Invited lecture/Review

Features of the Formation of Cross-Cultural Communication Skills in IT Business

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Abstract:
Effective establishment of cross-cultural communication is a prerequisite for business success, regardless of the field in which it is organized or already exists. The issue appears especially relevant against the background of the rapid development of information technologies, digitalization, socialization, and globalization of business. Cross-cultural communication is a process of information exchange among representatives of different cultures, which aims to establish mutual understanding through the achievement of conformity of different culturally determined value systems. As the sector of information technology grows ever more complex, Information Technology (IT) professionals are called upon daily to explain technology applications to coworkers from other departments, managers, and customers. Building effective cross-cultural communication within an IT company and establishing the right communication links with stakeholders affect the effectiveness of management decisions both at the operational and strategic levels. Barriers to the formation of cross-cultural communication skills in the IT industry include IT professionals being used to working in isolation or functioning within tight-knit teams, differing work expectations, varying values and customs, and different levels of technological knowledge. Formation of cross-cultural communication skills should create a basis for effective establishment of communication in the development team, providing support for the common organization of the group work on the processing of general information and information linked to the project, creating conditions for collaborative software development, and promoting the formation and development of corporate culture in IT companies.

Keywords: Communication; Cross-cultural communication; Skills; IT business; IT services; IT team

An established part of the modern world is globalization. Globalization means that there is an increase in the interaction and interdependence between different countries and regions of the world in the field of economy, social, politics, ecologic, and culture. The globalization has been accelerated by many factors, including the increased inter-national interconnectedness, the increased migration, both legal and illegal, particularly from less-developed to more-developed countries, and the ability of information and communication technology (Thomas & Inkson, 2017). In a general sense the process of globalization is forming an infinite world, when state borders turn into formalities on the path of displaced both factors and results of processes of human management of the mankind.

Despite the talk of de-globalization (Qu & Yang, 2023; Salavrakos, 2023), the globalization index shows a growing trend (**Figure 1**). Moreover, the WTO report (World Trade Report 2023, 2023) contends that international trade continues to thrive and points to the expansion of digital services trade. And, the global IT services market size is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.7% from 2023 to 2030 (IT Services Market Size And Share Analysis Report, 2030).
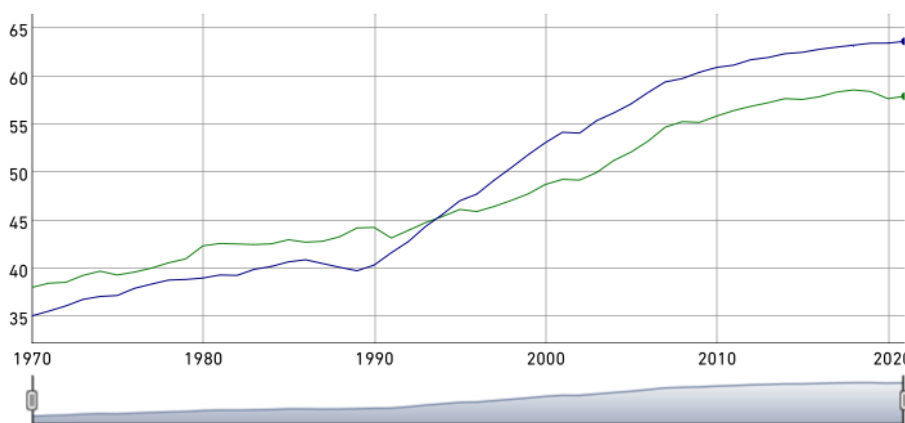
2021: **Index – De facto**: 57.94 **Index – De jure**: 63.65

Figure 1. The dynamics of the globalization index (KOF Globalisation Index, 2023).

Definitely, globalization creates significant advantages for the IT business. The main ones are easier access to new sales markets, the possibility of attracting highly qualified specialists from around the world, acceleration of technology transfer, etc. At the same time, it also presents several problems and challenges: increases the risks of infringement of intellectual property rights; intensifies competition both in the sales market and in the labor market, creates threats to cyber security, and increases the problems of cultural, ethical and legal compliance. The problem of establishing effective cross-cultural communication is especially acute for the IT sector. Cross-cultural communication is a process of information exchange among representatives of different cultures, which aims to establish mutual understanding through the achievement of conformity of different culturally determined value systems (Sahadevan & Sumangala, 2021).

Cross-cultural communication is of paramount significance in the IT industry, driven by globalization, multinational workforces, the need for effective collaboration, and the importance of building strong client relationships. It plays a pivotal role in problem-solving, innovation, and adaptation to global markets. Moreover, it influences talent acquisition and retention while fostering cultural sensitivity, making it a vital skill for success in this dynamic and competitive field. That's why the significance of cross-cultural communication skills in the IT sector has grown fast. Effective cross-cultural communication is not just a desirable skill; it's a necessity for success in this dynamic and ever-evolving field.

The goal of research is to investigate and understand the specific aspects, challenges, and effective tactics involved in developing cross-cultural communication skills within the IT industry. Moreover, the publication aims to furnish an information, insights, and guidance, pivotal in enhancing the communicative competencies of individuals, enterprises,

and information technology professionals. This enhancement is particularly crucial for navigating and excelling in cross-cultural interactions, thereby facilitating efficacious collaboration and operational success within the intricate of a globalized environment.

The IT industry is continuously growing in complexity, requiring IT professionals to regularly communicate the utilization of technologies to colleagues from various departments, managers, customers, and interested parties. It is unquestionable that the development of efficient cross-cultural communication within an IT organization and the establishment of appropriate communication channels with stakeholders significantly impact the effectiveness of managerial decisions, both at the operational and strategic levels. Barriers to the development of cross-cultural communication skills in the IT business are multifaceted and can pose significant challenges for IT professionals. These obstacles often arise from the unique dynamics and characteristics of the IT field:

1. Isolated work: Information Technology professionals frequently exhibit a proclivity for solitary labor or working within tightly-knit teams of similarly specialized confreres. The shift towards an environment characterized by global dimensions necessitates a significant adaptation towards a paradigm that is inherently more collaborative and heterogeneous. This transition poses a substantial challenge for individuals who are habituated to autonomous activities. The demands for heightened intercultural interaction and diverse team dynamics require a recalibration of both professional and interpersonal skill sets in globalized professional contexts.

2. Divergent Occupational Expectations: Distinct cultural milieus exhibit variegated norms and anticipations concerning professional temporal allocation, the equilibrium between vocational and personal life, and methodologies employed in problem resolution. The process of maneuvering through these dissimilarities and achieving a concordance of expectations creates multifaceted challenges and may require compromise and flexibility.

3. Different Cultural Values and Customs: Cultural diversity often means that people have different values, norms, and traditions. These differences can be seen in workplace behavior, ways of communication, and how decisions are made. Therefore, IT professionals need to be really aware of and sensitive to these varied cultural aspects. Understanding and respecting these differences is crucial for effective communication across cultures, especially in today's global work environment.

4. Heterogeneity in Technological Proficiency of Knowledge: Professionals in the field of Information Technology may frequently interface with clients or collaborators possessing a different spectrum of expertise in technological domains. The task of articulating intricate technical concepts to stakeholders with primary proficiency in technological matters presents a substantial challenge. This task necessitates the cultivation of a communicative skill set that is adept at converting complex information into comprehensible and accessible formats, thereby bridging the knowledge gap and facilitating effective knowledge transfer.

5. Language Impediments: Disparities in language present a notable obstacle within the realm of cross-cultural communication. Professionals engaged in the Information Technology sector frequently employ a lexicon replete with technical jargon and specific terminologies, which might pose comprehension challenges for individuals who are not native speakers of English or those hailing from diverse linguistic origins. This linguistic divide necessitates an increased focus on the clarity and adaptability of language use, ensuring that communication remains accessible and comprehensible.

Forming cross-cultural communication skills in the IT business involves a combination of methods and strategies that individuals and organizations can employ. Developing cross-cultural communication skills should establish a foundation for facilitating effective communication within the development team. In the world of IT development, teams often consist of professionals from various cultural backgrounds. The ability to communicate effectively and consider cultural differences contributes to seamless and productive teamwork.

Drawing upon the scientific work of N. A. Dlugunovych and Yu. V. Forkun (*Длугунович and Форкун*, 2017), it is pertinent to acknowledge that the cultivation of intercultural communication competencies necessitates the facilitation of collaborative group endeavors. Such collaborative frameworks should encompass the assimilation and synthesis of information related to distinct project-oriented objectives. This approach underscores the importance of integrating diverse perspectives and expertise in the collective processing of information, thereby enriching the scope and depth of intercultural communicative practice. It involves the processing of shared information distributed among teams and related to the project. Efficient collaboration and resource-sharing improve project productivity. The advancement of cross-cultural communicative proficiency is imperative in fostering an environment that is optimally suited for collaborative endeavors in software development. Within the domain of software engineering, the act of collaboration with colleagues from an array of cultural backgrounds is a basis for the genesis of innovation and the appearance of creative problem-solving ways. The capacity to amalgamate and synergize ideas emanating from a plethora of cultural vantage points not only augments the value of software products but also significantly propels the velocity of product development cycles. This multicultural approach to software development is instrumental in enhancing both the quality and efficiency of technological innovations.

Furthermore, the facilitation of cross-cultural communication plays a pivotal role in cultivating an environment that is propitious for the establishment and nurturing of corporate culture within Information Technology enterprises. Painstaking consideration of cultural subtleties is instrumental in the development of an internal organizational philosophy that not only promotes harmonious collaboration but also bolsters the morale of the workforce. This approach is critical in engendering a cohesive and productive corporate atmosphere, thereby enhancing both employee satisfaction and operational efficiency.

The improver of cross-cultural communicative competencies within an IT company necessitates a synergistic blend of both individual initiative and organizational strategy. It is imperative to embark upon a detailed exploration of the methodologies and approaches that can be adopted by IT professionals, as well as the enterprise entity in its entirety, to augment these essential skills. IT-professionals and the company as a whole can take a number of steps to improve these skills.

For IT specialists, it will be useful to increase their cultural awareness, cross-cultural learning, language skills in the context of IT business, cultural sensitivity, and practice active listening during cross-cultural interactions. They should cultivate empathy for colleagues from different cultures, seek feedback from colleagues of different cultures about their communication styles, and seek mentoring from colleagues who have experience in cross-cultural communication.

Developing cross-cultural communication skills in an IT company requires a company-wide commitment to diversity, cultural sensitivity, and ongoing training. When the organization as a whole actively works to enhance these skills, it can lead to more productive and harmonious cross-cultural interactions within the IT industry. The main steps for forming cross-cultural communication skills for companies are: offering cross-cultural training programs to all employees; implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives that promote cultural diversity within the workplace; establishing clear communication channels for employees to report any issues related to cultural misunderstandings or conflicts; providing access to cultural resource materials, such as books, documentaries, and online resources, that employees can use to expand their cultural knowledge; implementing cultural competency assessments or surveys to gauge employees' understanding of cross-cultural communication; encouraging cultural diversity in leadership positions to reflect the company's commitment to inclusivity; scheduling regular check-ins with international teams or colleagues to ensure that communication is effective and to address any issues promptly.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the pivotal role of cross-cultural communicative skills within the Information Technology sector, particularly in the context of an increasingly globalized milieu, cannot be overstated. The successful navigation of this complex, international landscape

necessitates a concerted and dual-faceted approach, encompassing both individual endeavors and organizational strategies. The acquisition and refinement of these cross-cultural communication skills are imperative for IT professionals, as they facilitate effective engagement with representatives of different cultures. This, in turn, improves productivity and sparks innovation, while simultaneously addressing the multifarious challenges inherent in the globalized business. Such competencies are integral to the sustenance and advancement of the IT industry in its pursuit of global interconnectedness and technological progress.

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