

# *Language Art in Business Negotiations of Transnational Trade*

Dongyue Liu<sup>1,a,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*School of Economics and Management, Xiamen University of Technology, Xiamen 361026, China*

*a. 2010117122@s.xmut.edu.cn*

*\*corresponding author*

**Abstract:** Trade activities between countries have become the main way of economic activities, and it is inevitable to conduct business negotiations when conducting trade activities. People usually only pay attention to the negotiation skills, but do not pay too much attention to the expression of language. However, language, tone and behavior will affect the negotiations and produce different negotiation results. Therefore, this paper studies the relationship between language expression and the outcome of transnational business negotiations by collecting real cases about the influence of language arts on the outcome of negotiations and making a specific analysis of the cases. Studies have found that cultural differences between different countries will produce different behaviors in business negotiations, the tone of the negotiation will also affect the outcome of the negotiation, and whether to listen carefully will also make the negotiating parties have different psychological feelings, and ultimately affect the success of the negotiation. Therefore, language arts play a very important role in cross-border trade and business negotiations.

**Keywords:** language art, business negotiations, cultural differences

## **1. Introduction**

The proportion of international business and trade activities between countries is increasing gradually, and business negotiation is one of the important links of international business activities. International business negotiation not only promotes the economic flow among countries, but also drives the cultural exchange and communication among countries to a large extent. The different countries have difference culture which also directly or indirectly affect the international business negotiations between countries. In all kinds of business activities and communication, different negotiators have different cultural backgrounds like the categories of language, behavioral action and expression of feelings. In business activities which have different cultural backgrounds, many negotiators don't care too much about these differences and evaluate the actions and objectives of others based on their own thinking and habits. These often result in culture clashes, the end of many kinds of negotiations, imposed some restrictions on international trade. In our changing world, the importance of skills in conducting effective negotiations is on the rise [1]. Based on three specific cases, this study analyzes the influence of language arts in business negotiations on the results of negotiations, and the understanding and research on cultural differences and other aspects are conducive to economic and commercial activities. Investigate and learn about cultural backgrounds and behavioral differences in

different countries, after all this preparation, appropriate negotiation strategies need to be developed to avoid conflicts caused by cultural differences and to establish better long-term cooperation., hold advantages in international business activities and obtain maximum benefits. Language art is studied and analyzed in three parts. Firstly, the influence of cultural differences on negotiation is analyzed, which is the preparation before negotiation, and confirmed by specific cases; secondly, the influence of language tone on negotiation is analyzed, which is what negotiators need to pay attention to when negotiators speak in negotiation, and confirmed by specific cases; finally, the influence of listening is analyzed, which is negotiators need to pay attention to when the other side expresses itself in negotiation, and analyzed by specific cases.

With the advance of the global process, the trade cooperation activities between countries are increasing gradually. Trading companies have to face transnational negotiation, because the negotiation involves the interests of both trading companies and even between countries, so the negotiation has become an issue of great concern to both sides of transnational trade. Paying attention to some aspects during negotiations is beneficial to the achievement of cooperation. One of the key aspects is the expression of language. It is important to have a good working relationship through communication and during negotiation [2]. Thus, this article considers the use of professional terms in the negotiation process carefully. There are a lot of language problems that need attention in the course of negotiations with other countries like tone, cultural differences, religious beliefs, etc. Different countries have different cultural backgrounds, and the different cultures will lead to different thinking, feeling and behavior between the cooperative partner in different countries [3]. While fully respecting the differences between the two sides, the negotiators should make adequate preparations to reach a good solution. Negotiators who have the same beliefs believed that they had a spiritual friendship and easier communication during the negotiation process, which had some positive effects. Just like the communication between people in today's society, a good relationship background between companies is more conducive for both sides to show their need to compromise and reach cooperation. It's hard to express the needs clearly if talking with strangers. The absence of such a background, like national culture, is a mistake made by American business negotiators in 1992, business negotiators from China spent 30 million dollars in chemicals in the United States to import. However, due to the clear cultural differences between the two sides of the negotiation, the cooperation eventually failed. Every negotiation is divided into three parts: preparation before negotiation preparation, promotion and leadership, negotiation and conclusion, so it will be very important and effective to prepare the stage of negotiations in advance to reach the expected result in successful negotiations [4]. Improving expression can improve the probability of success in transnational trade negotiation after reading this paper.

## **2. Cultural Behavior Differences**

It is very important to pay attention to cultural characteristics in cross-cultural communication [5]. Culture, as the long-term precipitation of a country's historical customs, has a profound impact on people's ideas and behaviors. Different countries have different cultures. Culture is a spiritual force that can be transformed into a material force in the perception and shaping of the world, which has a profound impact on the development of society. This manifests itself not only in personal development, but also in the history of nations and states. Culture is the accumulation of thinking and practice. If this aspect is lacking, the whole experience of society will be very thin and fragile. Culture is the crystallization of the whole social experience, the general trend of each country, and the common thought recognized by the people. Therefore, touching the cultural bottom line of the negotiating partner will not only lead to the failure of the negotiation, but even lead to cultural conflicts between countries, resulting in disagreements between the two peoples. Religious belief is also an important part of culture. Religious beliefs are widespread and continue to influence

governance in many parts of the world. However, its role in international business negotiations has not been widely concerned by the academic community [6]. If one side of the negotiations denigrates the religion of the other side, they can be blacklisted. The racial issue has also been a major concern since ancient times. It will not only damage the interests of the party, but also damage the image of the country represented by it. Therefore, it is not allowed to touch the words about racial discrimination and color discrimination.

Here's an example: During the business negotiation between China and the United States, the United States presented a souvenir with a red box to satisfy the Chinese side, but the box contained a green hat, which is a bad symbol for Chinese men. Therefore, the cooperation naturally failed. Although the United States had a certain understanding of Chinese culture in this negotiation, it did not carry out an in-depth exploration.

Therefore, understanding and respecting cultural sensitivities is essential for successful transnational business cooperation [7]. In a multicultural environment, a negotiator must be able to appreciate cultural differences and be able to tailor their negotiating style to the cultural coincidence necessary for success [8]. A lack of knowledge of the partner country's business procedures, sociopolitical practices and etiquette may undermine another trading partner's position in international trade and prevent mutual benefit from being achieved. When considering favorable economic outcomes, it is crucial to consider a country's culture. Before the negotiation, both negotiators should have a detailed understanding of the culture of the other country, respect the cultural differences between countries, and understand each other's customs and habits. Communication in business negotiations needs to be prepared in advance. For example, people need to learn the international common language well, or find a good translator. An English word has many meanings, one person may say one meaning, and the other person understands another meaning. It is suggested to avoid misunderstandings caused by cultural differences or contact with other people's beliefs. If someone needs to use synchronous translation tools, they must ensure that the translation tools can be used normally and effectively. So, before the negotiation, negotiators need to read some books about the essentials of Western etiquettes, such as the description of the daily greeting etiquette, dress etiquette, etiquette, dining etiquette and so on in Britain, France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, Sweden, Poland and other major countries. These preparations should be fully understood and paid attention to before the negotiation, and investigating the brand market share, industry status and national economic situation of the company is a good way, and on this basis negotiate with the other side and formulate negotiation methods and concessions [9]. These preliminary preparations can not only help readers understand each other better, but also respect each other's culture, express sincerity with each other's behaviors and habits, and prevent possible situations.

### 3. Language Expressing Styles

The tone is an important way of expression in language. In business negotiations, the important reason why people prefer face-to-face negotiation over paper or email is that through face-to-face negotiation, they can understand the expression and tone of the other side, avoid misunderstanding the other side's meaning, and can respond to problems in a timely manner. Understanding the other side's negotiating style is important too. Germans, for example, are most appreciative of honesty and integrity. They study each other carefully and do their homework before negotiating. They like to stick to their own opinions and don't like to ramble. Euphemisms don't cut much ice with them. In Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea, negotiators are allowed to use euphemisms appropriately to save face. The expression of language is not only reflected in the tone, but also in the content. The content should be complete and accurate. In the process of communication, both sides of the negotiation should first make it clear, accurate, objective and realistic. In business negotiations, the negotiator must be in line

with the reality when introducing the products, financial conditions and other conditions of the enterprise, not exaggerating, so as to let the other side really feel their meaning. Also, be brief and to the point when describing goals and intentions. In addition, both parties can judge what concessions can be made or whether they can continue to demand based on the subtle expressions of the other party. As a buyer, the seller's attitude also affects the desire to buy. In some cases, even if buyers like an item and are willing to make an offer, the seller is so indifferent to the buyer that the buyer would rather walk away. This shows how important tone is in context.

For example, the manager of a branch of a Japanese company in the United States can speak fluent English, but he always communicates with the other side in Japanese through an interpreter during business negotiations. But at the after-party after the business talks, he was laughing and joking in English.

As can be seen from the above examples, in international business negotiations, the translator is the actual core personnel. A good translator can have an insight into the psychology of the other side and the essence of the speech in the negotiation process, and his skills can change the atmosphere of the negotiation, save the negotiation mistakes, and play a considerable role in enhancing the friendship, cooperation and cooperation between the two sides. Therefore, expression is also very important in business negotiations. Negotiators should have excellent logical expression ability, careful thinking, clear concept expression, correct judgment, and rational reasoning. In the process of communicating with the other party, it is necessary to be objective, focused, well-motivated and convincing for the consultation to be successful. If during trade negotiations, the negotiator does not focus on the subject, does not aim at the objectives and uses long and vague language, the other side will be confused, even despise, and think that other side is not sincere and causing obstacles to the negotiation. The way of expression should be different according to the different objects, and the distinct character should be introduced directly and clearly. The negotiators should use persuasive and witty language expression, it is better not to deny directly, with the adult saying is reasonable but may lose some money instead of more effective.

#### 4. Listening Skills

The negotiators whose communication, persuasion, planning and so on are the key to the whole negotiation [10]. In addition, trust, flexibility, honesty and affectivity are also statistically considered essential attributes for procurement negotiators. Listening is an important activity in trade negotiations. The greatest weakness of inexperienced trade negotiators is that they can not listen patiently to the other side. They often mistakenly believe that their task is to talk about their own case, say what they want to say and refute the other side's objections. As a result, they often don't pay attention to each other during negotiations, and a lot of valuable information is lost. They mistakenly believe that good trade negotiators get the upper hand because they talk a lot. A successful negotiation is one in which the good negotiators listen more than half the time. Listen carefully, think carefully, analyze deeply, and ask questions of the other person to make sure they understand the other person's language correctly. Listen carefully to everything the negotiating side says, not just what they think is important or what they want to hear. Only in this way can we get valuable information from big data for the negotiation, increase the bargaining chip and improve the bargaining power. Being a good listener is an essential skill for a successful negotiator. In international business negotiations, negotiators should try their best to encourage the other side to talk more about themselves, so as to get to know the other side as much as possible. The first task of a negotiator is to gather information to enhance creativity. Listening can not only dig out the truth, but also explore the motivations of the other party. By learning to understand the other person's motivations, people can adjust their own coping strategies.

Here's a good example. Joe Gillard: Girard had a memorable experience. Once, a famous person came to him to buy a car. He was about to close the deal, but the other person suddenly changed his mind and walked out. She was told that she had not been listening when he was discussing his proud son.

From the above example, the importance of listening is obvious. Understanding and meeting each other's needs is the main way to promote business cooperation, and listening is an important skill to seek for needs. Listen carefully and patiently to the other person's request to earn their trust. Therefore, when listening to others, people should concentrate their attention and focus their attention on each other. In addition, when listening, people should take good notes and respond promptly and positively to each other, not always in a passive position, but also in time to respond to each other, let the other side know that listening carefully, an appropriate response can ease the atmosphere of tension, and promote a harmonious negotiation environment. Respect is the premise of cooperation and grasping the key points according to the loopholes in the other side's language, increasing the favorable conditions for negotiation, and promoting greater interests. Therefore, negotiators must have a "patient listening" attitude, take careful notes in the process of negotiations, and treat their opponents with the utmost respect and sincerity.

## 5. Conclusion

Through case studies, the results of the three cases all prove that inappropriate culture, language, and listening behaviors will lead to the failure of negotiations. It shows that in addition to negotiation skills, cultural differences between different countries, tone of voice in negotiations and whether they listen carefully will affect the cognition of the negotiating side and ultimately affect the negotiation result. Paying attention to the above aspects in the negotiation will provide a good foundation for the success of cooperation, more conducive to promoting the success of international business negotiations. This study objectively analyzes the objective effects of cultural differences, tone and listening on negotiation results, which is helpful to clarify the relationship between the above three aspects and negotiation. This study has enriched the factors that affect negotiations, provided a reference for international business negotiations, and is conducive to promoting business negotiations between different countries and improving the success rate of negotiations. Finally, this study does not fully consider other aspects that will affect negotiation, such as people's behavior during negotiation is also a factor that affects negotiation. In the future, the above-related factors can be further investigated and studied to facilitate the in-depth study of this topic.

## References

- [1] Fikre, B.: *The Art and Science of Negotiation* (2022).
- [2] FolklSzkudlarek, B., Osland, J. S., Nardon, L., Zander, L. *Communication and culture in international business—Moving the field forward. Journal of World Business* 55(6), 129-162(2020).
- [3] Hofstede, G.: *Cultural predictors of national negotiation styles. In Processes of international negotiations. Routledge*, 193-201 (2019).
- [4] Parvaneh, A., Akbari,V.: *Negotiation Processes: Tactics of Preparing a Successful Negotiation. International journal of Innovation in Marketing Elements* 2(1), 51-58(2022).
- [5] Panarina, E.: *Negotiating with Managers from Russia. The Palgrave Handbook of Cross-Cultural Business Negotiation*, 383-400 (2019).
- [6] Richardson,C., Rammal, H.G.: *Religious belief and international business negotiations: Does faith influence negotiator behaviour?. International Business Review* 27(2), 401-409 (2018).
- [7] Malaviarachchi, T.: *Cultural Sensitivities in International Business Relationship Management and Negotiations: Comprehensive Literature Review* (2021).
- [8] Caputo, A., Ayoko, OB., Amoo, N., Menke, C.: *The relationship between cultural values, cultural intelligence and negotiation styles. Journal of Business Research*, 99, 23-36 (2019).

- [9] Xu, G., Chen,Y., Xu, L.: *Western Etiquette. Introduction to Western Culture: Cultural History, Religion, Politics* (2018).
- [10] Mwangike, L.R., Chagalima, I.A.: *Procurement professionals' perceptions of skills and attributes of procurement negotiators: a cross-sectional survey in Tanzania. International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 35(1), 94-109 (2022).