noise sources affect message decoding in the channel portion between the transmitter and receiver.

Messages often have meanings. Namely is they refer to specific physical or conceptual entities or are associated according to the system (Shannon 1948, 1). Even in this early

communication model, languages are accepted as entities. On the other hand, Shannon and Weaver were mathematicians and their work contributed to computer science. This also marks the limits of a general model of human communication, as the Shannon and Weaver models are information-centric rather than meaning-centric, as can be seen from the noise location and channel definitions.

When considering communication from the perspective of transmission and response, if a reaction (response) occurs in another individual / group in response to an action (transmission) of one individual / group, communication is established between the two. (However, "Establish" does not mean that the content of the message is correct or incorrect here.) The function of communication behavior includes not only the transmission of information but also emotional empathy and the control of the behavior of the other party. Shannon's model was added a step of feedback later.

Strictly speaking, those studies introduced here are cross-cultural communication, so it includes elements of both culture and communication. Cultural values take on an overriding influence on message encoding and decoding between sender and receiver (Samovar et al, 1981; Kim & Gudykunst, 1988, according to Peltokorpi & Clausen 2011, 511). In addition, the case of communication across the border, the level of language used by both communicators is not always native, and they have different cultural backgrounds can lead to confusion, mistakes, and discrepancies, more frequently.

In the next chapter discusses about intercultural communication and key communication filter, Language, Style of thinking.

3.2 Language

Language as a cultural element has already been introduced in the culture section, but here it describes language as a means of communication. Communication is conducted in two ways, (1) language (Using words that have a commonly understood meaning and are regularly combined into sentences according to rules, grammar) and (2) nonverbal communication, or "silent language" what Hall called. (Ferraro 2006, 47; Browaeys & Price 2015, 330).

The definition of "language" in Concise Oxford English dictionary (2006, 801): *The method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the used of words in structured and conventional way. The system of communication used by particular community or country. The manner or style of a piece of writing or speech.* In addition, verbal uses linguistic elements which also includes such as intonation, idioms, grammar, slang (including internet) and dialects. Non-verbal language the use is an essential companion to spoken

language communication. Non-verbal languages also like as verbal, it is visible, audible, and contain cultural elements, such as facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, physical distance (proxemics), posing and usage of frequency and type of interjections. Accurate use and understanding of these require specific knowledge of culture. However, the perception of these cultural elements varies from culture to culture and can lead to communication discrepancies and psychological discomfort. However, in this study, it should pay more attention on the linguistic point rather than the non-verbal point because communication generally takes place in a situation where there is distance.

3.2.1 Role of languages

Language can be considered as an arbitrary code that counts on shared definitions. Language can be considered as part of the social process, a systematic framework for managing events (Browaey & Price 2015, 330). It is system which can be studied, described, and taught (Adler & Graham 1989, 519). Language is a significant part of communication, but communication has more vast meaning than language alone, which means that communication is not simply about understanding and speaking a language (Lane et al. 2014, 78). It involves transmitting an idea and understanding someone else's idea. It is difficult for people to perfectly express all one's thoughts and transfer to others correctly, even in one's native language. Also, there is a bound to how completely any two persons can share the same meaning for a given word. The more experience one share with another person, the more likely one is to share perception and thus share meaning (Bové & Thill 2008, 14). According to Sapir-Worf hypothesis, there are strong and weak formulation and various arguments, but what is commonly said here is that language influences thinking and cognition in no small measure. Although there is no evidence that different languages think differently and cannot be understood by each other, the diversity of languages is enormous and affects various perceptions. Language defines thought more than the other way around, because our early mental experiences are dominated by mother tongue, and the patterns of thought are formed already when we are very young. By the age of six or seven, our thought processes are adjusted for good by either clinically logical France, exuberant but vague Spanish, respect-oriented but even vaguer Japanese, or rigidly morphological (fourteen case endings) Finnish. (Lewis 2007, 132.) After all, language is a cultural element and an important tool in communication.

3.2.2 Language and translation in communication

The difference between this language (native language) and culture becomes apparent by using a foreign language (English here). The use of a foreign language involves the process

of translation. This includes cases where the mechanical features of translation are not used. The influence of one's native language may appear in the process of translation when using a foreign language. Translation is also a process of interpretation and can lose its meaning during the translation process (van Nes et al. 2010, 313). That's because the language itself has a cultural element. Koivisto (1998, 290) shows figure 10 about this linguistic and cultural difference and the misunderstandings that arise during the translation process.

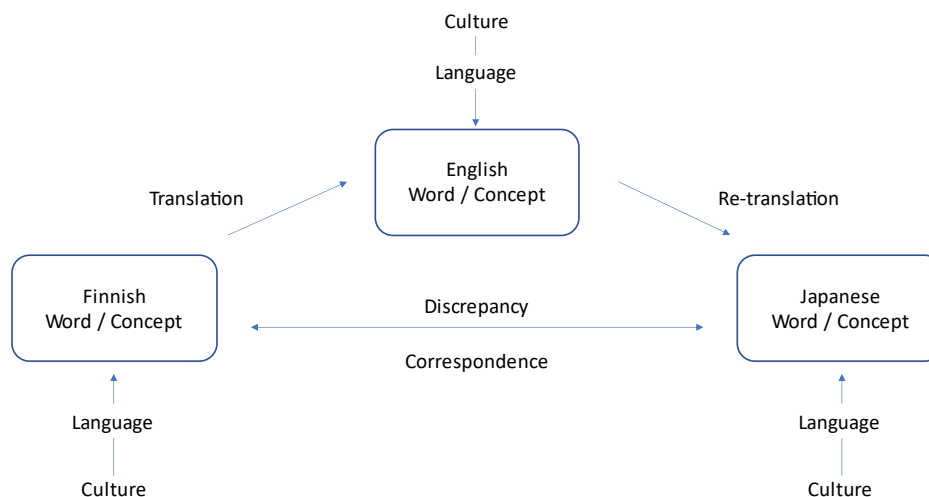


Figure 10. The use of English in Finno-Japanese management as a factor resulting in miscommunication. (Koivisto 1998, 290)

What needs to be considered is the translation process and issue, using English as a common means of communication between Finnish and Japanese organizations results in a total of three levels of translation process. That word in proper English stands for an English concept, and the Finnish and English concepts are not necessarily identical, and also the English and Japanese concepts behind the word are not always identical. Cultural and linguistic mistranslations can occur at several stages, especially if both parties to the communication process are not really skilful in English. (Koivisto 1998, 289.) In this way, the difference in the concept of the native language may affect the use of English through the process of translation. Related to this concept, the difference between English and Japanese is mentioned in chapter 3.3 of this thesis as the range of meaning of words, the area of context.

3.3 Style of thinking and communicating

How people think and express their thoughts is determined not only individually but also socially and culturally. A language is the primary means of communication, but its importance and how to express and communicate can vary from culture to culture. According to Hall (1989, 42), what gives person his/her identity no matter where he/she is born, it is his/her culture, the total communication framework. This chapter will be considering the style of thinking, which is a part of communication filters, especially based on concept of Hall's contextual culture.

Hall has always emphasized the close relationship between culture and communication. Hall proposed a complete theory of culture as communication, and also he treats culture in its entirety as a form of communication (Hall 1959, 51 and 55). His definition of culture is as a "system" to provide, send, store information. Birdwhistell (1970) takes different stance than Hall, he argues that the cultural focus is on structure, and the communication focus is on process (Giri 2006, 124).

3.3.1 High vs. Low context

Context can be specified as the atmosphere in which the communication activity happens and which aids to define the communication (Browaeys & Price 2015, 339). The context of the message is as important as the message itself. On the top of that, context carries varying proportions of the meaning (Hall 1979, 86). Contextual variances are evident in the way culture approaches circumstances such as decision-making, problem-solving, and negotiation (Bové & Thill 2008, 69). In other words, context is the environment and has role in the process of communication, and the content of context in a message varies from country to country.

High vs. Low context languages

Cultural values are important when considering that communication, but the author thinks that language, which is an element of both culture and communication, also plays an important role. Languages reflect the communication styles of the cultures which are using those languages (Meyer 2014, 37).



Figure 11. Context and language map (Meyer 2014, 39)

There are several relationships of national history, language clusters, and contexts based on the use of each country's language. Low-context countries tend to have shared shorter history, Anglo-Saxon cluster and high-context culture is vice versa (Meyer 2014, 39-41).

Japanese high-context culture from a linguistic point of view

Many researchers, including Hall, mention that Japanese communication style is very high-context (HC). Language (verbal) in communication is very important, but not all in itself, and this chapter discusses the role of language in relation to the differences in the concepts behind it. Especially here, it will be considered what characteristics Japanese language has in order to maintain HC communication.

Meyer (2014, 39) categorized the context by language and points that English is low-context, followed by Romance languages descended from Latin, and then Asian languages in high-context. Also, one of the reasons Japanese language is HC, because in which a relatively high percentage of words can be interpreted multiple ways base on how and when they are used, for example has countless homonyms (Meyer 2014, 37). However, this claim differs depending on the method of communication. Orally, it requires a contextual interpretation because it is a homonym, but its meaning becomes clearer when it is written, in many cases. This is because Japanese uses a combination of kanji, which is an ideographic character (originally from Chinese character "hanzi"), in addition to the two types of phonetic characters. For example, Meyer (2014, 37) used the Japanese word "Ashi" means both feet and legs as an example to explain that Japanese has many homonyms. In this case in Japanese, even if the pronunciation is the same "Ashi", for a person's foot, write "足" when referring to the ankle to toe, and write "脚" when referring to the entire foot below the pelvis, or below the pelvis to the ankle.

In terms of the high context of Japanese, how to read (pronounce) the country name can be mentioned. It may not be uncommon for a country to be called more than one name, as the United States of America/ USA or United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland/

UK. However, in the case of Japan, both pronunciations of "Nippon" and "Nihon" are generally used for one notation, "日本/Japan". In addition, this difference in pronunciation may be personal or may change depending on the situation of use. This may be related to the fact that, unlike Chinese characters "hanzi", many Japanese characters "kanji" have multiple readings (pronunciations) due to its historical and linguistic background. Furthermore, as of 2021, the official reading of the country name has not been announced by the Government of Japan. Considering in terms of utterances and letters oral and written, as Meyer (2014) said, oral communication in Japanese may be more contextual than written communication.

According to Meyer (2014, 37), Japanese is a high-context language, it has a high proportion of words can be interpreted multiple ways depending on how and when they are used. In high-context languages a relatively high percentage of words can be interpreted depending several ways based on context. It also can be said that related to be a matter of the range of meaning of the word, not just the homonyms. Depending on the language, the meaning of a particular vocabulary may or may not include results, or the meanings may depend on the context. According to Ohmura (2016, 85-87, author's translation), for example, **drown** in English includes the result of an action as a meaning, but 溺れる/ **Oboreru** in Japanese does not include the result, and it depends on the context. It means that 溺れる/ **Oboreru** in Japanese, the drowned person may be alive. Also, 説得する/ **Settokusuru** is the corresponding Japanese that **persuade** English, but it does not include the meaning of the result that convinces the other party like English.

The Japanese grammar and its operation, it is suggested from the following points that communication using it is very HC from a linguistic point of view. Even though some languages do not require it, the English language requires that the subject be stated in every sentence (The free dictionary by Farlex), also all verbs need a subject (Lexico.com, 2021). In English, in a case simple present sentence, verb conjugation changes depending on subject. On the other hand, simple present sentences in Japanese (Futsu-tai), conjugation does not change depending on the subject or the subject/person/thing of the topic, but it is often omitted. In other words, if both communication participants already knew who/what the subject (theme) of a topic = "old information" is in a conversation or sentence, it does not need to clarify those. It may be also related to the practice that the use of personal pronouns for bosses and elders is considered inappropriate (impolite). Either way, it (what the pronoun refers to) can be inferred from the contextual background and does not need to be explicitly stated for Japanese point of view. In Japanese, objects can be omitted under the same conditions as above.

Simple present conjugation:

English: I **am** a student. / He **is** a student.

Subject: No omitted, Verb: conjugation.

Japanese: (Watashi wa) gakusei **desu**. / (Kare wa) gakusei **desu**.

Subject /Theme: Usually omitted, if it is old information,

Verb: No conjugation.

Finnish: (Minä) **olen** opiskelija. / Hän **on** opiskelija.

Subject: Omitted (the first-person), usually no omitted (the third-person),

Verb: conjugation.

However, it is necessary to correctly understand what is omitted and what meaning / context is included on both sides of communicators. In other words, people need to share context in order to facilitate and maintain HC communication. In addition to the original meaning of the word itself, it may be efficient to include other information (cultural values, circumstances, detailed usage rules, etc.). HC communication generally, compared to LC communication, is economical, fast, efficient, and satisfying, but people have to spend a lot of time learning it Hall (1989). For example, Japanese has such a characteristic below.

- 1 **Onomatopoeia.** Japanese is said to be a language in which a wide variety of onomatopoeia is used in daily life (Weblio dictionary, author's translation). Using onomatopoeia also has the advantage of being able to convey concisely without the need for long explanations. In other words, onomatopoeia is a word that works on the senses and is easy to convey to the other person in a concise manner, so many native Japanese speakers can hear a certain onomatopoeia and think of the same sense and situation.
- 2 **Honorifics.** Honorifics are commonly used in some languages, but modern Japanese honorifics are relative honorifics, with changing levels of honorifics depending on the relationship between the speaker, the listener, and the other person. The use of honorifics in communication between two parties is influenced by their position (for example, hierarchical, age, job title, etc.), intimacy (generally, honorifics are also used for first-time encounters and people with a psychological distance, to "outsider"), and whether it is an official scene. In Japanese, the usage and variety of honorifics are little complicated and varies depending on relationships and situations. In communication when a third-party joins, whether outside or inside the group is the criterion for using honorifics. For example, in communication between a boss

(person A) and a subordinate (person B), subordinate uses honorifics (respectful expressions) for his/her boss. However, when a person outside of the organization (person C) calls the boss (person A), the subordinate (person B) who answers the call does not use honorifics (respectful expressions) about the boss. In this case, honorifics (respectful expressions) are used for third party (person C). This is because subordinate (person B) identifies his/her boss (person A) as the same group as him/herself (person B) (insider) and third party (person C) as outside the group (outsider).

Related to this point Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) that Japanese managers use the unique Japanese language, which encodes social distance with great precision, at the same time permitting messages to be communicated through the use of context, not solely by the self-complete grammatical code. (Holden 2002, 231) From those points of view of Japanese language and its use, it can be said that it is very high context because it is highly tolerant of ambiguity, implicit and requires understanding of context. This difference in communication between HC and LC also appears in non-verbal languages.

Non-verbal communication, use of interjects in Japanese, Aizuchi.

In nonverbal communication, cultural differences can be misleading. This is also related to the importance of the communicator's role in different contextual cultures. The frequency and meaning of listener feedback vary between low-context communication that emphasizes explicit content and high-context communication that requires an understanding of implicit content. Lewis (2007, 134) explained that the American is very focused about *what* is said, in the other hand, the Japanese cares much more about *how* it is said.

Aizuchi is part of the Japanese interjection, and its frequency of use and its meaning are characteristic of Japanese communication. Aizuchi is frequently interjected during a conversation, indicating that the listener is paying attention or understanding the speaker. Aizuchi is thought to reassure the speaker, indicating that the listener is active and involved in the discussion. In Japanese communication, it is an important element that the speaker can confirm that the conversation is established by showing that the listener is participating in the conversation by Aizuchi. It's feedback from the listener during the conversation. In Japanese communication, as seen in the use of this Aizuchi, the listener's feedback plays an important role in establishing the conversation, and the listener's nonverbal communication guides the conversation.

However, this Japanese usage of Aizuchi is often misunderstood by non-native speakers as having the listener fully understand what is being agreed or said. For example, the difference in the role of interjections in Japanese and non-native business negotiations can

lead to discrepancies. By Aizuchi, the non-natives thought that the Japanese partners were in full agreement with their proposal, but the Japanese partner meant that they understood the proposal. This is because in Japanese communication, the interjection also plays a role of indicating "understanding" rather than "agreement."

High vs. Low context culture

Here, describing culture from a contextual point of view. All communication attempts occur in cultural contexts, patterns of physical cues, environmental stimuli, and contained understandings that bear meaning among members of the same culture (Bové & Thill 2008, 69). Low-context (LC) culture is rule-oriented, more knowledge is systematized, public, external, accessible and transferable. Time, space, activities, and relationships tend to be ordered and separated. People who have the culture background also tends to prefer more interpersonal relationships for shorter periods of time. Task-centric, decisions and activities focus on what needs to be done and the division of responsibilities. Knowledge tends to be explicit, consciously organized. High-context culture is knowledge is not all conscious but tends to be implicit or built on patterns. It is difficult to explain the source of that knowledge, even for members of high-context (HC) culture.

In individualist cultures the information in the carried system will be taken more seriously and considered more essential than in collectivist ones. According to Hofstede, in individualist cultures, the information in the accounting system is taken more seriously and more essential than in collectivist cultures. It means that individualism focuses on identifiable things such as numbers. Hofstede borrows Hall's words and defines collectivist culture as a "high-context" culture. In HC culture, people have many other more subtle clues to learn about organizational well-being and people's performance, and they do not rely much on explicit information such as numbers. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 319.)

High vs. Low context communication systems

An important part of communication is a precise understanding of the message between the sender and the recipient. A universal feature of information systems is that meaning (what the recipient is anticipated to do) consists of communication, the recipient's background and pre-programmed response, and the situation (the last two of these are internal and external contexts). Therefore, what the recipient understands, is being influenced in four ways: status, activity, setting, and experience, is important in understanding the nature of the context. (Hall 1989, 100-101.)

Cultural context influences the nature of business communication in many ways, for example, whether the nonverbal message behind the convocation / statement is perceived by

communication participants as important communication content. And it also affects how it is expressed as an explicit language. In some cultures, contexts that are implicitly included as much as or better than what is expressed as an explicit language may be important.

In the communication between HC and LC, the importance of contextual information is different in the first place. Therefore, they should tend to be more preferred in the way and content of communication. LC communication systems, people transfer/communicate a large part of the meaning into explicit code (Hall 1976, 1981, 91). In other word, perceptible spoken/written words carry most of the meaning.

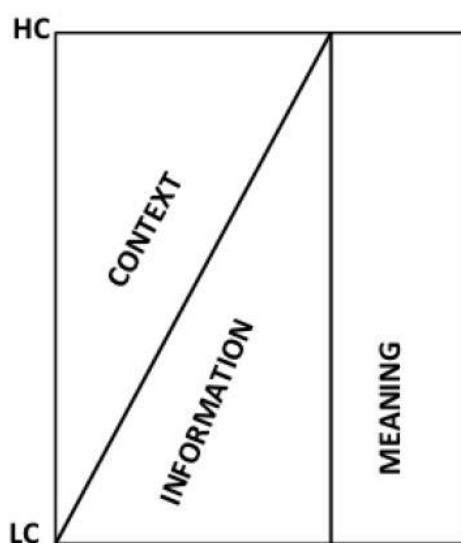


Figure 12. Information and meaning in HC and LC communication in message (Hall 1976, 1981, 102)

As Hall (1989, 102) explains in figure 12, when a sender and a receiver share a certain amount of meaning, the amount of information transmitted and the amount of context that exists between them are inversely proportional. The HC culture places a great deal of emphasis on nonverbal behavior and environment settings to communicate meaning (Bové & Thill 2008, 69). In HC communication a large part of the meaning lies in the physical context, which includes facial expressions, tone of voice and gestures. In HC communications or messages, most of the information is already in the individuals, and very little in the coded and obvious transmission part of the message (Hall 1989, 91). It means that as a premise of communication, it is necessary to have multiple cross-cutting connections and intersections with others. For that purpose, the length and depth of human relationships

with the other party are also important. When they do communicate, there is a strong boundary between who is accepted as belonging and who is considered an "outsider". In other words, individuals / collectivism, groupism with a HC culture identify the communicate partner with as internal or external based on whether they have been sharing information or background with.

It also affects the content of the messages sent by companies. This distinction between high-context and low-context communication styles also can also be seen in content materials such as advertising messages (Lee & Choi 2006, 319).

3.3.2 Japanese high context in organization

Maintain high-context communication in a Japanese organization.

From the perspective of high-context communication, it will be discussed the system that is said to be common to many traditional Japanese companies and has the characteristics of both Japanese cultural background and high-context communication.

"Ho-Ren-So" is an abbreviation for "report (ho)", "contact (ren)", and "consulting (so)". It is a Japanese business communication style, and employees working in companies are taught to "to report, to contact/ to inform, to consult/ to discuss ", when faced with a problem. Japanese business manner books and websites pick up Ho-Ren-So: e.g., Ho-Ren-So is the basis of Japanese business communication. In particular, it is the duty of subordinates to report to their superiors. Frequently report on work progress, changes, completions, results, etc. Also, by sharing information with those around you, you can cultivate a sense of companionship and avoid isolation. By increasing the number of friendships, you can raise your work consciousness. By consulting with your boss, colleagues, and subordinates, you will be able to come up with new ideas and solve your worries. Accurate Ho-Ren-So is not just necessary to get the job done accurately and smoothly. It is indispensable to keep the company energized in order to prevent mistakes and troubles and improve work efficiency. It is widely known that Ho-Ren-So was started by Tomiji Yamazaki, the president of Yamatane Securities in 1982, through an in-house campaign. He published a management book on this in 1986. As an interesting side note, Ho-Ren-So has the same pronunciation as spinach in Japanese.

Related to this subject of information in the organizations in Japan by different point of view: In study of Peltokorpi & Clausen (2011) who researched Nordic-subsidary in Japan, as one expatriate president explains, the ability of language carries capability to, allocate, store, and filter information that is an important source of informal power. Information is important and it guarantees a strong organizational position and Japanese managers who have a

large amount of information are highly evaluated by other employees. Numerous expatriates said that control over information is part of Japan's management style that increases reliance of subordinates on their supervisors. (Peltokorpi & Clausen's 2011, 519.)

In case, a company has many employees, and their nationalities may be the same, but each worker's cultural background (region, profession, etc.) is different and human relationship in the working/office is also quite different from personal/private relationships. Today, the extensions that construct most of the human world are almost always low context (Hall 1989, 102), and the situation changes rapidly in business context. So even in Japan, which is said to be a high-context culture, in business communication should have tendency to be low context communication. However, Japanese culture and communication style are based on high context, and Japanese people feel anxious if they do not come into contact with information. If so, there should be a move to share information within the group. With that in mind, the author thinks that high-context communication styles that presuppose information sharing tend to create information networks and collection points. The purpose of this Ho-Ren-So communication is to share information and it assists for maintaining high context communication. And it promotes a sense of belonging to the group, a horizontal connection in collectivism culture, and also a vertical connection between decision makers and performers in hierarchical societies. From these points, it can be said that Ho-Ren-So communication is Japanese-style communication.

The high adoption rate of On-the-Job Training (OJT) for new employee (usually for freshman) education in Japanese organizations can be regarded as a cultural and contextual manifestation of Japan. In OJT, bosses and seniors in the workplace give specific jobs to their subordinates and juniors, and through those jobs, they intentionally, systematically, and continuously provide the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for the work. It is an activity to develop overall business processing ability and tact by instructing and acquiring. In addition, understanding and inheritance of corporate culture (way of daily work, etc.) will be carried out, and human relationships will be built for new employees. According to data from Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2020) (survey was conducted in 2019), 64.5% of the establishments conducted planned OJT for regular employees, and 29.0% for non-regular employees, and it can be seen that OJT is still emphasized in Japan. On-the-job training requires consideration of leadership ability more than the work performance of instructors, and in particular leadership ability may affect even the fate of new employees.

This comment pointed out that Seniority (年功序列, nenko-joretsu, nenko-system), it is a personnel system that raises job titles and wages according to age and years of service.

"Seniority/年功(nenko)" means " Many years of service and achievements", and the seniority system is operated based on the idea that "experience, skills, and know-how are accumulated as the number of years of service and age increases." (D's Journal 2020, author's translation). This seniority system was pointed out in the book "The Japanese Factory", published in 1958 by American (later took Japanese nationality in 1997), Japanese business theorist and professor, James Christian Abegglen. It was introduced along with "lifetime employment" and "Enterprise union" as management methods for Japanese companies after the war by him. The strengths and weaknesses of seniority are not the subject of this study. However, seniority is managed based on the idea that "the accumulated experience, skills, and know-how are appropriate for years of service and age". This idea shows that non-verbalized information within humans is respected. In that respect, it is a very contextual idea that depends on the contextual background. It will be related with Japanese culture value.

Japanese high-context and overseas subsidiary management

High-context culture may affect not only Japanese personal communication, but also the systems within the Japanese organization and strategy of the organization expands. According to data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2017, 16 and 47), the total number of Japanese companies operating outside Japan (the number of bases) is 75,531. The number of Japanese long-term residents working for overseas private companies (three months or more and planning to return to Japan completely, only for him/herself, excluding accompanying family members) is 273,088. From this point of view, there is a tendency for Japanese companies to dispatch a relatively large number of expatriates to overseas bases.

It will be considering trends in the international management strategies of Japanese companies from the perspective of communication, and the tendency of Japanese companies to dispatch expatriates to overseas bases (subsidiaries). Amuro (1982) mentioned that Japanese companies that have grown and developed in a high-context culture have a lot of management know-how and mechanisms (tacit knowledge) that are not specified or coded. Therefore, when managing overseas subsidiaries, tend to direct control is achieved through humans (Japanese expatriates) who are familiar with the system and organized. On the other hand, in Western companies based on a low-context culture, the main management know-how is formalized (explicit knowledge), so there is room for indirect control (localization) of overseas subsidiaries. (Furusawa 2016, 58, author's translation.)

3.3.3 Communication behaviour (style) and communication environment

Considering from the behaviour (style) and environment point of communication, if a person is an outsider (who commonly uses LC communication style) in a high context culture/environment, the person may find it difficult to communicate in a HC, because the person does not keep contextual information inside and cannot instantly create close relationships, and also she/he may not notice non-verbal messages. In other words, the receiving skills of the recipient (such as sensitivity to nonverbal messages and understanding of the context) are also important in HC communication. On the other hand, explicit information is important in LC culture/environment. In other words, pure language skills to convey to the other person or to understand the message from the other person become to be important. Even if a person who has HC communication style tries to communicate by reading between lines (like as HC communication behaviour), it brings a risk for not be communicated correct messages to the other, like as misunderstandings and confusion. It can also be confusing for people with background of HC culture, who are not accustomed to explicit language, that how much content should be stated clearly. Furthermore for them, the psychological burden of clearly expressing or receiving negative content may be great.

Communication may not be efficient in such a different context environment and behaviour. Appropriate management and proper creation of context determines the success or failure of "sharing meaning of dynamic information", which is the biggest issue of communication behavior, and also leads to the success or failure of business activities (Ota 1994, 58-59, author's translation).

		Communication behavior	
		HC	LC
Communication environment	HC	Effective	Ineffective
	LC	Ineffective	Effective

Figure 13. Relationship between effective communication behaviour and the environment (Ota 1994, 59, adapted and translated by author.)

According to Ota (1994, 59), this figure 13 shows the relationship between the environment in which the communication process occurs, and the actions taken by the sender in that environment at the context level. As mentioned in chapter 3.3.1, based on Hall's (1989) "context communication systems", the advantage of HC communication behavior is that it provides efficient interaction with small amounts of information. However, in order for this economy to take advantage, the same context must already be shared (pre-programmed) between the sender and the receiver. Therefore, in an LC communication environment, HC communication behavior has the potential risk of causing negative interactions. First, it takes a lot of time and effort to get the recipient to understand the context. In addition, HC messages are not well explained in the LC communication environment and may be determined to be passive interaction oriented. LC communication behavior, on the other hand, is clear and efficient for those who do not share context.

The screens, you impose between yourself and reality creates one of the ways in which reality is constructed, and in order to control rationality-like behavior, we need to be aware of its structure (Hall 1989, 102). Ota (1994, 60) suggests a little more detailed way to control one's communication behavior according to the existing communication environment. Especially in the LC communication environment, the communication behavior that reduces noise as much as possible, it means that will be based on the communication behavior that takes off from the own context. While assessing the changes that the new context formed by the new communication behavior gives to the premised communication environment, the feedback is given to the trajectory correction of one's own communication behavior. Matching the communication environment and communication behavior from the perspective of the context, in other words, the communication behavior that manages the context is important.

3.3.4 Direct expression vs. euphemism

Depending on the contextual culture, the preferred expression tends to be different, whether it conveys what you want to say or the truth in a conversation directly or implicit euphemism. For example, in Japanese, negative questions tend to be used frequently when soliciting. This is because the invitee tries to reduce the psychological burden of the other party in advance, considering the possibility that the other party will decline the invitation. In Japanese communication, euphemisms that take the listener's side into consideration tend to be preferred to show compassion for the other person.

3.3.5 Pre-study assumptions

The author assumed that: Hall (1989) states that Japan is a high-context culture, and also if the language reflects the thoughts of the people who use it, it means that it is possible that Japanese language itself may be high-contextual. Furthermore, pre-programming the context, that is, sharing information, is essential for the establishment of a high-context communication style. Since sharing this information is one of the axis of high-context communication, in addition to the tendency of collectivism even within a company organization that has a tendency of low context, the system (Ho-Ren-So, etc.) of the organization may have been formed to enable high-context communication. In addition, even Japanese people may not be able to perform sufficient high-context communication without using Japanese language. On top of that, in this study, the two communicating parties are far apart. Therefore, many communications are difficult to share information, including relationships, and the most of method of communication in this case has limited to convey non-linguistic code, so it is in a low-context environment. And communication conducted with not native language (lack of language skills), and this language (English) is considered as in a low-context language.

Therefore, the author thinks that high-context communication behavior will not be actively done by Japanese. Of course, it can also be considered as follows. Perhaps this difference in context affects the content and expression of the message, but the recipient may simply perceive it as a matter of language ability.

3.4 Stereotype

Stereotypes are generalized views made about people in another group or their individual members (Browaeys & Price 2015, 332). It may take some time to generalize, so the stereotype may not match the current situation, or the original information may be incorrect. It is also an idea in which personality is ignored in order to generalize the masses.

3.5 Relationships

This is about how those communications perceive each other's social status and may involve a variety of factors that seem appropriate, such as the degree of formality/ informality, respect, and intimacy considered appropriate by one or the other. Those are reflected in the behavior of the interaction and may also need to care of hierarchical considerations. Because status can be a barrier to communication between employees when employees with different hierarchy levels and cultural backgrounds have to work together. (Browaeys & Price 2015, 322.)

3.5.1 Face

Face describes the proper relationship with one's social environment, which is essential to a person and that person's family. "Losing face", in the sense of being humiliated, is an expression that carried to the English language from Chinese, the English had no equivalent for it. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 110.) "Face" is "honor and face to the world." A Japanese (Kotobank, author's translation) introduces that by maintaining one's own face and respecting the faces of others, it also brings sophistication and elegance to human relationships.

3.5.2 Guilt vs. Shame

Guilt cultures and shame cultures is the cultural type used by the American anthropologist Ruth Benedict in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1946). In the Western culture of guilt, morality has an absolute standard, Christianity which believes one god, and individuals regulate their actions based on their conscience's inner awareness of guilt. In other words, behavioral assessments are self-based. On the other hand, the culture of shame found in Japanese life is said to regulate one's actions for fear of criticism and ridicule of others. For example, mothers sometimes advise their children to stop something because they are embarrassed. The evaluation of one's behavior is based on the outside (public). The characteristic of shame culture is that "consciousness is always directed to the outside." In Japan, the idea of not doing something that the other person dislikes and thinking about one's surroundings and actions oneself has taken root since childhood. This shows a tendency to value harmony within the group, based on the idea of prioritizing groups over individuals. It also leads to a tendency to dislike deviating from common sense within the society or within the group which one belongs. And Japanese the code of conduct will be based on rules and restraints. The characteristics of these cultures of shame are similar to those of Hofstede's collectivism. Harmony, and the other important concepts in connection with the collectivist family are "face" and "shame". (Hofstede et al. 2010, 110) "Face" is a consciousness that leads to honour, and the part of how you can show others that "you are good" is important. On the other hand, "shame" is sensitive to particularly negative evaluations from the surrounding people and is a self-consciousness emotion that resulting from reference to self-assessment. It can be said that by always being aware of oneself (self-evaluation) that may be recognized by others, one tends to behave in a common sense (within a group) and act to avoid deviations. Due to the difference in emphasis on the culture of "face" and "shame", there will be differences in behaviour in the office even in cultures that have the same collectivism culture. For example, in Japan, some cross-cultural training for expatriates who go to China, which has a culture that emphasizes "face", touches on the cultural differences of "rebuke" as part of their education.

4 Intercultural communication in Finland and Japan

This chapter will review the culture differences as indicated by Hofstede's cultural value dimensions, Hall's context, and English studying as foreign language, as well as highlights the communication styles of Finland and Japan. In addition, Japanese characteristic points will be discussed. Koivisto (1998, 268) researched Finno-Japanese management, most interviewees of his study emphasized "similar feeling" as a clear source of cultural synergy between Finnish and Japanese. However, this study is focus on differences between those two. These differences between Finnish and Japanese culture, communication style, and language are exactly the purpose of this research, and are the differences that may appear in this interview and analysis.

4.1 English proficiency point of view

Needless to say, Finland and Japan use different official languages. Considering the use of English as a shared language in globalization, the language commonly used in communication between these two countries (organizations) will be considered to be English. English is used in the case companies of this research study too.

This standardization of English as the common language of business has opened up incredible opportunities, but most businesses face a huge skills gap. For many business practitioners whose native language is Japanese, lack of English communication skills is a common problem (Sakimoto & Saito 2019, 784, author's translation).

English test scores may not be a general indication that you can communicate in English in your business. Previous studies on English proficiency and TOEIC by Chapman (2003) and Hirai (2002) have denied a correlation between TOEIC score and English proficiency (Sakimoto & Saito 2019, 789, author's translation). However, Sakimoto and Saito (2019, 789, author's translation) conducted an IBM Japan English proficiency survey in 2012, and while this survey confirmed the correlation between the TOEIC score and English proficiency in terms of reading. On the other hand, the relationship between the TOEIC score and speaking, writing, and listening could not be statistically proved.

Thus, it cannot be said that there is a perfect correlation between English proficiency and test scores, and it cannot be forgotten that English proficiency is an individual skill. However, when considering communication between organizations, it is thought that objectively knowing the differences in English proficiency in each country helps as a premise for understanding the sub question "How language skills affect communication" in this study.

There are various tests to measure English proficiency, such as TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and TOEIC (The Test of English for International Communication). First, looking at secondary data on the differences in English proficiency between Finland and Japan.

The world's largest ranking of countries and regions by English skills. It based on test results of 2.2 million adults in 100 countries & regions by Education First (EF). In EF English Proficiency Index 2020 shows that Finland is No.3 on the world ranking of English skills, very high proficiency (EF EPI score 631). In the other hand, Japan is ranked No. 55 and is in the low proficiency group (EF EPI score 487).

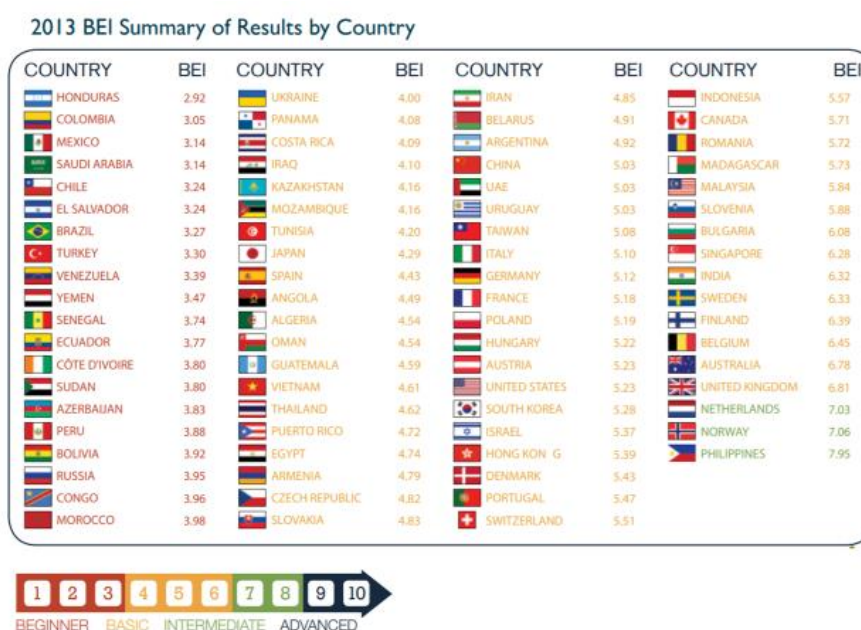


Figure 14. The 2013 Business English Index (BEI). (GlobalEnglish white paper 2013, 14)

The figure 14 is 2013 Business English Index (BEI), GlobalEnglish's third annual release of the index, is the result of a December 2012 analysis of the Business English proficiency levels of more than 212,000 GlobalEnglish subscribers from around the world.

To supplement the credibility of this data, the reason English-speaking countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom are not ranked the highest on this table is that the survey includes people who do not speak English as their mother tongue in those countries. In the 2013 index, the average global BEI score is only 4.75 out of 10. According to BEI data, Japan business English skill (4.29) is under average, while Finland (6.39) is at a very high level. However, Japan ranks 8th by size of labour force in the same BEI survey.

According to the white paper of GlobalEnglish (2013, 5), the BEI demonstrates the level of competency across multiple dimensions, including:

- Knowledge of the English language itself.
- Language application across various formats and media, it means communication.
- Use these communication skills in a various of situations, contexts.
- Ability to understand and use tones and intricacy in business situations, and to contribute substantially to relevant discussions.

In this study focus on Finland and Japan, neither countries English is not native language. Nevertheless, secondary data shows huge gap of English proficiency between countries. In this study, the language used for communication between the two organizations was English, which was learned as a foreign language other than the native language. Learning English or second language acquisition (SLA) are not the subject of this thesis, but English skills are an important keyword in this study. Also both education and language are included as a cultural element. Therefore, having the cultural context of learning language helps to discuss the differences between Finnish and Japanese English skills, and here utilizing the idea of SLA to explain it. However, it is very general.

When studying about foreigner language are many different prospective, for example, as English as foreign language (EFL) is the term used to describe the study of English by non-native speakers in countries where English is not the dominant language. And Second language acquisition (SLA) and learning is learning and acquisition of a second language once the mother tongue (or first language) acquisition is established. Also SLA is the process of learning other languages in addition to the native language.

Many things (e.g., age, environment etc.) may affect the acquisition of foreign language (in this case English), but here it will be discussed about the following:

- Linguistic distance
- Input and output opportunities.
- Motivation

Linguistic distance between English and Finnish/Japanese

Linguistic distance is how different one language (or dialect) is from another (or dialect). It may not be a complete paradox for Finns and Japanese to learn English, but it is discussed

the distance between languages to consider the differences in language concepts in terms of languages that are difficult for native English speakers to learn.

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) is the training arm of the State Department. FSI created a list to show the approximate time people need to learn a specific language as an English speaker. The categories indicate gross differences in how hard it is for native speakers of American English to learn different languages. According to Jackson and Kaplan (1999, 77-78), Japanese is Category III: Languages that are exceptionally difficult and among the hardest for native English speakers to learn to speak and read, and one of the most difficult languages. It takes about 2200 hours to reach general professional proficiency (S-3 / R-3, ILR 3). Finnish is Category II: a language that has linguistic and / or cultural differences from English, its expectation of studying hours is 1100 hours to be same level, and Finland's second language, Swedish is Category I: The language is closely cognate with English, expectation hour of study is 575–600. This level (general professional proficiency) is considered to most probably correspond to B2-C1 when identified under the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), but the requirements at each level within the two frameworks do not perfectly match. This expectation of learning time is based on the linguistic distance and is influenced by student' learning motivation and various factors.

Input and output opportunities

According to data from Tilastokeskuksen maksuttomat tilastotietokannat (2019), at end of 2019, approximately 268,000 foreign citizens lived in Finland. The number of foreign nationals increased by almost 10100, or 3.9 per cent from the previous year. At the end of the year, foreign nationals accounted for 4.8 per cent of the total population. Finnish TV very often broadcasts the show in the original language.

In other hand, Japan is an island country that does not have a land-based border geographically and is highly ethnically homogeneous. According to data of e-Stat, the portal site for Japanese Government Statistics (2019), there are 3,651,154 foreign residents (status of residence holder, data of 12.2019) for the total population approximately 126,167,000 in Japan in 2019 October to December. In other words, approximately 2.89 per cent of the population is foreign national. Japan tends to prefer to maintain homogeneity due to various factors such as geographical and historical isolation, cultural values and communication styles. Most of the information and services, including all TV programs, are provided in Japanese. In addition, the number of foreigners in the domestic population is very small, so there are few opportunities to come into contact with foreign languages except for school

education unless living in metropolitans, and naturally there are few opportunities for input and output in daily life.

Motivation

Gardner (1985) established a model of motivation in second language acquisition. This model describes two forms instrumental motivation and integrative motivation. Instrumental motivation refers to learning to complete tasks such as completing a course or getting a better salary. Integrative motivation refers to a positive attitude towards the target language community, for example, the desire to integrate and adapt to a new target culture through the use of language.

As long as living in Japan (except living in large cities), people rarely hear English in daily life. It means that Japanese people live in an environment where integrative motivation is unlikely to occur. Also, it was not required English language skills for acquiring a job. The environment of instrumental motivation was also weak. However, the situation is gradually changing for this motivation. The number of foreign tourists visiting Japan is increasing. In the field of business, the number of companies that require employees to have English proficiency is increasing due to globalization, and people are entering an era in which English proficiency affects compensation and careers depending on the industry and occupation.

4.2 Cultural point of view

Defining the cultural characteristics of Finland and Japan based on the Hofstede's cultural values dimensions explained above-mentioned.

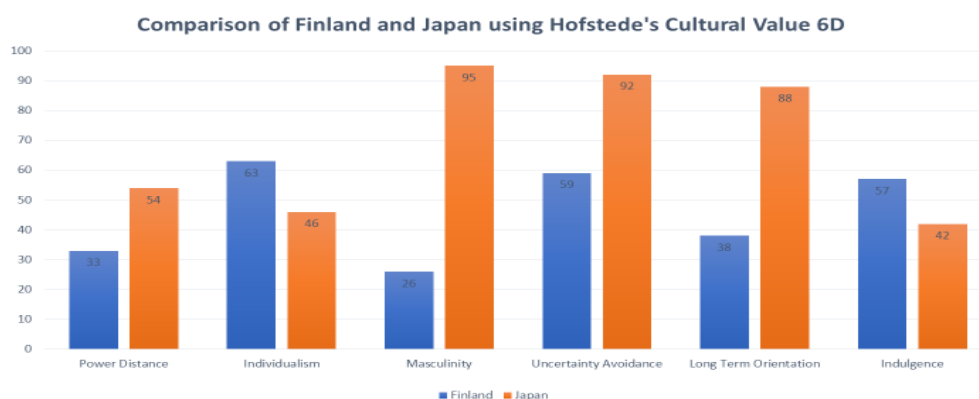


Figure 15. Hofstede cultural value 6 dimensions, comparison of Finland and Japan (Hofstede et al. 2010; Hofstede Insights.)

Gap of two cultures in each dimension are follow:

Dimension	Score gap
Power distance (PDI)	21
Individualism (IDV)	17
Masculinity (MAS)	69
Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)	33
Long term orientation (LOT)	50
Indulgence (IVR)	15

Table 1. Gap of Finland and Japan culture value in each dimension

According to Hofstede et al. (2010) cultural value dimensions, compared to Finland and Japan, Japanese culture can be tagged as:

- PDI: Less equal, hierarchical order can be acceptable
- IDV: Slightly more collectivism
- MAS: Evidently much more masculine
- UAI: More uncertainty avoiding, tendency to avoid ambiguity
- LOT: Clearly more oriented toward long-term
- IVR: Slightly more strict social norms, suppresses gratification of needs and regulates

Since the relationship between PDI and IDV is mentioned above (chapter 2.5.1), it can be said that Finnish culture is horizontal / individualism and Japanese culture is vertical / collectivism based on the relationship. In general, the opposite properties tend to be well recognized, so it is necessary to pay attention to the empirical part as well. Finnish people do not have to be in a group and tend to feel more autonomous (Karhu 2005, 75). Browaeys & Price (2015, 62) look back on the Viking culture of Scandinavia (including Finland) and describes the Scandinavian business style in this way. The Viking had no dominant hierarchy, no elaborate system of control. Instead, they maintained large independent networks,

each with its own laws and governing bodies. The Viking heritage of self-sufficiency, fairness, egalitarianism and democracy is manifested in the way businesses are conducted in Scandinavian countries today.

Finns are individualists, but in Finland individualism doesn't involve breaking the law or a promise, manipulating with fact, or saying one thing when meaning another. Finnish values are strong because they are shared by the country, rarely compromised or reduced, and are considered a norm of ethical conduct. Finns feel a sense of separation from other nationalities. They are racially not Scandinavian or Slavic like as their neighbour countries, and also their distinctive language is different from other countries near them. This sense of separation in Finland comes with a high level of national self-consciousness. (Lewis 2005, 56 and 58-59)

According to figure 16 by Torelli & Stoner (2015), Finland is horizontal individualism culture, and Japan is vertical collectivism culture. In an article on managing cultural equity in multicultural markets explains that: culturally compatible segments are those sharing either a vertical/horizontal cultural aspect or an individualism/collectivism cultural aspect. Vertical collectivism is less compatible with horizontal individualism than it is with any other cultural orientation. This happens because following the conservation values of preserving the status quo and honouring traditions, emphasized in vertical collectivistic cultures, it prevents the pursuit of open values of living an exciting and stimulating life focused on in horizontal individualistic cultures. (Torelli & Stoner 2015, 113).

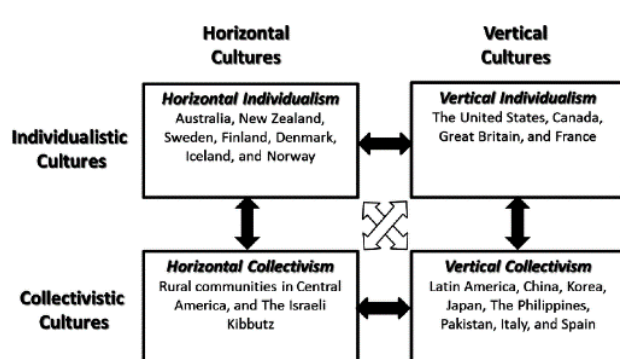


Figure 16. Description of the World in Terms of Dominant Cultural Orientations. (Torelli & Stoner 2015, 112)

4.3 Context point of view

According to Hall (1989), Japan is a country with a high level of high context culture in the world, and the communication behavior/style of the Japanese people living there is also

based on the high context culture. In high-context culture, people tend to build relationships centred on groups and shares information. Interactions between people include not only the method of communication (sharing information) but also the process of collecting information. Due to this difference in the information gathering process, Lewis (2005, 75-76) describes culture as data-oriented culture and dialog-oriented culture. Finland is data-oriented culture, people do research to produce loads of information, which is then acted upon. And they love to gather solid information and move solidly forward from this database. People from dialogue-oriented cultures as Japan, see events and business possibilities in context because they already possess an immense amount of information through their own personal information network. Finnish people prefer to speak briefly, they commonly very direct. This is perhaps the only area where Finns upset the Japanese, for in Japan direct statement, especially if combined with criticism, are completely taboo (Lewis 2005, 62). In addition, non-verbal communication is considered important for message transmission, and main communication tool is not only verbal. Lewis (2005, 77) notes that both Finns and Japanese need to be good body watchers, as oral messages are minimized in communication within their own culture.

In other hand, according to Hall, the communication style of Scandinavian countries referred as low context. However, Finland is not expressly mentioned in Hall. Nevertheless, if Finland is racially and linguistically separated from Scandinavia, as Lewis says can Finland be included in Hall's Scandinavian category? Finland appears to have been a high context culture in many ways, but that characteristic is gradually changing, and it is becoming in the younger generation's communication a lower context culture (Nishimura, Nevgi & Tella 2008, 788). Finnish context point of view, there are some research results. The hypothesis that the Finnish culture would be characterized by low context approach to communication gets strong support in the literature. Their directness or low contextuality of the communication ways of present-day Finland are mentioned by several authors (Koivisto 1998, 142).

	LC (Finland)	HC (Japan)
Planning	Developing plans that are explicit, detailed, quantifiable and information-base.	Developing plans that are more implicit and less detailed in term of instructions.
Organizing	Task-responsibility guideline are explicit: people are detailed and understood through verbal or written instruction.	Assigning tasks and responsibilities are implicit and understood according to the context.
Detailing: Manager get work done through others by	Outlining specific goals and way to achieve them. Instructions are explicit and conflicts is depersonalized.	Giving attention to relationships and group processes. Conflicts must be resolved before work can progress.
Controlling	More task-driven in accordance with monitoring and control procedures used to ensure performance objectives.	More process-driven. Information regarding the various aspects of control is embedded in the cultural context.

Table 2. Communication and context (excerpted from Browaeys & Price 2015, 156)

5 Research findings and analysis

This chapter presents an overview of the data this study is based on, as well as analyses the findings by them to the theoretical part presented in the earlier chapters. Language difference and issues, cultural matters, communication style differences, and topics related to how Japanese communication style and cultural difference in communication are perceived by Finnish organizational members and how they influence communication between the two will be discussed separately. And they will be categorized under the headings based on the themes that emerged in the interviews as significant topics.

5.1 Communication with verbal and non-verbal

Analyse matters related to language (verbal and non-verbal). This chapter 5.1 focuses on the actual English proficiency used in communication between two organizations and how it affects their communication.

The main finding is that differences in language skills can affect the communication itself between the two organizations. The effect is that it is a means of communication, it takes longer than usual to respond to understand the language, sometimes occur misunderstandings, the process of confirmation and correction takes effort and time. Linguistic communication is important for Finnish members, while attention to nonverbal behaviour is low.

5.1.1 Verbal communication (English proficiency)

This study focuses on the "differences". Since the common language of each of the two organizations is different in the first place, it will be focused on English that is actually used as the shared language for their communication. Therefore, this chapter first analyses the impact of English proficiency on communication.

Language was one of the mentioned words which addressed barriers or difficulties in those interviews. It turns out that (skills of) shared language is an important element and influence in business communication. Especially in the case of communication between Finnish and Japanese organizations, and there may be a gap of English proficiency between two organizations even in this research as similar as the secondary data shows at chapter 4.1. Differences in English proficiency between Finnish and Japanese organizations, and differences in English proficiency by age and occupation among members of Japanese organizations, even affect communication between the two organizations.

Most of the people in Japan (or side organization) can't speak English.
(Interviewee C)

We have language barrier. Yeah, that's for sure. (Interviewee A)

In this study, language can be a barrier in the sense that communication between these two organizations is not smooth. However, communication and joint business projects between organizations are conducted in English. The author considers that the comments below from this research interview show their positive attitude even in situations where linguistic communication is not smooth, or it can be difficult.

Language barrier, it is not that big issue, because you can always ask what other people means, though, in the end, you will get an understanding.
(Interviewee B)

This interview, the low of the corresponding of business communication in English skills in the Japanese organization was found. This was similar to secondary data and was not a new finding. To put it a little more clearly, in case of this study, it means that not all members of the Japanese organization can participate in communication depending on the ability of the shared language (English). Also, it is perceived that the younger the age of Japanese organization members their English proficiency tends to be higher by interviewees. However, English proficiency is personal and varies from person to person, which also pointed out in the interviews.

Occupation and language proficiency.

The research company this time develops and manufactures industrial products. Therefore, communication involves technical content. There are many technical terms that are completely different from the words used in everyday English, so not only general business English but also technical matter English is required. In Finland, English proficiency is also included in the education as part of the university program to become a mechanical engineer.

The interview comments show that direct communication in English is difficult on the theme of duties (technical content) between Finnish and Japanese engineers. Because that not only general shared language (English) in day-to-day business, but also particularly jargon (words themselves, shared language in technical filed) is lacking.

I mean the content it's sometimes very difficult to understand what they're trying to say because there are in our business a lot of technical language and technical words. The Japanese people they don't necessarily know what are

those in English so that's causing sometimes confusion so mostly it's difficult to understand what they are trying to really say in the email. (Interviewer: So you mean is more like language issues related to your communication?) Yes, I think it's more related to the technical vocabulary, because lots of technical words in English and this Japanese people may might not necessarily know them so that's why. That's why it's sometimes difficult to understand what's the what's the content of the message. (Interviewee B)

For some reason, Japanese technical companies, their workers they have not developed kind of good English skills to communicate. And I think this is very strange, because Japan should sell product outside and to sell product outside, you need to speak English. (Interviewee D)

However, although the difference in English proficiency is personal, the Finnish side recognized the tendency of Japanese organization members in that respect as follows.

It is not always like that Japanese people all can't speak English, it depends on the person. There are for example in Yaskawa, there are lots of young people who are doing international business and their English is very good. But there are other people who are not so accustomed to talking with foreigner, their English is not so good. (Interviewee B)

The position of English proficiency in Japan is as described chapter 4.1, but with globalization, the importance of English proficiency is increasing in Japan as well. English is less familiar to older generations than it is now, so there is generally a difference in English proficiency among generations. Also, the demand for English proficiency in hiring departments dealing with international business is predictable in Japan. It is considered that human resources with who already have English proficiency are distributed to the departments of international businesses, because generally, it takes a considerable amount of time and effort to acquire language ability.

Influence of English skills on methods of communication

It's no secret that Email is a very common means of business communication. Especially in communication with a physical distance, you can start communication by sending a message from one side without considering the time difference between countries and the difference in calendar. With the development of ICT, many means of business communication have emerged other than email. Recently, (due to for example, this corona crisis,) holding remote video conferencing is becoming more common.

One of the effects of poor English proficiency on business communication is the reduced effectiveness of conference calls. The advantage of conference calls is that participants can exchange ideas/opinions on the fly (face-to-face if video is activated) even in remote locations. However not all members of the Japanese organization can speak English freely and fluently and need the action of translation, so it was difficult to exchange opinions on the spot, and the conference call did not produce very meaningful results.

Mostly email 99% of the time. We tried to do conference calls. But that was extremely inefficient because there are three four or five persons in the call, and one, only one or two speaks English which we can understand. So then it's always translation retranslation and then like most of the conversation on their side in Japanese. We are just waiting cannot understand each other. So now I think we agree, not agree, but we are more like to communicate in English so they can spend time to translate understand this and give correct answers. (Interviewee A)

We have tried a couple of times using Teams or phone calls, but language barrier it's too much, it's very difficult communicate. I mean by using discussion. So in practice, all the communication goes through the mail in written format. (Interviewee B)

I would say that the only way to really have a productive meeting with Japanese organization is face to face. And then phone meetings are also possible, but only few members of the organization can handle the English to communicate through the, normally doesn't work, because I know only a few persons in Japanese organization who could confident, be confident in the meeting speak like about everything. I would say, 90% of the members, they are, they don't feel confident to speak English through phone or video. (Interviewee D)

Normally Japanese organization avoid this video and phone discussion because the English, I think. They don't want to. So, they prefer the email because then they have more time to check English is okay. (Interviewee D)

It seems that each person found a suitable way to communicate for them through try and test. Email is preferred when communicating with members of Japanese organizations, among the interviewees in this research. Originally, it is assumed that it takes time to reply to an email, so in other words, there is an advantage that person can reply after thinking carefully. Each person will have time to understand the contents/meanings of email.

Finnish organization's response to facilitate communication.

The content of the meeting materials uses many images in consideration of members who are not good at English. Japanese members may not be able to participate because high language skills are required, so a member of Finnish organization is working to promote understanding using images.

If you have slide with 20 rows of text. And next slide with 20 rows of text. I mean, these are bad slides. Anyway, there are bad over in Finland. But this is not a reading exercise if you forget something. In Japan, I think it's very unpolite, because then you exclude some people from the presentation completely because they cannot understand it, but if you use a lots of visuals, schematics symbols and pictures, and very few words. [...] Somewhere in Europe, so if you have very visual presentations, people like them also in Europe. But in Japan, it's I think it's polite. (Interviewee E)

Interviewee described the effort that all members can be participated in communication as "politeness." This comment shows that from the point of view of Finnish organizational members, basically presupposes that all participants can participate in the communication. To that end, they are making efforts and consideration, such as creating materials that appeal to visual information more than linguistic information.

Translation issue

The interview did not provide a concrete example, but suggested the loss of meaning due to translation.

It would very nice, I think for their overall communication, if the Japanese organization would have like very good English or some kind of. Because I think a lot of things are lost in translation. (Interviewee D)

Based on Koivisto (1998, 290), "Language and translation in communication", it is highly probable that at least the Japanese side has gone through the following translation process. Message from the Finnish side in English → Translate into Japanese, for understanding and information sharing inside the Japanese organization → Translate into English and sending a message from the Japanese side to the Finnish side.

In high-context cultural communication, the explicit part can be simplified by sharing the background, but it also means the background part is not explicit and it is difficult to be translated by outsiders. In Anglo-Saxon negotiations the translator is expected to be neutral, like a black box through which words in one language enter and words in another language

exit. Translators of more communitarian cultures usually serve national groups, involve members for the long side groups to understand their background, and seek to mediate misunderstandings that come from culture and language (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 77). Here, the translation method is also involved this issue. In other words, in order to translate from high context to low context, it is necessary to describe the implicit part (background, in grammar point subject and object etc..) in the case of machine translation, and to share the background with the translator in the case of human translation. In addition to differences in linguistic concepts, importance of contextual points can lead to loss of meaning during translation. On top of that, if the language distance is long, it will inevitably take time to learn. And also it is necessary to have some level of language skill or experience to be able to recognize the difference from own language in the meaning range and contextuality of those words.

Consideration of how to express sentences, elimination of ambiguity, simplified English.

There is an opinion that the member of Finnish organization tries to simply write about main point as much as possible on emails, because it just an attempt to prevent misunderstanding of meaning due to additional decoration. It is because, the issue of English proficiency (in Japanese side). Also mentioned that those emails sent from Japanese member are same, those are very short and simple.

I used to write like short sentences, you know, like when I write other person in Finland or around the world, I write open, you know, like an openly, it's a big kind a paragraph, you know. when I write to Japanese organization, I do it in the same way how they write Japanese, one sentence, second sentence, like, very simplified English. (Interviewee D)

One way with emails, is that I use very much simplified English. So not very complicated sentences, so the sentencing its very clear sentences are short. So if I was, if I would write for an English speaking person I would write much more fluent. Let's say flowing with colour. To Japan I write very very clear and this is just to get the understanding. (Interviewee E)

Differences in sentence expression tendencies, such as whether they are explicit or not, are often discussed in the high-context and low-context areas that represent Hall (1989). It is also said that high-context communication is more ambiguity and depends on the interpretation of the context, omitting the explicitness. In other words, by sharing the context, they are omitting the explicit part. Interview members of Japanese organizations were not included in this study, so it cannot be said that the short expression message was sent from the Japanese side is high-contextual expressions that premise sharing the background.

However, in the emails sent by Finnish members to Japan, it does indicate the steps taken to avoid misunderstandings, taking into account differences in pure English proficiency rather than the influence of contextual culture.

Different cultural experience helps for understanding.

Other previous experiences help communication in the new environment. For example, even if the content of communication is difficult to understand due to English skills, it gives patience for understanding each other through repeatedly asking questions again and again.

I have learned, I have adapted, I have learned how to behave with them. I think that helped me a lot, when I started to communicate with Japanese. I have the patience I have like the answer for many times and things same things are asked. So I kind of understand that people who never talked with Chinese and Japanese I think it's harder for them. [...] I am asking okay what do you mean like, okay, maybe I mean, or when I read, I understand what Japanese is asking. [...] So you need some kind of experience and then you start to understand what they actually want to say. (Interviewee A)

It is not only linguistic difference also cultural differences can be learned through the patience and effort of the communicating parties. Effective adaptation of one's communication efforts to another culture requires knowledge of the culture, as well as the ability and motivation to change individual habits as needed (Early & Mosakowski 2004, according to Bovée & Thill 2008, 75).

Intercultural training

Interviewees were asked if they participated in intercultural communication or cultural understanding training. The purpose of this question is to learn about the approach to cultural understanding in individuals or company.

Unfortunately, I didn't. And I really think it's necessary, especially for business it's so different culture. It's also for Asian, Chinese, Japanese, it's quite different than there are some. You should understand. I have learned by myself but I would be happy if I could have training before that, and to even discuss the people who, like me who communicate with Japan a lot, could give some advice or some kind of training internal training, so other colleagues who is who has not experienced that. So yes, don't have training but I think it's necessary. (Interviewee A)

Maybe let's say I would say it is good for new new co-worker, let's say new person who will be working with Japanese. But for me, I think I have already been working so long with Japanese people that I don't know if there will be any benefit for me. (Interviewee D)

No, I have not. I think there was this kind of possibility a couple of years ago but maybe I was traveling or something. But at least I didn't participate on that, so I haven't received anything. [...] That is very beneficial to our companies, because there are also lots of other people who are communicating with Japanese, that could make sense. (Interviewee B)

They seem to learn intercultural understanding in the field by gaining experience through their work while communicating with Japanese people. They also recommended the benefits of cultural understanding training for new members of the organization.

5.1.2 Non-verbal communication

Regarding non-verbal languages differences, eye contact and gestures as examples was used in the interview, but many of the interviewees said that they did not pay attention much about the other person's gestures. Among them, the one that came out was a bow that Japanese people often do. Bowing is used in various scenes such as greetings, exchanging business cards, apologies, and gratitude, in Japanese business, and is considered to be recognized as differences because it is often seen. Bowing is a fairly large action that can be seen, and it is an iconic action that indicates the Japanese, but there are other contents related to Aizuchi. However, only one person mentioned this, and there was no mention of the "meaning" contained therein. The interviewee did not have information why this Aizuchi sounds are used.

Japanese person cannot say anything, just "aahhh...", without the need this "uummm", you know this. Its somehow for us it's little funny. Because we never do that. (Interviewee A)

This below is an opinion from a person who has a high degree of direct contact with Japanese people.

I know this is important in Japan, so I learn some, some things Japanese culture. Bowing, when we meet the customer, kind of like arrangement of the seating places for members of organization, you know where the boss sits and where the other sit around him. And also, you toast like higher glass than the

others. I notice this things when I was eating with my colleagues. (Interviewee D)

This seating order concept is based on Kamiza (seat of honour, top seat, upper seat, seat far from doorway.) and Shimoza in Japan. "Seating order" is the place and order of seating, and the seating order is a manner that shows respect for superiors and customers. As with the order of seats, the degree of respect for bowing depends on the angle. In Japan, as a method of expressing honour/respect based on a hierarchical cultural concept that respects superiors and elders, as a method of expressing regard/respect to people with a profit relationship such as customers, and as a method which shows the degree of respect, non-verbal languages have many meanings. Finns also give meaning to non-verbal languages sometimes. It is similar to Finns trying to show their sincerity by giving them some strength in their handshakes, as well as willing to receive similar messages from the other party.

It cannot be said unconditionally because it is affected by the communication status and the surrounding environment during the call, but nonverbal communication may be influenced by your own national culture. Five interviewees were conducted for this study, 3 of 5 are using their web-camera during interview, they are not originally Finnish nationality. However, the samples are very few, so not really can be mentioned about that correctly.

It is important, so when I think for not only between Finland and Japan culturally, but always when we see the person like now we share the video call, because I can see you. It gives me of course a lot of extra information, specifically to Japanese....(expression: Thinking)... well,.. (Interviewee A)

Actually, I don't pay so much attention to these things. I know that some people are very kind of like sensitive to this eye contact, or you know kind of like tone. (Interviewee D)

For example, inside the Switch, I think almost nobody uses with video, during Teams call. [...] Yes, it is only by voice. Of course, one of the reasons is that everybody's using video is eating a lot of internet bandwidth connection goes slow picture becomes choppy so that's also one of the reasons that people typically don't use the video, especially if there are lot of people in the meeting. (Interviewee B)

Members of the Finnish organization describe their perception of non-verbal languages in this way. Interview results show that Finns have little awareness of non-verbal languages.

In Finland, I would say, it's not important. In Japan, well, maybe the only thing that I've noticed is this bowing which is of course is normal to Japanese people

but besides that, I haven't really noticed anything different compared to Finnish meeting culture. (Interviewee B)

I don't know if any particular kind of like nonverbal communication, because I think Finnish people actually are very low profile in that sense. Because I think this is part of my kind of culture heritage. You know that we always try to somehow decorate our words. (Interviewee D)

One of the interviewees said he was using a non-verbal language for himself but was not paying attention to the non-verbal language of others. This "himself" means that "He" (the sender) feels that more information is being conveyed, when using the non-verbal languages. The reason may be influenced by the multicultural nature of Finnish organizations.

Because I have been working with so many different people. You know that kind of like, kind of like I know different style of communication. I kind of like, I just accepted it, you know, I don't really, let's say to me, the most important thing is the message. You know, if I can get message. In my case, I feel like my message goes better if I communicate this style (using hands). (Interviewee D)

Non-verbal languages are diverse and have a lot of information. However, the messages contained are not valid unless the recipient is sensitive to the non-verbal language and understands the cultural background and meaning of the message. In addition, in communication with a person with a physical distance that is the subject of this study, and especially if there are restrictions on shared language skills even bring limitation to communication methods which have visual and audio information superiority, such as video conferencing. In other words, it may be difficult to adopt a communication style that emphasizes non-verbal communication in such situations, and therefore it may be less perceived as a difference.

5.2 Related in cultural aspects

5.2.1 Organizational culture

Regarding the question of cultural differences, the following are addressed.

How do you feel that organizational culture similarity or differences? This question concerns whether cultural differences have affected their day-to-day operations after the acquisition of the organization. As a result of the interview, there was no big difference in daily work, but since they became the same corporate entity, they had cultural contact and communication with Japan such as values and how to proceed with work.

We don't feel or don't have any changes or big changes dictated by culture. And we are really happy that our Japanese owners, they are not interfering too much in our working life. So they are not like doing what to go into this micromanagement level. Maybe the General instruction for top management, but more middle or middle low-level people that do not even feel. I think that this Japanese owner and we are, I think they do it on purpose, so they understand that it's so big difference that it's better not to do that. [...] we were good company, quite successful. And after this acquisition, I don't think that there's there any reason to, you know, to change the culture and, you know, shake the whole company, its too dangerous. (Interviewee A)

It was in organizational culture that the vertical cultural background was recognized.

The values, how we see the business. We are very similar. I would say that we value innovation add value for the products. We value as well as careful environment. We also value let's say intellectual property, let's say also like that. I feel like we are not copying or trying to steal like making like shady business you know. [...] So I would say that Japan and Finland they share those values. [...] This is why one of the reasons I decided to continue working in this company because I think at the end, we share a lot of value in business. [...] I would say that we need to get things right, in the end of our values are very similar, methods are different. (Interviewee D)

More expression for the end of sentence for previous comment.

My idea is that Japanese organization and Finnish organization, the goal, ultimate goals are very similar. Personally, I really like Japanese approach, how they see the development, how they see the customer relationship. They care for environment. [...] Problem comes with the method to achieve that goal. [...] Japanese organizations cannot react fast to changes. Finnish organizations can react very fast to changes. Because we are more like horizontal. Everybody can talk to each other. (Interviewee D)

Main differences I see how to say Hierarchy and flexibilities. For example, Finnish organization is more horizontal. We have of course bosses. There is more the Finnish organization delegate more responsibility, and also members of organization can contribute to decision making easily. If you have some messages to the organization, you can come back directly, anybody.

The communication is more direct. But in Japan, the organization is very vertical. There is no kind of like, same agile communication, because always have to go vertical. (Interviewee: D)

There are a lot of difficulties. I don't know where to start. So language is the first, second, uumm hierarchy or organization what they have. (Interviewee: A)

Seniority

Generally, the larger the organization is, the more it tends to be hierarchized. A traditional Japanese company has many hierarchical corporate structures, and the hierarchical system of this organization often incorporates seniority. The seniority system, as detailed in Chapter 3.3.2, it is based on high-context ideas, and also what factors can be the norm in the hierarchy in the cultural value of collectivism. To understand the difference in communication styles, which is the main theme of this research, first consider the difference in the relationship between age and position within the organization in Finland/Japan.

Interviewee had some cultural training (Japan) from consultant plus some from Japanese embassy. The original concept of his comment came from those trainings.

In Japan, your rank, your position in the company is very close to your age. If you're high in the organization, you're not young. There's more have happened in the Japanese organization. It's difficult in a Western organization as well but it's possible. Typically, boss is always older than the people who work for him. This was the message of the training and it has proven to be, let's say that's basically true, of course always some exceptions. (Interviewee E)

The hierarchy within a Japanese organization, the relationship between status and power is sometimes complicated. In Japan, status is not always linked to power; sometimes status was offered as a kind of reward to office holders who had significant responsibility but not appropriate power or compensation (Guirdham 2009, 100-101). In other words, in Japanese culture, status (e.g., job titles/ positions) are recognized as valuable.

In these interviews, "vertical" or "hierarchical" is used to describe both Japanese organization and culture, while Finnish organization and culture are described as "horizontal." These were the same results as in previous studies. In addition to these differences in cultural perspectives, the style of communication within Japanese organizations influenced communication between Finnish and Japanese organizations. This will be analysed in detail in the next chapter.

Communication between Finnish organization and Japanese organization, A role of expatriates.

Many Japanese companies send many expatriates from their own countries to their subsidiaries, as seen in the Government of Japan, shown in Chapter 3.2.2. Their role is reflected in this way by local employees.

They have so good difficulties to understand what is actually going on here in Finland. So they need to have someone sitting here like and then they report from inside. And then they understand what is going on how it works and just to have a better understanding. So that's maybe part of this part of culture. There's some misunderstanding so they have to put someone to Finland to filter out all this culture things, so he can just report the pure like business cases what what's going on. So they don't want to guess if it's cultural not cultural, then it's contact Japanese to Japanese. (Interrupted by Interviewer, no language barrier between them, no.) So, no language no culture barrier between them. (Interviewees A)

First and foremost, one of the most important roles of expatriates is the transfer of knowledge and the transmission and sharing of information (Gao 2015. 2, author's translation). In other words, expatriates also play the role of mediators that promote communication between bases in order to form a common understanding with the head office. In this regard, it is conceivable that noise from communication behavior can be suppressed if the human view takes common communication behavior. In addition, in many Japanese companies, Japanese is the official language of the company at the head office in the home country, and most of the materials and communication are required to be in Japanese. However, not all of the management or employees at the head office in the home country, are familiar with foreign languages. Namely, the expatriates are stationed for their professional abilities, and on top of that, they remove language barriers and cultural / contextual communication differences, and in charge of sharing information between their home country headquarters and subsidiaries.

5.2.2 Power distance (Hierarchy) and Collectivisms in communication

The interview also recognized differences in cultural values. According to their perception, the approach to communicating opinions within organization between boss and subordinate seems to be very different from Finland and Japan. Various factors may be considered more when the Japanese express their opinions. According to Hofstede (2010), Japan has a more collectivist culture and a greater distance of power than Finland. Trompenaars's dimension,

which is corresponding to Hofstede's collectivism, communitarianism tends to require collective consensus in their views, and decisions are referenced by representatives of the organization (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 85). Within the strong power distance (vertical culture), order and power are formed, which can also lead to who are in upper status has a strong voice. In this study clearly indicated Finnish and Japanese power distances, and individualism - collectivism cultures contrast.

Differences between Finland and Japan internal communication

From the perspective of members of the Finnish organization, the relationship between superiors and subordinates and their communication styles are clearly different. For Japanese people in the organization, the standing position and positional relationship in the organization may be very important. As already mentioned in chapter 3.3.1, even the Japanese language used by them works with such human relationships (hierarchical relationships) in mind.

It is very important for the Japanese to be able to place people in a social ladder on the formal, ceremonial side (Hall 1989, 67). The several interviewees note that it seems like not easy for subordinates to express their opinions to their superiors in communication between their superiors and their subordinates in Japanese organization. Especially, to tell or suggest negative comments or opinions to their superior. It can be seen that the cultural contrast of power distance and collectivism / individualism associated with it stand out.

Everybody in the Japanese organization is afraid to say things that are outside. Let's say kind of like a common sense. I know only few Japanese person who can speak in the meeting and challenge the decision. [...] For example, if we are in a meeting in Finland, everybody can challenge the decision, everybody can say, Hey this is not good, because it doesn't matter if the boss said it. But in Japan, if the boss says something young engineers or lower levels of the organization will never challenge that in the meeting. (Interviewee D)

One difference is very very clear. Japanese hierarchy is clear. It means the boss is boss. And you don't talk back to your boss. So if your boss tells something you don't say why or you don't propose anything else, unless your boss asks you to. (Interviewee E)

The interviewees described Finnish style communication in the organization.

Finnish communication style is kind of as I said, your title, or your age doesn't give you any extra value. You can communicate openly with people. In Japan,

if you're old, or if you are boss, then you are a better person somehow. (Interviewee D)

If boss is telling the people who work for him you must do this, they will, of course, because that's the boss. It's rather common if boss telling something people will ask why, and they will also ask is this wise, or they will propose some other method, even though the boss didn't ask for it. (Interviewee E)

In the interview, this relationship between bosses and subordinates in a Japanese organization was likened to the military. Interviewees also mentioned the bilateral differences in the presence of filters in internal communication and the position of their bosses. It also depends on whether the decision is left to the person in charge of each case or to concentrate on the superiors of the organization. It also depends on whether the decision is left to the person responsible for each case or centralized to the organization's manager. Interviewer asked Interviewee E that is it easier to communicate with boss in Finland?

It is also easy in Japan, no problem but it is just different. This means that I also have military, I did military. In the military you never question your command, if you get a command you do exactly what you're told and nothing else. Japanese company based business is more military than Finnish very much more. Very strict. That means that the bosses in Japan they are very careful before they give commands because they know that if they give a command to do something, it will be done. So, they have to make sure that whatever they command is absolutely correct. Responsibility is clear, very clear. In Finland, if I give a command, which is completely stupid, or I haven't thought about it long enough, it'll not go through. There will be a filter, so that the people who work for me, they will come back and say. "Well, this was an idiotic command". If I said; I don't care, so you still go do it, they will. But there are some filter. There's a filter and proposal for other opinions. And this method is in Japan, different. (Interviewee E)

I could say that they especially with the younger people their discussion is easier. They are very unformal and very open and they have a very good sense of humor. But if there is some older Japanese people, they are not. It's quite formal caution discussion. You need to be much more careful what you are saying them. You cannot be so open that with this younger people. So in that sense, discussion communication with younger people, it's that sense easier. (Interviewee B)

According to Hofstede's cultural values, Japan is collectivism and high power-distance. As mentioned in Chapter 2.5.1, according to Hofstede's dimension of cultural value, there is a negative correlation between the two dimensions of power distance and individualism, it means that large power distance countries are also likely to be more collectivist, and small power distance countries vice versa, it to be more individualist (Hofstede 2010, 103). The recognition of the interviewees of this study shows Japanese receptiveness of power and status distance, in addition collectivism tend to create a hierarchy (vertical) within the group. And creates a chain of command, as well as giving authority and responsibility to its superiors. It can see the decision-maker is in higher the organization. The background of high-contextual communication style, Japanese bosses have more information than others and tend to scrutinize and take responsibility for it, so you may need to pay close attention to the content of the discussion.

On the other hand, in Finnish internal communication, the opportunities for bosses and subordinates to speak were equal, and there were almost no barriers to their own statements according to their perspective. Since communication participants become so-called observers, it is recognized that mistakes and opinions (suggestions / improvements) are likely to be made as necessary. Regarding the relationship between superiors and subordinates, and related culture, in most companies in Scandinavia, bosses are considered team leaders and coaches rather than decision makers who allocate tasks to others, which encourages employees to speak freely at meetings. The final decision is often by of the team leader, however everyone's opinions are taken into account when making decisions. (Browaeys & Price 2005, 62-63.)

Internal communication, emotional discharge

The cultural analysis of this study uses the theory of Hofstede (2010) as a basis, but in this emotional part the Trompenaars theory, Affective versus Neutral culture (2012) can be used. Interviewees mentioned a phenomenon opposite to Trompenaars. According to the results of Trompenaars's survey, "Percentage of respondents who do not show emotions openly", Japan has a score 74 in Neutral Orientation, which is the least acceptable, while Finland is 41 percent (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 88).

The emotional expressions of Japanese and Europeans in communication are perceived as contrasting. An interviewee mentioned that Japanese emotions are manifested in attitudes.

I don't think I see that is something special in Japanese in that way. Of course, this, this kind of expressions, they're more developed, they're more open to show that when they're happy or not happy when they're puzzled or troubled

or when they're angry. You can read it, like, not from the face but from people changing. I think for Europeans they're quite more. They can hold inside them you never know he is smile and it's like, you never know that he is angry or.
(Interviewee A)

The interview states the tolerance of the boss's emotional outburst to his subordinates in communication within the Japanese organization.

I have never seen Finnish person, screaming, or yelling in the meeting. When you know something goes wrong and you surprised voice and you, and I've seen many times Japanese were doing that in our common meetings, when we come here we go there. So one is stand up and when one he lost the patience. Well that's, same as I explained before that, you have this (Interviewer: emotion?). Emotions Yes, so he cannot keep it and he start to yell. And this is totally not acceptable in Finland. If you do this like, you will get the know that this is inappropriate behavior. But in Japan I understood that it's quite normal that boss is yelling to their employees. [Interviewer asked: The guy is order, elder?] Of course you have to be a higher high enough to afford this kind of behavior. Yes, small guys, young people in never will do that. (Interviewee A)

An interviewee in Karhu's (2005,115) study mentioned the similar emotional attitudes for Japanese boss-to-subordinate as in this study. When people express their thoughts and feelings, they try to find propriety of themselves in the response of our audience (Trompenaars et al. 2012, 89). Regarding emotional expression in Japan, expression may be allowed depending on the difference in power and status, because it is also considered that the power distance is high in Japan.

Different communication style affects in communication between Finland and Japan

Differences in internal communication styles also affect communication between Finnish and Japanese organizations. Continuing from the previous section, the difference between Decision-maker is particularly emphasized.

A lot of layers and if boss tell him to do something he's doing it no matter what. And for me it's so difficult to explain then, sometimes there are mistakes and I explain others this is mistake, please go to your boss and discuss again. But he is not willing he is like. This is culture, he cannot go back and ask, you know you're wrong. It should be done this way. So he prefers to go this difficult way or wrong way but still, avoid doing to question his superior opinion. And

that's, that's causes a lot of problems. (Interviewer: Okay, so it's effect to even the communication for you between that and?) Sure, I have to ask again and again and finally I should go over the top and somehow reach through him, but he is not so willing to, he or she wanted to do this office mix. So, they're not always, especially younger persons, of course they're young, they think that this old people know more and correct of them they're not questioning them. (Interviewee A)

The below can describe the organizational culture, but it is showing culture value effect to communication.

Japanese organization cannot react fast to change, Finnish organization can react very fast to change, because we are more like horizontal. Everyone can talk to each other. But in Japan to make a change is very difficult. It's like almost I would say impossible. (Interviewee D)

When the comments from the Finnish side may require Japanese side to be corrections or when its negative, it may be difficult for subordinates of Japanese organization member to convey their opinions to their superiors. Considering the results of the interview that more young people have higher English proficiency, it is possible that the people who communicate directly are young people in the Japanese organization, which leads to difficulty in flowing correction/suggestion from the bottom to the top. On the other hand, in Finnish organization, describing for giving opinions from subordinates to superiors is considered to be part of normal communication.

Karhu's (2005,100-101) study also mentioned follows: more direct communication style of the Finnish people is closely connected to the decision-making and clearly the Finnish decision-making style shows a more individualist culture. The decision-making style of differences that seem to trouble the Finnish interviewees more can be connected to the power distance and individualism/collectivism features.

Say "No"

It seems like difficult for Japanese to say "NO". It is not a new finding. Many previous studies (Karhu 2005, 117-118; Usunier et al 2005, 377) already showed it.

I have notice that it is sometime difficult to say "no" for them [...] In Finland, in Europe, people are very open and very honest and they are discussing with the suppliers or customers but with Japanese people its sometimes very difficult to know what they are exactly thinking because they are not necessarily

telling you what they feel. And sometimes they don't want to say "no" which is quite opposite in Western countries. (Interviewee B)

For example, if we are in the technical meeting, in the end we asked from the Japanese people have you understand, any questions regarding this presentation or whatever and the everybody says "yes this is all clear we have understood everything", but often that really not the case because there are. I think they are sometimes afraid to ask, they don't want to show that they haven't really understood that message and we are finding out only later on, maybe after a week or two that they didn't really understand what we were trying to say. (Interviewee B)

Because let's say, I think because when we give a message, "we need to do this", we think that "we have to do this". Japanese organization said, "Okay, yes," when we are in. But then, next day, they say something completely different. So it's like if they disagree with our idea. They don't say it right away. You know, they first need to, how to say, discuss, the next day it's like it's like a we start from zero. You know very well in the meeting that Japanese Organization cannot say "no" right away. And we think that they understood, and they agree with us. But then after this meeting they sent an email with the same questions like, again, like, you a kind of like, it seems that we don't understand each other, you know. (Interviewee D)

But the exact opposite is also mentioned. Before this comment, the interviewer explained that Japanese style expression "No", for example, "uummmm, difficult" it means that "cannot".

I never seen that because maybe because they are like the they are our like bosses, so if they say we do or like we don't know. They don't shy to say no/yes. Because we are employee, and they are employer. (Interviewee A)

This research should be also taken into account linguistic problems, that is, the problem of English proficiency, which is the inability to freely express thoughts and opinions unlike the mother tongue. Also, Hall (1989, 67) mentioned that when operating in the low-context mode, the Japanese say nothing, even if they have very useful information. However, it is necessary to consider the difference in the expression of "No" in Japanese. Usunier et al (2005, 377) point that, the word "No" practically does not exist in Japanese vocabulary and there are ways to try and go around the matter – 'yes' in certain circumstances can actually means 'no'. Karhu (2005, 118) analysed this point something that can be contrasted to the concept of maintaining "face" in the Asian culture. In this research case, it seems to relate

one of important collectivism concept, "shame" by Hofstede et al. (2010, 110) mentioned. The also mentioned long term orientation having sense of "shame" and Japan is high score of long-term orientation society. There are many proverbs using with a word "shame" in Japanese, and books on Japanese consciousness of shame have been studied and published. (Sakisaka 1982, Yamada 2008). "Shame", which is also a characteristic of Japanese culture, is related to the evaluation from the group, the awareness of the self-evaluation received by other's evaluation, and the avoidance of deviation from the group. In addition, in Japanese communication, as can be seen from the frequency and meaning of the specifications of Aizuchi, the recipient continues to announce the participation of the communication to the sender. That means that the sender is also always following the reaction of the recipient. In other words, it can be said that we are constantly re-evaluating our own behavior based on the reaction of the recipient. In other words, by caring about the recipient's reaction, the sender may be in a state of constant reassessment of his or her behavior or may have many opportunities to do so. This shame and how the participant perceiving "group", a culture that respects harmony of group and not willing to disturb and trying to avoid breaking harmony, can have an effect. Karhu (2005, 117-118) pointed out this topic in his study, chapter of customer/supplier-relations that the Japanese striving for harmony basically avoids using the direct style that Finns would like.

Admit for their mistake.

Also it may relate in shame culture and collectivism.

I have some feeling that experience and thought Japanese is there it's very difficult for them to admit that they made a mistake. So they argue to be each other until the very last moment and very few persons I had met who can say, sorry I was wrong. You're right. I don't know why it's so difficult. (Interviewee A)

Hofstede's (2010) study also states that Japan tends to be collectivism culture. In addition, in Karhu (2005, 100) mentioned that the Japanese make careful decisions, which can take a considerable amount of time. Before Japanese can take action, they need to involve everyone as much as possible and reach an agreement. In other words, the consensus of the group may be more important than the individual in the decision-making process. Regarding the weight of individual opinions on group decision-making, tends to be large power-distance in Japan, so how group managers relate to their subordinates (how much power and how power they show, by attitude and responsibility etc.), can affect the decision-making process within the group. The based on those points, the author thinks that; Since the de-

cisions associated with this is group-based intent, they tend to be avoided because (1) individual apologies are not strongly conscious, rather than individual mistakes, or (2) apologies lead to admitting the blame of the entire group.

Japan has a huge potential to control all technology, because skills of the people, Japanese are very hard worker working people. The country is big, market in Japan is big, reputation is good in the world. But own Japanese people make things so complicated for themselves that they cannot. They cannot expand that they cannot go out and control the world, it's like Japanese people with the organization method block themselves. (Interviewee D)

From the Finnish organization members' point of view, it may be highly possible that those differences in individualism/collectivism, and attitude toward power is recognized as a difference in communication between the two. This is an example of how cultural values, which seems to be related to how status and power, individualism - collectivism are perceived, influence communication between two organizations, and it can be said that there are differences in communication styles between Finland and Japan. And these differences which can sometimes to add nodule to the process of performing duties. For example, this difference in communication style seems to be recognized as a difference in interval length during the development process. However, this may be influenced by other cultural values. It will be analysed in next Chapter 5.2.3.

5.2.3 Uncertainty avoidance

According to Hofstede (2010), Japanese culture has a high degree of uncertainty avoidance dimension (score 92), and this uncertainty avoidance is not exactly the same as risk avoidance, however, does play an important role in the current business attitude of the case company.

The interviewee mentioned that there were many similar inquiries about the matter from Japanese members.

I come to conclusion; this is just me. Japanese people like to be very sure, they want to be very certain that have what they present forward. So these guys will present something to the boss, and they want to be 100% sure that is correct. So they asked three times. You don't see this in Finland. If boss asks something he believes what people tell him, he doesn't ask three times. [...] They are extremely good at making this three times sure that everything is right. And this in my opinion it leads to Japanese famous Japanese quality.

They don't want to make a mistake, they make very sure that they don't make a mistake. (Interviewee E)

Karhu (2005, 123 and 126) mentions that the so-called zero-defect thinking is still very dominant in the Japanese production industry and he called it "The Japanese zero-defect policy". The actions to avoid mistakes also affect the quality of Japan.

Avoid mistakes as much as possible, and also in collectivism in combination with high-context communication, the information that should always be shared within the relationship is updated, but if the relationship building is sparse, the information people may act to encourage updates. It also influences their business strategy. It can be seen the difference in market needs and business model between Europe and Japan.

They are all really scared that the product, final product is not in their control. What about if customer make a mistake and chooses a fictional component which is wrong. (Interviewee E)

Based on Hofstede's (2010, 197-198) explanation, the author interprets that the difference between (1) risk avoidance and (2) uncertainty avoidance is, in a broad sense, (1) avoiding a negative effect called risk when it is recognized, and (2) things are in uncertain (ambiguous) situations, people may avoid uncertainty (reduce ambiguity) by considering possible possibilities.

In a culture with a high dimension of uncertainty avoidance, there is a contrasting difference in the vector of communication behaviour (high context - low context) in combination with another cultural dimension of individualism - collectivism. In individualist countries, when strongly avoiding uncertainty, the rules usually are written into law which typically is more low-context communication. On the other hand, in a collectivist country when strongly avoiding uncertainty, rules are often implicit and rooted in the tradition, like as more high-context communication (Hofstede 2010, 218-219). Avoidance of uncertainty, which prefers to reduce this ambiguity, and highly tacit high-context communication can seem to be inconsistent. The reason why high context is called high context is its high information sharing based on human relationships and other information contacts. In addition, in the case of Japan, it is highly homogeneous due to its geographical and historical background, and is bound by tacit knowledge, the rules of common knowledge (inside Japan), and the culture of shame. Increasing information sharing and tacit knowledge may help reduce the implied ambiguity (anxiety) in people in high-context communication. Like this study, in the field of business, which tends to be low-context, and in an environment of cross-border remote communication where it is difficult to establish a relationship between collectivism interpersonal relationships and information sharing, it can be said that it is difficult to be able to be

achieved higher-level high-context. This cultural factor may influence the business model in each region.

5.2.4 Other culture value

In the interviewee's opinion, there was very little mention of differences in cultural values other than individualism-collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance.

Masculinity

According to Hofstede's (2010) study, the score of Masculinity (MAS) is Finland 26 and Japan is 95, the gap of the score between two countries is 69, it is one of the most contrast culture value.

So this word impossible. For some reason, all Japanese they do not accept that impossible. There's not such words in their, you know vocabulary. [...] So some, not, not possible to accept this, when something is not impossible. (Interviewee A)

The key differences between feminine and masculine societies in the workplace, masculine management is decisive and aggressive vs feminine management is intuition and consensus style. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 170) The Japanese attitude towards this impossibility at work is very tough, which may be related to the difference in the way of thinking about time for work and leisure.

Short- and Long-Term Orientation

Based on Short- and Long-Term Orientation studied by Hofstede (2010), it is 2nd large score gap 50 between Finland and Japan, the score of Finland is 38, in other hand Japan's is 88. Item of general norm and family in long-term orientation is perseverance, sustained efforts toward slow results. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 243)

Because I had the impression that Japanese companies, rather long-term Japanese companies have a long-term perspective, in comparison to, for example, US companies. (Interviewee E)

Specifically, the details of the long term oriented will be described by the interviewee as follows. However, perceptions of this long-term-oriented, may vary depending on the department or individuals.

Indulgence vs Restraint (IVR)

According to Hofstede et al. (2010), Finland is labelled the most common pattern-high indulgence plus short-term orientation group.

You know that because the environment is so tough, that winter and it's dark and so on. I think they learn very fast that they put more pressure on people, also they need to make that tough work, then people will collapse. So I think this is why a lot of vacation and free time (in Finland). And I think it's proven to be right. Because the productivity of Finnish people is very high, higher than Japanese even they work less. (Interviewee D)

Cultural values may have something to do with the environment of the people who live there. There is an important, statistically positive relationship between indulgence and national wealth, but the connection is weak. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 286).

5.3 Related in contextual point

5.3.1 Contextual communication style

Appearance of high context

The author's assumption about high-context behaviour in a low-context environment, described at the end of Chapter 3.3.5, did not hold.

Members of the Finnish organization were not aware of clearly high contextual matters in communicating with the Japanese. In the other hand, from the perspective of the Japanese who currently belong to the Finnish organization, a clear high-context idea was stated.

However, some of members of Finland recognized the differences in communication style in Email.

There was a contextual point in terms of relationships, rather than euphemisms, omissions, or the need for contextual understanding. When communicate between Finnish and Japanese member by emails, there are some Japanese common styles appeared, which is using Surname plus -san/sama (its unisex, Mr/Ms), and long greeting phrases beginning of email. This greeting phrases sometime touching on private life, family, etc... Hall explains based on his experience that; in Japan there are the two sides to everyone - warm, close, friendly, involved, high-context side that doesn't stand on ceremony, and the public, official, status-conscious, ceremonial side, which is what most foreigners identified. Most Japanese feel awkward when they are in ceremonial, low context, institutionalized environment of life or

in relationship. The purpose of them is to move from the ceremonial side to relaxed, comfortable, warm, intimate, courteous and friendly side. (Hall 1976, 1981, 68.) In this case also it seems that they are trying to build closer relationships. For people with high context culture, building relationships is an essential part of communication. On top of that, it is thought that the speaker tends to express that he / she cares more about the recipient through the recipient-oriented communication. However, it can also be a formal expression.

In emails, they're also different. From Japanese people that's always first time, Hello, how are you? how are you today? how is your family? Like how familiar and then short question, and how is this project? Then, I tried to answer like this way but then I found out that for me it's too difficult to spend so much time to know this official greetings and then. So I missed this part. (Interviewee A)

The differences between the use of first name and last name (which one to call) have been mentioned several times by the interviewees.

This that you always using -san adding so we have to use -san everywhere. It's okay but, for some reason you're using official Japanese culture, they're using last name not first name. Well okay it's some, some levels also in the Europe. But when I communicate with one person almost daily, I call him by name. But in Japan I still use like last name and -san. (I: Yes, yes) Because I know if I call it just by name, it might be not polite or like I should not do that. (Interviewee A)

The Japanese "-san" pointed out in the interview corresponds to the honorific title Mr / Ms, but there is no gender difference. In Finland, people rarely use the Mr / Ms title (Herra / Neiti) which has formal implications, in daily or even day-to-day work life. Similarly, the use of surnames usually has a formal meaning more than the use of first name. Contextual point of view, changing the degree of context, itself will have a message and create a communication. An upward revision of the degree of context indicates good relationships, and a downward revision of the degree of context means deterioration of relationships. For example, in an American company, if a boss changes way of calling his/her subordinate from one's first name (high context) to one's surname (low context), when the boss has some dissatisfaction with his/her subordinate. Originally, calling for the first name in Anglo-Saxon countries was an artificial attempt to create a high context. (Sakuma 2003, 15, author's translation.) On the other hand, the use of surnames is "formal", but it has a strong "official" implication, because the full name is "formal" in Japanese business emails. And generally, indicates that calling each other by first name is in closely relationship, and it is not used for

business scene. (e.g., family, friends, etc, or with the exception of having the same surname.) So to speak, the relationship between the surname (low context) and the first name (high context) is established. Therefore, it might be attracting attention those differences by them. In this way, the author considers that those differences in the handling of names between Finland and Japan affect communication in sentences. However, according to Torrelli & Stoner (2015), Finland is horizontal-individual culture, and the United State is vertical-individual culture. In Finland, their relationship between boss and subordinates within organization members may not be same as the United States, so the expression (dissatisfaction) may be different as well in Sakuma's (2003) example.

Direct or Indirect (euphemism)

Peltokorpi & Clausen (2011, 520) mentioned that affected by collectivism and power-status differences, Japanese communication is defined as context-sensitive and vague, making it difficult for (Nordic) expatriates to understand local (Japanese) employees. The big difference between their study and this one is that the place where the study was conducted, it also the communication environment, is Japan, which is a very high context environment. As contextuality of communication's point, Koivisto (1998, 275) mentioned in his study that Finno-Japanese communication, Finnish interviewees most often and repeatedly stated that Japanese indirect communication was a factor in cross-cultural friction and misunderstanding. On the other hand, Japanese interviewees said that Finns tend to be too straightforward, open and stubborn in communication, which are the most prominent causes of cross-cultural friction. The contrasting communication styles of indirect Japanese and direct Finns can have serious consequences. (Koivisto 1993, 70-71, according to Koivisto 1998, 277).

The interviewees in this study did not point out except that the Japanese tend to avoid saying "No" regarding the ambiguous and euphemistic expressions of the Japanese.

They are not hiding. They do not put some words around, and they know they can ask straight. (Interviewee A)

In the other side, from Japanese commented it. It is necessary to consider the language ability gap in this regard.

Maybe I have not got used to it yet, but sometimes I wonder. The way of expression looks ambiguous. (Interviewee C)

Peltokorpi & Clausen's (2011) research was conducted in Japan, where communication happened within the organization, expatriates have a higher position than the locals in terms of power status, and there is a collectivist culture from the perspective of the contextual

environment. Considering this point, it is possible that the number of interviewees was small, which was not ambiguous in this research, but there is one possibility, the power relationship between the parent company (Japan) and the subsidiary (Finland). In other words, it is possible that ambiguous expressions are not often used in power relationships that are easy to refuse. In addition, it is common to send non-verbal messages (tones, facial expressions, etc.) to help the others understand, at the same time with content that is linguistically ambiguous, when particularly negative answer in Japan. However, in this case, sending non-verbal messages is impaired for the various reasons mentioned above.

5.3.2 Style of thinking and communicating

Style of thinking is one of key communication filter, how people think and how they express their thought appears to be determined not just individually but also socially. For example, different culturally influenced thinking patterns may tend to prefer different approaches (Browaeys & Price 2015, 331).

The biggest difference is the difference in culture, but what I think most is that the way of thinking in Japan and this way of thinking in Finland are different.
(Interviewee C)

I like to work with Japanese organization, but problem comes with method to achieve that goal. In my opinion, Japanese methods are not efficient. (Interviewee D)

The style of thinking is not only one of the filters but also act as barrier in communication. The differences in the method to achieve the goals was already discussed in the cultural aspects chapter 5.2, but in this chapter also it will be discussed from a contextual perspective.

The interviewee's comment indicated that they have high contextual style of thinking, and there is a very high degree of information sharing or homogeneity among Japanese people.

Japanese people consider various things, including risks, including what the other person thinks. Not just what was said. That's because Japanese people have that kind of mind. (Interviewee C)

Most Japanese say they can understand it in one word. That is why the Japanese side wants the people here to think about what is behind the words and answer. (So if people only receive and answer what is said / written,) it may not be the answer they were looking for. (Interviewee C)

Regarding this contextual difference, the content, concreteness and need for contextual interpretation of the message differ.

Not all of them are all, but Finland (a member of the organization) answers only what was said, but nothing more. On the other hand, Japanese people try to write things simply, including those points (the background of the words), so there is no concrete indication. (Interviewee C)

As I said earlier, the Japanese think behind the words. In Finland, for example, when I ask a question, I write that this question is necessary for this purpose. I write a lot, but otherwise it (message, my meaning, intention) cannot be conveyed. (Interviewee C)

As mentioned in Chapter 5.1.1, efforts are being made to convey one's intentions in communication. The subject of this empirical study is communication in English, and both communicators are physically far from each other. In terms of expression, high-context style communication can be said to be a communication style that omits explicit expressions on the premise that information and relationships are shared in advance or is within the scope of common sense. In the other word, to receive inexplicitly messages usually a receiver is required some high contextual skill, which need to understand the characteristics or rule of each culture. Also that (excessive) high-context communication in business can lead to misunderstandings and serious mistakes, when the context is not sufficiently shared. High-context communication is based on the dense information sharing and relationships that take place on a daily basis too. So the author think even if Japanese side expects it to do high-contextual thinking to the Finnish side, it will take a great deal of effort and time, and even not to achieve to be high-context style communication similar to Japan. Especially in a situation like this survey where there is doubt about common understanding with the other party of communication. The need for high contextual interpretation in this business may also affect other cultural values, for example, avoiding uncertainty, predictive behavior for the future, etc.

It's strange to say Japanese (people), but because it's a company, I have to consider various things, business-wise. I think about the risks and various things, such as what will happen in various futures. When thinking about risks, if this were the case, it might be like this, so there are many things to consider including that, in Japan. If you are instructed to do one thing, you will make various preparations considering the risks other than what you were instructed to do. [...] You need to think about that risk, right? No one knows that. Do you

need to do such a wasteful thing? That's the way of thinking (in Finland). (Interviewee C)

Rather than risk, there is a difference between the Japanese and Finnish way of thinking about avoiding uncertainty. Japanese people who tend to avoid uncertainty may tend to explore many possibilities early on when a task is given.

So it does not mean that the members of the Finnish organization aren't thinking about anything at all. I understand that this is the way of thinking (here), and it's hard for me, but I understand. (Interviewee C)

Efforts to notice and understand the differences are very important. As Morgan says, people can better understand "foreign" practices by understanding these differences. Also, this awareness of differences itself may be difficult. The perspective of seeing an organization as a foreigner may bring new awareness.

There was also a difference in human resource management between Finnish companies and Japanese companies.

It's the way people work (is different). In the case of Japan, if it is a development department, all the human resources in the development department will be gathered in the same place. [...] The company relocates workers. In Finland, the same development department may not always be together. [...] Because here people are family-oriented. Therefore, people use Team to do meeting. (I: A long-distance meeting?) Yes. That's why it's rare for everyone to get together and have a Face to Face here. (Interviewee C)

This may be a way of thinking about the rationality of human resources management, but it can also be considered of as a way of understanding human relationships in terms of context difference, because those relocate order from the companies are very common in Japan.

This difference in style of thinking seems to be a very difficult subject. Because it could not be read only from the recognition of the members of the Finnish organization except the Japanese. Many things in an organization may be treated as English problems. However, by interviewing Japanese person, it shows differences that cannot be told purely by language ability alone, because Japanese communication is based on this high-contextual style of thinking. However, since there is only one interview with Japanese people, there is a possibility of being personal, and it may be a subject for future research.

Promise, in term of time concerning.

They need promises, or they also give promises. And I have to say they follow their promises, and they say that they will be ready then most probably they will be ready. But in Finland is somehow more flexible more we are. We understand that things are changing, and the plus minus few days okey there are delays, we miss deadlines. It's not good but if it's communicated unfortunately it's ok. In Japan, they do not accept or it's difficult for them to accept this kind of style. (Interviewee A)

High-context culture is more process-driven, and information regarding the various aspects of control is embedded in the cultural context. Many projects consist of a stack of tasks hanging from them. In high-context culture, there is a tendency to emphasize the whole process, and managers also get the job done through others by paying attention to relationships and group processes (Browaeys & Price 2015, 156). They may tend to dislike schedule disruptions, because changes in the situation are also changes in the context, and information sharing is essential.

6 Conclusions

In this study, the cultural differences in communication between Japanese organizations from the perspective of Finnish organization members were taken up from the points of English proficiency, culture (values), and communication style (contextual culture). This chapter summarizes what this study has found by answering the research questions of this study.

This is main question of this study is;

“How are the cultural differences perceived and influenced by members of the Finnish organization in business communication with members of the Japanese organization?”

Sub-questions are;

- “How does language skill affect the communication?”
- “What are the general cultural differences between Finland and Japan?”
- “How intercultural communication can be affected by the cultural differences between those involved in this case?”

6.1 Summary of the most important findings of this study

The main question is broken down to the sub-questions. Summarizing this study through answer sub-questions.

In Finnish organizations, cultural differences are perceived as differences, challenged, learned and adjusted as needed. Regarding English proficiency, it is mentioned in this study that the English communication of Japanese organizations was low on average, but this was also mentioned in previous studies and secondly data. The interviewees say that 90% or more of communication with Japanese organizations is done by email, but there are simplifications of English expressions due to gaps in English proficiency.

In this study, there was no clear reference to contextual culture from Finnish organization members. However, the Japanese interviewee mentioned the difference in style of thinking, that is, the Japanese communication style which is based on interpreting the context and Finnish communication style which is more explicit, language-oriented. It may not be easy to notice the differences related to contextual points. Regarding cultural differences, since it is communication between company organizations, the cultural values regarding the power relationship between superiors and subordinates, and the differences between power distance and individualism-collectivism were clearly stated. This difference also has

a negative impact on communication between organizations. For example, it is difficult for the Finnish side to correct Japan's response to the top of the Japanese organization.

“How does language skill affect the communication?”

Language learning in intercultural communication is an important factor in overcoming barriers and improving intercultural communication skills, as pointed out in the framework of this study. The author thinks that; It is not practical for members of both organizations to learn each other's language (Finnish / Japanese), and purely shared language skills (English) are important even if the English they use is influenced by the concept of their native language. However, this non-native English proficiency is generally a post-learning skill and varies from person to person. This point was also pointed out by an interviewee.

As a premise of this survey, the common language of within Finnish organizations is English, and within Japanese organizations use Japanese. In other words, the members of the Finnish organization use English on a daily basis to do business.

First of all, there seemed to be differences in English proficiency between the two organizations. It is mentioned in this study that the English communication skills of Japanese organizations was immature on average, but this was also mentioned in previous studies. Due to these differences in English proficiency, Finnish organizations need time to understand what meaning of the contents in the messages sent from the Japanese side, and confirmation work is required if necessary. Misunderstandings due to immaturity of language skills can also cause the process to return to the beginning. The interviewees also mentioned that young Japanese tend to have higher / higher English proficiency than older people, also that the English proficiency of people in departments that have strong relationships with foreign countries tends to be high even within Japanese organizations. Also, from the perspective of communication between occupations, considering communication between engineers, it can be said that there is a lack of shared languages because English technical terms are required. In other words, means that not all communicators can participate in communication in English. From the perspective of communication means, in communication between two organizations, video conferencing due to in-situ response of communication is not efficient, that is, not all communication means work productively. Regarding this point, cultural differences may need to be taken into consideration, but communication means are limited due to differences in English proficiency was mentioned by several interviewees. During try and error communicating with Japanese organization, they find their efficient way of communication. The interviewees say that 90% or more of communication with Japanese organizations is done by email, but there are simplifications of English expressions due to gaps in English proficiency. Still, they need to spend effort and time for

additional understanding resulting from differences in language proficiency, as mentioned above. Also in this study, there are also opinions that wish Japanese organizations to improve their English proficiency, and it is thought that the shared language (English) and its language proficiency (English skills) play an important role in communication between two organizations. In the case of this study, it may not be possible to say that the shared language of Finland and Japan is completely lacking within the Japanese organization, but it can be said that it is close to that. Therefore, the author considers that language (English) and language proficiency (English skills) influences communication between the two organizations as a barrier.

“What are the general cultural differences between Finland and Japan?”

According to Hofstede’s cultural values, the gap between Finnish and Japanese scores is in that order, Masculinity (score gap: 69), Long term orientation (50), Uncertainty avoidance (33), Power distance (21), Individualism (17), Indulgence (15). From the interview of this survey, only a part of MAS with the highest score gap was seen, and regarding LOT, the difference in business style between Japan and Finland was mentioned by an interviewee. Cultural differences in avoidance of uncertainty (UAI) may have influenced business models. It is thought that by handling only the finished product, control over the product is ensured and uncertainty is avoided.

From the perceptions of the interviewees, the cultural differences between Finland and Japan were the most contrasting in the dimension of power distance and individualism-collectivism, based on the cultural values of Hofstede (2010). Specifically, it was most noticeable in the scene of exchanging opinions in communication between superiors and subordinates. This is thought to be due to the cultural background in which the Japanese tend to tolerate the hierarchy and the collectivist cultural background in which they respect groups over individuals and prefer their harmony and order. Finland, on the other hand, has low power distance scores and tends to be unacceptable for hierarchies, and job titles do not significantly affect personal value. In addition, individualism tends to prioritize individual opinions over group harmony, so it is thought that there are few barriers to remarks regarding opinions, including corrections, from subordinates to superiors. This difference in the relationship between superiors and subordinates in both countries effect communications in those two organizations and it may also influence decision-making.

Hofstede also points out that contextual culture and individualism - collectivism, are closely related. This study also showed the difference between Finnish and Japanese individualism - collectivism, suggesting that each culture can be interpreted contextually as well.

“How intercultural communication can be affected by the cultural differences between those involved in this case?”

In communication with members of the Japanese organization, direct communication is restricted due to English ability, and the flow of opinions from bottom to top is not as easy as in Finland due to the strength of power distance and the cultural influence of collectivism within the Japanese organization. This cultural difference has resulted in the difficulty of requesting corrections from the Finnish side to Japanese organization in communication between the two organizations.

Regarding Hall's contextual culture, in this study did not mention the confusion of contextual interpretation peculiar to high-contextual culture from perceived by most interviewees, like as in previous studies. However, this seems to change the situation when Japanese interviewee's opinion is added. There was a difference in contextual cultural, it is style of thinking in communication between the two organizations. However, the perception of Finnish members in the communication between the two organizations did not confirm the need for contextual interpretation. In this point, it may be a very unnoticed hidden barrier to communication between two organizations. Hall recommended that we should learn to understand the out-of-awareness aspects of communication (Hall 1995, 53).

6.2 Validity and reliability of this research

Kirk and Miller (1986, 20) defined reliability as reliability as the specified degree to which the result or finding are regardless of the accidental research circumstance (Peräkylä, edited by Silverman, 2004, 285). Reliability is one of the enduring criteria in generally used in quantitative research and reliability indicates the degree of produces of the same result then repeated trials with similar measurement, procedure, or instrument (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 292). What is important here is that the survey method adopted in this study is a quantitative method, semi-structured interview, which involves persons (interviewees and interviewer). Although it is possible to interview the same segment of interviewees as this study whom with a) a person who works for a group company of a Japanese company in Finland and b) a person who has contact with Japanese. Also, it may be possible to interview them about their cultural perceptions with the same question, but since this study was conducted by a semi-structural interview, it is not possible to repeat the exact same question. The situation in interviews is always unique, and qualitative research seeks personal experience, awareness, and opinion in the first place, so the author thinks that different interviewees will see the same trends as in this research, but also it may come out different perceptions. Moreover, it may be getting a very unique answer. In the empirical part of this research, the number of interviewees was as small as five, so with a greater number of

interviewees, the result may be different, or give more other perspectives. In addition, since only one Japanese person was interviewed and all interviewees are male in this study, it can be said that the interviewee's segment also affects reliability.

The aim of validity in qualitative research is to provide research with a guarantee that the report or description is correct (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 292). Kirk & Miller (1986) deemed from a traditional standpoint, the objectivity or truth of interview responses might be assessed in terms of validity, the extent to which inquiry yields the correct answer (Holstein & Gubrium, edited by Silverman, 2004, 145). Therefore, the validity of a qualitative research can be supported by through accurate reporting that designing the appropriate interview framework, and how the research was conducted and selecting the appropriate interviewees. Triangulation, which is often discussed in the validity of qualitative research, involves multiple observers, and the data is detected independently by multiple observers to create validity. However, there were no participants other than the interviewee and reader in this study, and the interviewer and the observer (researcher) were the same person. Therefore, this study uses other measures to consider validity. leaving an audit trail which documentation and record used in study, rich and thick description for providing detail to support and corroborate findings (Cohen 2011, 182-183). Also, the validity of qualitative research in the field of cross-cultural /intercultural communication may be increased by some techniques. The translator should be familiar not only with both languages, but also with the subject matter (Liu 2002, according to Cohen 2011, 192). The background of the interviewer (the researcher, as well as the author) can be said that was already familiar with the cultural background of Finland and Japan, the general issues of overseas organizations of Japanese companies. Though does not have working experience in the same manufacturing industry as the case company, has a total of about 6 years of work experience at the head office of a Japanese company and their overseas subsidiary (China) and has lived in Finland for 7 years. Since the interview is conducted in a foreign language (English) except for one Japanese interviewee, linguistic influence may affect the validity as van Nes et al. (2010, 315) said. In addition, regarding the translation of Japanese comment (interview C) from Japanese into English, the author had to supplement it from the contextual meaning due to the lack of subjects and objects in the oral operation of Japanese. Also, during the analysis of the empirical study, it was noticed that the researcher unconsciously changed her communication style when speaking in Japanese with Japanese interviewee.

6.3 Suggestion for future research

This chapter describes future research related to the theme of this research. During the study, a small number of subjects were detected for future studies.

It would be beneficial to study this issue, as language barriers, cultural differences and style of thinking have been shown to have a significant influence market attitudes and the process of projects, as pointed out as looking back at communication between the case company.

This study was conducted from the perspective of Finnish organizational members, but if the study focuses on the comparison of low-high context cultures, the samples also need to be sensitive to high context cultures. Therefore, it may be necessary to pay attention to sample selection, especially in long-distance communication. The number of samples is overwhelmingly small, so the author would like to leave this point for future research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview topic and themes

Introduction, background information

- The purpose of this thesis is to study cultural differences between Finnish and Japanese communication style. This study does not set a special communication scene. The theme is cultural differences that are perceived in cross-border business communication that takes place in everyday work. This study explores the cultural aspects that affect communication between Finnish subsidiaries and Japanese headquarters from the "differences" perceived by employees of Finnish side of organization.
- This interview is recorded, and your name will not be on the paper.
- Introduce yourself. (Name, occupation, how long working for the company?)
- Please describe your usual tasks in working life. (What do you do?)

Language

- What languages are used when communicating with colleagues and customers here, also with the members of Japanese organization?
- Are there any challenges in language that you face while working with/communicating with Japanese organization?
- What is your opinion about English being the dominant languages in the organization?

Cultural

- Are there cultural aspects coming to your communications? For example, are there any issues working in different time zones and calendar, as calls or emails expected to be done out of office hours?
- How do you feel organizational culture similarities or differences? If you know.

Intercultural communication in Japan business culture

- Have you received any cultural or communication training? Yes, what is the contents and how you get benefit from it?
- In your view do you encounter any differences while communicating with members of Japanese organization? Please describe these differences.
- Do you encounter any difficulties while communicating with members of Japanese organization? Please describe these difficulties.
- What about intercultural communication in Finnish organization?

Non-verbal communication

- How do you perceive non-verbal communication in your working life? For example, silence during meeting, eye contact in presentation etc.
- Have you ever encountered any misunderstandings because of non-verbal communication? Please describe the situation.

Communication technology

- Which communication technology do you use to communicate with Japanese organization? What do you prefer or dislike?