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CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION: ACADEMIC AND BUSINESS CONTEXTS

Introduction. Globalization has made effective professional communication essential for economists in both academic and business contexts. Cultural differences influence academic writing, business interactions, and negotiation styles, requiring adaptation to diverse communication norms.

Purpose of the Article. The main objective of the article is to analyse the impact of cultural differences on professional communication in economics, focusing on both academic and business contexts.

Methods. A qualitative, comparative, and interdisciplinary approach is applied, integrating Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory and Erin Meyer's Culture Map. The research integrates theoretical analysis, comparative country studies, and case-based insights to explore how economists navigate academic and business communication across diverse cultural settings.

Results. The study finds that cultural differences significantly affect academic writing, negotiation styles, feedback mechanisms, and leadership approaches. The results reveal that Ukraine's hierarchical and collectivist culture fosters formal and authority-driven communication, whereas the USA's individualistic and low-context culture emphasizes directness and efficiency. Japan's high-context communication relies on indirect messaging and consensus-building, while Sweden's egalitarian approach promotes open dialogue and participatory decision-making. These differences present challenges for economists navigating academic publishing, international collaborations, and global business interactions.

Conclusions. Cultural intelligence, collaborative engagement, and strategic adaptation are essential for economists to succeed in cross-cultural academic and business environments. Economists must balance local and global expectations and adapt their communication strategies. Future research should explore the role of AI-driven language tools, digital platforms, and effective strategies in shaping professional communication in economics.

Keywords: intercultural differences, professional communication, academic communication, business communication, intercultural competence, digitalization.

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КУЛЬТУРНІ ВІДМІННОСТІ У ПРОФЕСІЙНІЙ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ: АКАДЕМІЧНИЙ ТА БІЗНЕС-КОНТЕКСТИ

Вступ. Сучасні процеси глобалізації та інтеграції економік зумовлюють необхідність ефективного професійного спілкування між економістами у різних країнах. Однак, комунікаційні особливості значно варіюються залежно від культурних чинників, що впливає на стиль академічного письма, ведення переговорів, презентацію економічних ідей та побудову професійних відносин.

Мета. Головною метою статті є аналіз впливу міжкультурних відмінностей на професійне спілкування економістів, як у академічному, так і у бізнес-контексті.

Методи. Дослідження базується на якісному, порівняльному та міждисциплінарному підході. Використано теорію культурних вимірів Гофстеде та культурну карту Мейєр для аналізу міжкультурних

відмінностей у професійній комунікації економістів. Проведено порівняльний аналіз України, США, Японії та Швеції для оцінки впливу культурних факторів на академічну та бізнес-комунікацію.

Результати. Результати дослідження підтвердили, що культурні відмінності значною мірою впливають на академічну та бізнес-комунікацію економістів. Україна характеризується високою ієрархічністю та колективістськими цінностями, що сприяє формальному та авторитетному стилю спілкування. США демонструють прямотинність, ефективність і чіткість комунікації, що обумовлено індивідуалізмом та низьким контекстом спілкування. Японія застосовує непрямую комунікацію, що часто уповільнює процес прийняття рішень. Швеція характеризується демократичним підходом, що заохочує відкритість, рівність і дискусію. Виявлено, що різниця у стилях зворотного зв'язку, презентації ідей та веденні переговорів може призводити до непорозуміння у міжнародному професійному середовищі.

Висновки. З огляду на результати дослідження, стає очевидним, що для успішного професійного спілкування економісти мають розвивати міжкультурну компетентність, адаптувати стилі комунікації та поєднувати локальні й міжнародні стандарти спілкування.

Ключові слова: міжкультурні відмінності, професійне спілкування, академічна комунікація, бізнес-комунікація, міжкультурна компетентність, цифровізація.

Jel Classification: A12, A14, M14, M16

Introduction. To start with, the growing globalization of economics makes effective professional communication vital for economists in both academic and business contexts. However, cultural differences significantly shape communication styles, expectations, and professional interactions, influencing how scientists navigate these diverse environments. While academic communication emphasizes a theoretical approach, structured argumentation, and formal discourse, business communication often prioritizes clarity, persuasion, and efficiency. These distinctions become even more complex when cross-cultural elements come into play, as economists must adapt their communication strategies to align with different cultural norms, institutional expectations, and professional objectives. While English has fortified its role as the lingua franca of academic and business communication cultural differences extend beyond language, influencing how research is conceptualized, business ideas are communicated, and results are received.

Literature Review. The role of cultural differences in both academic and business communication has received increasing attention in recent years, particularly in the context of globalization. Scholars have explored how cultural dimensions shape communication styles, influence collaboration, and affect the perception of ideas across diverse professional settings.

Huang and Liao (2024) employ Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory to analyse cross-cultural business communication, emphasizing the impact of cultural disparities in thought processes, value systems, and communication modalities [1]. Their study highlights those cultural differences in power distance, individualism versus collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance significantly shape business interactions, often leading to misunderstandings in international exchanges.

Similarly, Vlajkovic and Ilievska-Kostadinovic (2023) provide an in-depth analysis of intercultural business communication, focusing on how Hofstede's dimensions influence workplace interactions [2]. Their study underscores that high power distance cultures tend to emphasize hierarchical structures in communication, leading to a preference for indirect and deferential communication styles. In contrast, low power distance cultures encourage egalitarianism and open dialogue, which can create friction when professionals from different backgrounds collaborate.

Mujtaba and Langaas (2023) extend this discussion by examining the role of cultural influences on workplace communication, with a particular focus on Scandinavian business culture [3]. They argue that Scandinavian countries, which exhibit low power distance and high levels of individualism, foster open and participatory communication in professional settings. Their study contrasts this with more hierarchical and structured communication practices found in other regions, suggesting that cultural adaptability is a key determinant of successful collaboration in international business environments.

A study by Khosrowjerdi and Bornmann (2021) examined the association between national cultural dimensions and research impact [4]. They found that cultural traits such as uncertainty avoidance and power

distance negatively correlated with citation impact, while individualism and indulgence showed positive associations.

Nunn and Giuliano (2021) explore how cultural norms persist or change over time, emphasizing the role of historical, environmental, and institutional factors in shaping societal behaviours [5]. Their findings reveal that deeply rooted cultural traits, such as attitudes toward hierarchy or individualism, can influence communication styles. However, cultural change can occur through globalization, migration, or exposure to new practices, highlighting opportunities for adaptation in academic contexts.

Gelfand et al. (2011) investigate how cultural norms of tightness (strict adherence to social rules) and looseness (greater tolerance for deviance) influence societal behaviours across 33 nations [6]. The study highlights that tight cultures, often characterized by high conformity and strict norms, may face challenges in adapting to the more flexible and collaborative demands of international academic communication. Conversely, loose cultures, with their openness, may align more easily with global publishing standards.

House et al. (2004), in “The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies”, analyse how cultural dimensions such as collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance shape leadership and organizational practices [7]. The study offers a robust framework for understanding how cultural differences impact the ability of scientists to engage with international academic standards.

The current literature also overlooks the role of digitalization and open-access platforms in bridging cultural gaps in academic publishing.

Thus, recent studies provide valuable insights for a better understanding of cultural factors and communication practices in economic and business contexts.

Research Objective. The objective of this study is to analyse the impact of cultural differences on professional communication in economics, focusing on both academic and business contexts. The research aims to identify key communication challenges, adaptation strategies, and cultural influences that shape how economists interact across diverse cultural settings. This study aims to examine how cultural dimensions influence professional communication in economics through a comparative analysis of Ukraine, the USA, Japan, and Sweden, focusing on their impact on academic and business interactions.

Materials and Methods. This study employs a qualitative, comparative, and interdisciplinary approach to examine the impact of cultural differences on professional communication in economics. The research integrates theoretical analysis, comparative country studies, and case-based insights to explore how economists navigate academic and business communication across diverse cultural settings. The study is grounded in Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions Theory [8] and Erin Meyer’s “Culture Map” [9], which provide a structured framework for analysing cross-cultural differences in communication styles, power dynamics, and decision-making. A comparative analysis of four countries – Ukraine, the USA, Japan, and Sweden – was conducted to illustrate the influence of cultural values on professional interactions.

The research methodology includes a systematic review of existing literature on cultural influences in business and academic communication, drawing from key studies in economic sociology, business communication, and cross-cultural management. Furthermore, insights from case studies and documented professional experiences of economists in global academic publishing and business negotiations were examined to contextualize theoretical findings with real-world applications.

This methodological approach ensures that the findings contribute to both theoretical discourse on intercultural communication and practical applications for economists engaged in international academic and business environments.

Research Results. Culture plays a crucial role in shaping how communication is conducted in both academic and business contexts, particularly in economics. The nuances of cultural differences affect everything from writing style and citation practices to negotiation techniques and organizational dynamics.

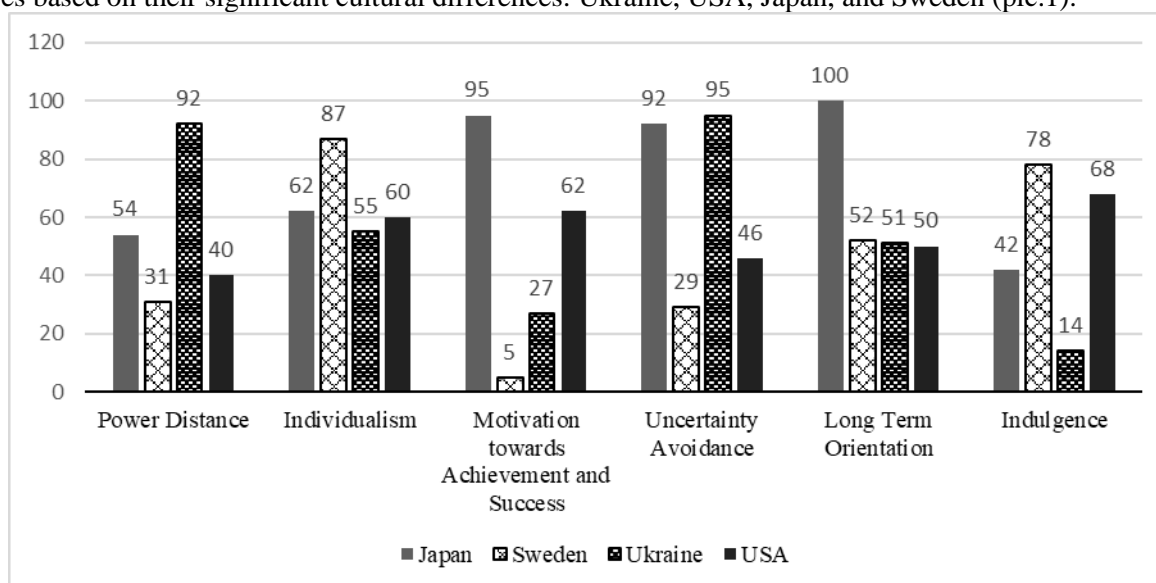
One of the fundamental distinctions in cross-cultural communication is the contrast between high-context and low-context cultures, a framework introduced by Edward T. Hall [10]. High-context cultures, such as Japan, China, and many Arab and Latin American countries, rely heavily on implicit communication, shared cultural knowledge, and nonverbal cues. In contrast, low-context cultures, such as the United States, Germany, and Sweden, prioritize direct, explicit, and detailed communication. These differences shape how individuals approach both academic and business interactions.

In academic settings, scholars from high-context cultures may emphasize background explanations, indirect argumentation, and hierarchical respect in their writing and peer review processes. Meanwhile, researchers from low-context cultures tend to value clarity, structured argumentation, and direct critique.

Similarly, in business communication, negotiation strategies and leadership styles differ: professionals from high-context cultures often build long-term relationships before engaging in formal agreements, whereas those from low-context cultures favour efficiency and contract-driven transactions.

The following discussion focuses on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, which provides a framework for understanding cultural differences across six key dimensions: Power Distance (the extent to which less powerful members accept unequal power distribution), Individualism vs. Collectivism (the balance between individual autonomy and group loyalty), Masculinity vs. Femininity (the focus on assertiveness and achievement vs. care and quality of life), Uncertainty Avoidance (how societies cope with uncertainty and ambiguity), Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation (preference for long-term planning and persistence vs. short-term gains), and Indulgence vs. Restraint (the degree to which societies allow gratification of desires) [8]. By applying this model, our research explores the ways cultural values shape the behaviours and practices of economists, particularly in terms of their interactions with global academic norms and their ability to navigate the complexities of international publishing.

To illustrate Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, we have selected 4 countries with contrasting scores based on their significant cultural differences: Ukraine, USA, Japan, and Sweden (pic.1).



Picture 1. Cultural Dimensions Comparison

Source: formed by the author based on data from <https://www.theculturefactor.com/country-comparison-tool?countries=japan%2Csweden%2Cukraine%2Cunited+states>

Ukraine has a relatively high Power Distance score (92), meaning it tends to accept hierarchical structures in society. It also has a low Individualism score (25), indicating a collectivist culture where group loyalty is prioritized over individual freedom. Ukraine also scores moderately on Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI), suggesting a preference for structured rules but with some tolerance for ambiguity. The United States has a low Power Distance score (40), reflecting a more egalitarian approach to authority and decision-making. It is highly individualistic (91), emphasizing personal freedom, individual rights, and achievement. The USA also scores low on Uncertainty Avoidance (46), indicating a higher tolerance for uncertainty and risk-taking. Japan scores high on Power Distance (54) but also has a deep respect for hierarchy in the workplace. It is known for its collectivist culture (46), but to a lesser extent than Ukraine. Japan has a very high score for Uncertainty Avoidance (92), meaning there is a strong preference for stability, rules, and structure in all areas, including academic communication. Sweden is characterized by a low Power Distance (31), signifying a more egalitarian approach to authority. It is highly individualistic (71), which is reflected in the Swedish emphasis on personal rights and autonomy. Sweden also scores low on Uncertainty Avoidance (29), making it more adaptable to changes and flexible in its approach to ambiguity and innovation. These four countries – Ukraine, the USA, Japan, and Sweden – have contrasting scores on the

key dimensions of Power Distance, Individualism vs. Collectivism, and Uncertainty Avoidance, which will highlight how cultural values influence communication.

Cultural differences significantly influence communication styles, decision-making, and leadership approaches in both academic and business environments. Erin Meyer's "Culture Map" provides a useful framework for analysing these differences, particularly when comparing countries such as Ukraine, the USA, Japan, and Sweden. Meyer's research identifies key cultural dimensions that influence business and academic communication such as Communicating, Evaluating, Persuading, Leading, Deciding, Trusting, Disagreeing, and Scheduling. These dimensions are crucial for understanding how professionals from diverse backgrounds can adapt their communication strategies to bridge the cultural gap [9].

For example, the contrast between high-context (e.g., Japan) and low-context (e.g., the U.S.) cultures affects how information is conveyed, impacting academic writing and business negotiations. Similarly, differences in evaluating styles mean that while direct feedback is common in Germany, indirect criticism is preferred in Japan, which can lead to misinterpretations in peer reviews and professional exchanges. The persuasion approach also varies, with principles-first cultures prioritizing theory, while applications-first cultures (e.g., the U.K.) emphasize practical results—affecting how economic research is presented. Leadership expectations further diverge, with hierarchical cultures (e.g., Ukraine) valuing authority, while egalitarian cultures (e.g., Sweden) emphasize participatory decision-making. Trust-building is another critical factor; task-based cultures (e.g., the U.S.) focus on competence, whereas relationship-based cultures (e.g., China) prioritize personal connections, shaping international collaborations. Similarly, the approach to disagreement – confrontational (e.g., Israel) versus harmony-seeking (e.g., Japan) – affects how economic debates unfold. Finally, cultural attitudes toward time management range from linear-time cultures (e.g., Germany), which prioritize punctuality, to flexible-time cultures (e.g., Brazil), which allow for adaptability in scheduling.

We now proceed to a comparison of the four countries discussed in the previous example: Ukraine, the USA, Japan, and Sweden. One of the most striking distinctions among these cultures is their approach to communication. The USA and Sweden are considered low-context cultures, meaning that messages are direct, and require little reliance on background knowledge or implicit understanding. In contrast, Japan represents a high-context culture, where communication is often indirect, nuanced, and dependent on shared cultural cues. Ukraine falls somewhere in between, with a tendency toward directness in professional settings but an ability to use implicit communication depending on the context. These differences can lead to misunderstandings in both academic and business interactions, as direct communicators may perceive indirectness as evasiveness, while high-context communicators may find direct approaches rude.

Another area where these cultural distinctions manifest is in how feedback is given. Americans tend to be direct in their evaluations but often soften criticism with positive framing. Swedes, while also direct, prefer to deliver feedback neutrally and diplomatically. Ukrainians, particularly in academic and professional settings, often provide straightforward criticism without excessive cushioning. In Japan, by contrast, negative feedback is typically delivered indirectly, sometimes through third parties, as a way to preserve group harmony and avoid confrontation. Such differences in evaluative communication can create challenges, particularly in academic peer review processes or international business negotiations, where expectations about how criticism should be conveyed may not align.

Trust-building is another cultural dimension that affects professional interactions. In the USA and Sweden, trust is primarily task-based, meaning it is developed through demonstrated competence and reliability in a professional setting. By contrast, Ukraine and Japan emphasize relationship-based trust, where long-term personal interactions and loyalty play a crucial role in establishing professional credibility. This distinction can lead to differences in business negotiations: Americans and Swedes may prefer to move directly into substantive discussions, while Ukrainian and Japanese counterparts might first seek to establish rapport before engaging in detailed negotiations.

Leadership styles also vary significantly across these cultures. The USA and Sweden exhibit egalitarian leadership structures, where hierarchies are relatively flat, and leaders are seen as facilitators rather than authoritative decision-makers. In Sweden, consensus-driven decision-making is particularly strong, with an emphasis on including multiple perspectives before reaching conclusions. By contrast, Ukraine and Japan maintain hierarchical leadership structures, where authority is respected, and senior figures play a decisive role in shaping outcomes. However, while Ukraine allows for some degree of flexibility in decision-making,

Japan's approach is often highly structured and consensus-driven, which can slow down processes but ensure strong commitment from all stakeholders once a decision is made.

Decision-making further reflects these cultural differences. Americans tend to favour fast, top-down decision-making, where leaders consult their teams but retain the final authority. Ukrainian organizations also follow a top-down structure but may allow for more discussion and adaptation in the process. Sweden and Japan, in contrast, place a strong emphasis on consensus-driven decision-making, often leading to longer deliberation times but ensuring broader agreement and support. The Japanese model, in particular, is characterized by extensive internal consultation before an official decision is reached, while Swedish organizations tend to seek a democratic balance among all participants.

A final notable contrast lies in approaches to time management. The USA and Sweden prioritize linear time, where schedules, deadlines, and punctuality are strictly observed. Ukraine and Japan, while still valuing structure, tend to be more flexible in their approach to time, allowing for adjustments based on circumstances and relationships. This can lead to differences in expectations when it comes to deadlines and project timelines, particularly in international collaborations where rigid scheduling may be prioritized by some but seen as negotiable by others.

Understanding these cultural dynamics allows professionals to navigate international interactions more effectively, fostering collaboration across different cultural contexts.

Discussion. This study highlights the significant influence of cultural differences on academic and business communication in economics. Economists must navigate variations in communication styles, feedback approaches, and hierarchical versus egalitarian structures, all of which shape collaboration and knowledge exchange. Scholars often adjust their writing to align with global academic norms, while business professionals adapt negotiation and leadership strategies to meet international expectations.

A comparative analysis of Ukraine, the USA, Japan, and Sweden demonstrates how cultural dimensions impact communication. Ukraine's hierarchical and collectivist culture emphasizes deference to authority in both academic and business settings, while the USA favours direct, individualistic communication. These differences highlight the challenges economists face in adapting their communication strategies to diverse professional environments.

To engage effectively in international contexts, professionals must adjust their communication strategies, balancing local perspectives with global expectations. Digitalization has further facilitated global engagement, offering flexibility and accessibility. However, it also presents challenges, as online communication can amplify cultural misunderstandings, limit accessibility for those unfamiliar with dominant digital norms, and reduce the effectiveness of nuanced interpersonal interactions. Addressing these barriers requires proactive measures from academic publishers, businesses, and researchers. Journals should provide clearer guidelines and language support, while companies can implement cross-cultural training. Researchers can contribute to a more inclusive academic and professional landscape by advocating for greater recognition of diverse communication practices and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration. By adopting these strategies, professionals can navigate cultural complexities more effectively, ensuring that their work is both accessible and impactful in the global economic discourse.

Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research. Cultural differences in academic and business communication present both challenges and opportunities. By acknowledging and addressing these differences – whether in writing style, citation practices, negotiation tactics, or feedback mechanisms – academics and business professionals can foster a more inclusive and equitable communication environment. Professionals must navigate these complexities by adjusting their discourse, balancing local and global expectations, and leveraging cultural intelligence to ensure effective engagement with international audiences. The findings reaffirm that success in global academic publishing and business interactions is contingent on the ability to bridge communication gaps and foster collaboration across cultural boundaries. The study also demonstrates that successful adaptation requires cultural intelligence, collaborative engagement, and technological literacy. Participation in multicultural teams allows economists to refine their communication strategies, integrating diverse perspectives to enhance clarity and effectiveness.

Future research should focus on identifying and refining effective strategies that enable economists to communicate more successfully in cross-cultural settings. While this study has explored broad adaptation

techniques, further investigation is needed into the role of digital communication platforms, AI-driven language tools, and interdisciplinary collaborations in mitigating cultural barriers.

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