



INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to shed some light on cross-cultural communication in a globalized context. These two phenomena will be explored through the assessment of their intermingled dimensions, in an attempt to contribute to interpreting their complex aspects. Nowadays, under the globalization effect, societies are intrinsically open to sharing intercultural principles of communication. That is, priority given to cross-national issues has transformed the universe from individual countries to a global nation. Correspondently, the study of compatibility between globalization and cross-cultural problems needs to be addressed from various angles to help decipher the complexity of these phenomena and contribute to understand their magnitudes. To interpret the foremost manifestations of these magnitudes, the interdependencies between multinational communications and global encounters should be reviewed.

INTRODUCTION

The process of globalization, even if it depends mainly on technological and economic characteristics such as information exchange and financial dealings, needs to be boosted by an extensive improvement of multicultural dimensions. These dimensions constitute potentially the key patterns of individuals' encounters and intercommunications. Naturally, witnessing interactions between cultures in different circumstances calls for analyzing the hazards of cultural classification in characterizing people only according to their cultural backgrounds. However, in a context of inevitably set globalization at the expense of

national identities, cultural aspects should always be taken into account in order to build adequate channels of communication between peoples worldwide. This view is well articulated by Watson (2017) who contends that “a rudimentary version of world culture is taking shape among certain individuals who share similar values, aspirations, or lifestyles. The result is a collection of elite groups whose unifying ideals transcend geographical limitations” (p. 1). In the same perspective, Soproni & Horga (2008) contend that “this is due to its dynamism imposed by new technologies, which allows further attainment of various fields of life through a faster rhythm [...]. With the help of the new communicative means, new ideas can get around the world in just a few moments” (p. 4). That is, the interconnections of the globalized world have become overwhelming, especially with the new technologies of information and communication. Then, the present paper seeks to assess the prospective influences of the globalization dynamic on communication between cultures and its manifestations in different multicultural encounters. This assessment is meant to discuss the interconnectedness of the multicultural standards and the individual perceptions of people working in global settings.

GLOBAL VALUES VS NATIONAL IDENTITIES

During the last decades, cultures and nations have become largely interconnected in complex and delicate ways. This alteration seems to be shaping the principles on which human contact has been relying in favor of transnational communication process impregnated with universal morals. Therefore, communication depends structurally on the extent to which people from divergent cultural backgrounds can interact with one another without clashes. This calls obviously for their preparedness to put aside their indigenous susceptibilities for the benefit of open-minded interaction. However, even if individuals involved in multicultural settings agree to adopt a common system of communication, they generally cannot get rid of their sociocultural specificities. Hence, effective management of intercultural communication necessitates a steady consciousness of the standards that go along with the globalization process. In due course, the way in which communication between individuals and communities takes place should be suitable to the global conditions. In this perspective, Soproni & Horga (2008) observe that:

The use of the new information and communication techniques, in all the fields of the economic and social life, has determined the growth of social productivity and has modified, at a large scale, the working and living style of the peoples (pp. 3-4).

That is, the global cultural landscape has bewilderedly expanded, and this has been molded by

people with divergent cultural origins who are involved in cross-national encounters. In such encounters, intercultural aspects need to be taken into consideration to ensure an effective cross-functional processing, which is necessary to reach the common objectives intended by teams gathered for multinational accomplishments such as peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance. Accordingly, for the creation of productive transnational contexts, cultural differences ought to be managed with high subtlety so as to avoid obstacles that impede cooperative dealings. Interacting with people from diverse backgrounds, requires deep comprehension of these correspondences (Moran, Harris and Moran, 2011). This is to say that cross-cultural interaction between individuals and groups of divergent ethnic identities is fundamentally governed by universal standards, which entails that management of cultural differences draws its principles from the full understanding of the globalization ethics. Nevertheless, the tricky situation of the international cultural landscape seem to generate potential challenges for global encounters. Such challenges are likely to hinder successful interaction between contributors who expect to enhance the common output of these encounters.

CULTURAL COMPLEXITY AND GLOBAL CONSTRAINTS

Globalism is steadily antagonized by the combination of cultural worries and conflicting hopes, as well as discrimination threats. An assessment of this combination reveals that in spite of the challenges of global relationships, multiculturalists can cultivate appropriate mechanisms of intercultural communication. Therefore, social multiplicity within transnational associations should be developed as potential sources of multicultural dynamics in order to improve the wide-ranging communication related to such dynamics. Hence, the performance of real multiculturalist achievements calls for a sort of cultural hybridity. This would hopefully put into interaction different competences of cross-cultural intelligence to generate openness between individuals and communities throughout the globe. As cited by Hall & Theriot (2016), Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner claim that “the cultural awareness and skills that make people culturally competent are lacking today, in a time when these qualities are most needed. Without cultural awareness and skills, operational gridlock can occur at great cost to the workplace” (p. 35). Moreover, coordination needs in socioeconomic dealings have led to a significant removal of local cultural barriers, which transferred the international cultural landscape from individual identities to globalized atmosphere. The globalization of culture, boosted by the information and communication technologies, is perceived as a tendency to establish a common experience

everywhere. In this respect, Mazur (2010) points out in his description of the intrinsic change made by globalization for peoples' interconnections that "increasing globalization requires more interaction among people from diverse cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds than ever before. People no longer live and work in an insular marketplace" (p. 5). That is, in today's global background, multicultural expertise is highly required to boost people's ability to make their way across any deadlocks related to antagonistic responses emanating from cultural individualities.

Correspondently, individuals and groups, attending international meetings, should give up their personal egocentrism in favor of collaborative interactions. That is, what finally matters in cultural diversity is the outcome of values and viewpoints emerging from it. This notion is well illustrated by Moran, Harris & Moran (2011) who argue that:

A global person does not believe that his/her nation is the best at everything and that everyone else wants to be just like him/her-rather he/she is aware that other cultures of the world have lives and viewpoints different from his/her own (p. 9).

Clearly then, successful globalists should have transnational principles and be impregnated with full respect for the different cultural identities constituting the world's cultural landscape. Actually, communication between cultures has been driven by globalized systems that have started to implement universal cultural approaches recommended to deal with transnational frameworks. These systems are inherently based on humankind equality regardless of their cultural backgrounds. For that reason, cultural knowledge and sensitivity have become extremely important for their reciprocal understanding. As cited by Moran, Harris & Moran (2011), Einstein said "all people are to some extent like some other people. This is the cultural aspect which we share, in part, with people from our own tribe" (p. 10). That is, to make global multiculturalism persevere, cross-cultural policymakers should build their approaches as to boost minded-openness and encourage cultural flexibility.

Nonetheless, the globalized cultural system constitutes a dynamic process that generates a kind of cultural hegemony susceptible to trigger potential confrontation with national identities. Hence, multicultural manifestations should be measured from their different angles to assess their real magnitude and their effects on a community's behavior and how it relates to the conduct with other communities. That is, the depiction of social mechanisms relevant to this process needs to be oriented toward agendas that help set balance between the global and local characteristics of cultural identities. In this respect, Herring (2001) notes that "some people

believe that the increased cross-cultural contact facilitated by computer networks will reduce cultural distances, transforming the world into an “electronic global village” (p. vii). Explicitly, when universal cultural frameworks are free from biased perceptions, their impact on national ones has substantial chances to succeed.

In view of that, to live globally it is necessary to adopt the posture of a world characterized by multi-faceted interdependences. Hence, attenders of cross-national sceneries should possess the required degree of multicultural competences to understand the landscape where they evolve and how to cope with it. This depends essentially on the ability to develop cross-cultural skills that constitute key elements of cross-cultural integration. Hence, cultural divergences should be delicately controlled in order to transcend sociocultural obstacles. However, unfriendliness feeling is likely to generate low morale for individuals coming to work in an unfamiliar context, which would impede their performance. Hence, participants in global work teams should be prepared to manage their cultural dissimilarities in the sense of adapting their consciousness and conduct according to the environment in which they evolve. According to Belhoste & Monin (2013):

People still refer to national culture, but without essentializing or negatively evaluating cultural differences. Rather, national differences call actors to adapt their attitudes and behaviors according to what they understand about the nationalities of the people with whom they work (p.13).

As a result, multicultural managers are solicited to develop effective mechanisms so as to vulgarize information exchange between communities worldwide. All of this will make it more practical for managers and followers to carry out cross-national activities in better contexts. In addition, linguistic approaches, such as verbal interpretation and transcultural orientation courses, could be operational in ensuring clarity of communication, which is vital to the overall success of cultural rapprochement. Furthermore, in global perceptions, cultural diversity constitutes a constructive action for the enrichment of communication within work groups, especially when the intended level of collaboration between the groups' members is reached. Globalist managers are decidedly invited to build platforms able to facilitate intercommunication within multicultural organizations gathered from different cultural backgrounds. But this could not be achieved unless by improving cultural awareness among these organizations.

Naturally, global perceptions constitute a permanent characteristic of communication between people who work in a multicultural organization. These people reach their self-satisfaction through the mutual understanding with the other members of the organization. Therefore, the respective viewpoints of all participants in global teamwork should be taken into account for the sake of the collective input. Moreover, to avoid miscommunication in organizational dealings, cultural sensitivities need to be addressed with tact and professionalism by these participants. As stated by Anna (2013), “creative life activity associated with subject activity makes qualitative changes in the culture and psychic of an individual, producing its own new object” (p. 281). At that point, management of organizations at any level would depend of the interrelation of their members’ beliefs and particularly their perception of collective interactions. That is, the accomplishment of fruitful communication within an association relies to a great extent on the degree of adaptation to the collective values of the association. As cited by Keyton (2017), McPhee & Zaugg point out that “communication is also tailored to interrelated and overlapping organizational functions” (p. 3). Nevertheless, for a rational process of communication, the involved members should be able to maintain a fine balance between their own perceptions and those adopted by their associates. Thus, all multicultural organizations need management structures that take into account the ability of people from one cultural background to cooperate smoothly with others from dissimilar cultures. For that reason, successful communication constitutes, for managers of a multicultural organization, an ultimate objective that they must achieve through cultural comprehensiveness of the adherents of that organization. As cited by Chhetry (2020), Adler & Gundersen argue that:

Every leader and employee working in the organizations which are globally operated requires multicultural skills. It is because, in the multinational companies, multiculturalism has huge effects. European Union committees and United Nations office is a good example of multicultural organization” (p. 4).

Then, it could be assumed that multicultural platforms should be structured in a way to make their attendees open-minded and tolerant with divergent cultural identities. This could also be enhanced by orientation courses that seek to reach a higher degree of intercultural consciousness. Such a process would undeniably reduce miscommunication and help take advantage of cultural diversity to enrich the organization’s productivity. That is, regardless of people’s initial attitude towards cultural differences, it is important to

develop genuine intercultural sensitivity in order to be an active member of a multinational organization. The perspective through which cultural diversity is perceived must be adapted to the global perceptions and styles.

That is, regardless of people's initial attitude towards cultural differences, it is crucial for participants in multinational organizations to cultivate intercultural rapprochement, which calls for understanding and successfully addressing cross-cultural antagonisms susceptible to challenge global meetings.

POTENTIAL NUISANCE FOR GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS

Global meetings pertaining to multinational interactions need comprehensive communication between the participants. These interactions suppose evidently the existence of appropriate homogeneousness and mutual understanding. Therefore, such encounters should be arranged so as to promote dialogue and sustain multidimensional activities related notably to socioeconomic and security issues. Accordingly, cross-national teams that contribute to global encounters should be prepared to face many challenges inherent essentially to cross-cultural interactions. In this respect, Hussain (2018) argues that "in a multicultural organization, it is only through the effective communication that the information is shared, trust is built, and constructive relation is developed and maintained. Organizational communication is as broad in its domain as the field of communication itself" (p. 45). It could be gleaned from this that preparedness for global meetings must be based on the ability to decipher the participants' cultural characteristics and to develop cross-cultural communication techniques. Another dimension of cultural challenges faced by global assemblies, is building friendly relations with the different attendees whose misunderstanding may lead to failure. For this purpose, specific coaching programs should be implemented in order to elucidate the complexity of cross-cultural contexts.

Furthermore, practical mechanisms such as linguistic and communication styles uniformity, as well as directions for assignment completion are to be operationalized with full respect for cultural individualities in order to mitigate cultural clashes. Then, to reach the needed interoperability amid global organizations, multicultural principles and common sense have to be integrated in the members' daily activities. In this regard, Britta Baumgarten (2010), cited by Jochen Roose, states that "the national framework that impacts cultural differences across borders is quite stable. Meaning-making takes place within this framework. If national agendas are quite stable, then their impact on meaning-making is quite stable, too" (p. 93). From this

description it could be noted that the balance between the national and global cultural agendas might be neutralized if multicultural coherence within global associations is not completely established.

Naturally, cross-cultural settings are multifaceted and very difficult to manage. However, a communal willingness of rapprochement, coupled with tactfulness in capitalizing the globalists' recommendations in this field, could give birth to prosperous multicultural encounters. That is, psychological and anthropological dimensions taking into account cultural diversity are expected to promote the dynamic necessary for this achievement. According to Constantin, Cohen-Vida, & Popescu, (2015), "Cultural awareness becomes essential mainly when we have to interact with people from other cultures. Individuals should be aware that it is difficult to think and behave in the context of their own culture within the confines of another culture" (p. 3). It is then observed that the intrinsic settlement of a global communication system calls for the development of cross-cultural reconciliation stemming from the need for successful interaction between peoples' societal and economic proportions.

CONCLUSION

In sum, today's people living in a globalized world, are intrinsically doomed to apply an interactive communication process with other individuals and groups constituting the world cultural landscape. Therefore, transnational communication standards should be developed so as to achieve the required level of mutual understanding. National identities are to be fashioned to cope with the global standards governing the international communication system. Multicultural awareness is then highly required to mitigate cross-cultural antagonisms and boost coherence within global encounters. This constitutes a source of concern for peoples' streams related to their frequently shifting aspects. That is, intercultural communication is perceived as a platform permitting to develop successful interactions between people from different cultural backgrounds.

Being an ineluctable process, globalization stands for an overriding phenomenon that imposes potential alterations for national cultural identities in terms of human contact, morals, and life styles. Experts' prospections pertaining to this issue let deduce that communication cultures is increasingly shaped by the globalization tendency based on universal human values. The main focus seems to be the opportunities that cross-cultural communication could offer to boost the globalization process. At that point, it would be judiciously suggested that intercultural communication studies need to be oriented toward the establishment of globalized transcultural institutions. This would hopefully help people throughout the world to obtain the

cultural rapprochement needed to make multicultural communication account for the universal medium of people's interconnection.

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