

What is the impact of cultural diversity on virtual communication in companies?

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Abstract : A series of changes have altered the context and the way to communication in organizations. In these new modes, there are virtual exchanges that shake up the traditional concept of teamwork. Moreover, in these new framework, companies must often manage a staff composed of people from various cultures. Thanks to virtuality, a lot of companies can develop connections with people from various cultural backgrounds which can be co-located or distributed. This paper aims, through a literature review, to study the impact of ICT and cultural diversity on communication in organizations. There are already many studies analyzed the impact of diversity not-virtual context but very little about the impact of diversity in virtual context. This investigation leads us to believe that ICT can lead to three types of distances interrelated: physical, perceptual and temporal. These distances, which are at the heart of virtual exchanges, frame the intercultural communication. Virtuality and cultural diversity can lead to problems of communicative dissonance, to blind spots as well as situations of linguistic or technology interoperability. These different levels of complexity will impact the operation and effectiveness of the organization's communication with these stakeholders.

Keywords: intercultural communication • virtual communication • information and communication technologies • diversity.

Introduction

There are already some studies analyzing the impact of the cultural diversity on communication in companies. However, there are few studies on the impact of cultural diversity on virtual communications. Our paper aims present a review of scientific literature with a view to identifying the various aspects around this problematic, new in the field of diversity studies.

It involves comparing, the one hand, the literature about virtual communication and, the second hand, that on interculturality in business, to issue a series of hypotheses on the relationship between these two variables.

Since the end of the eighties, the globalization lead to use more and more frequently by companies of information and communication technologies (ICT) in their communication process with their stakeholders: staff, but also customers and business partners (Langevin, Parot, & Picq, 2002). These new forms of exchange shape up the traditional notion of work (Jawadi, 2005; Rohmeyer, 2005) lead firms to manage more and more communications involving several different cultures (Graham J.L. Mintu A.T. Rodgers W., 1994). Moreover, multiculturalism is not only synonymous with internationalization, companies with local market are also in relationship with stakeholders with cultural frameworks and modes of communication many and varied (Cornet & Warland, 2008).

The use of ICT permit to increase the flexibility and responsiveness and reduce costs (Cascio, 2000; Duarte & Snyder, 1999; Dumoulin, 2000; Rohmeyer, 2005). This introduces new forms of relationships and communication patterns change (Fortier, 2009; Jawadi, 2005; Rohmeyer, 2005). We will try to identify the challenges posed by this multiculturalism in the context of virtual relationships.

1. Issues of cultural diversity in the organization

1.1. The cultural diversity and le the language

In an intercultural context, one of the first challenges is the confrontation of different mother tongues. So, we need choose a common language. This choice is often the result of a compromise between the nationality of the group and a strategic and geographical reality of the business overseas to work with a transnational group generally induces to speak the language of business today is that the english. Nevertheless, there are companies that emphasize rather the language of the main headquarters of the company as several French multinationals where French is the dominant working language. This selection will favor those who master the language adopted for

corporate communications for mastering a language is often a sign of power and influence (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003). The degree of language skill can be very variable; that can lead to frustration, lack of motivation.

The frameworks involves several native languages may cause dissonance related to communicative linguistic knowledge deficiency, also known in the literature: surface level of language(Davel, Dupuis, & Chanlat, 2008). This includes syntax (the rules about formation of sentences) and semantics (way to interpret the meaning of sentences). Linguistic deficiency can lead to impoverishment and simplification of communication, which can lead to lose informations in the exchange (ex : less access of shades or meaning) (Irrmann, 2006). An idea which we don't know the words that can allow its expression will be simplified to the level of expression, unspoken or is told with mistakes. Linguistic errors, not too frequent, can generate corrections from the speaker (like "you meant ...", "Pardon, I don't understand", etc.). Linguistic weaknesses may also lead wanting go more directly into the heart of the matter, by streamlining and cleaning up the message(Irrmann, 2006).

We can also observe deficiencies in the records of pragmatic language. It is the use of language in context. How to use language in a particular situation to achieve a particular effect. This concerns both how to speak that way of create a well-argued speech. When we learned a foreign language, we learned mainly linguistic knowledge (syntax, grammar and semantics) but not records of pragmatic language (which is inculcated through socialization rather). Consequently, we transfer unconsciously the records of pragmatic language from mother tongue in foreign language (Thomas, 1983). An error in this area will generally not be interpreted as such by the speaker but as a deliberate and voluntary, which leads more easily to judgments (Thomas, 1983). Side of the one who made the mistake, he will not have consciousness, since it corresponds to him in the normal way to express themselves. Therefore, it makes it very difficult activity correction in the exchange. This problem of pragmatic tensions can also be found within the same language as the parties can have different cultures (Davel et al., 2008).

1.2. The various factors generating the cultural distance

Culture is an internalized system of collective meanings that guide how to act and how to encode and decode their environment and experiences (Geertz, 1973). Culture is internalized by a process of socialization (family, the school, through work, etc.) (Thévenet, 1999). As mental programming, it influences business communications by providing individuals (Hofstede, 2002; Schein, 2006; Thévenet M., 1992) :

- a way of understanding business situations

- rules of life (ways of interacting with others)
- cognitive (specific methods to solve problems).

Culture leads to identify members of one group over those of other groups. We can therefore speak of cultural distance that characterizes the significant gap between cultures.

Worldwide organizations, we can analyze culture on several levels: by geographical area of reference (national, regional, etc.), Business sectors, business, jobs, functions, etc. (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003).

Several dimensions are likely to generate cultural conflicts within the company and organization. We will then take them back to ask ourselves how these cultural attitudes and representations are likely to interact with the effectiveness and efficiency of virtual communications.

A) Hierarchical distance (Hofstede, 1987; Morgan, 1989): This is the report that the person has with the hierarchy and authority. Some cultures are in respect of the head and authority. It has a number of privileges in connection with its hierarchical position. This is also reflected through more or less differentiated status through, for example, a formalism in the language (use first or last name, job title, an expression of respect or a more familiar places reserved parking under the constitution, commitment to the protocol, etc.). Clothing and certain dress codes may also mark the distance and hierarchical status. This also marked by the degree of submission to the orders and instructions given by the line manager who can go from a seemingly total submission to a regular discussion on the instructions and orders.

B) Individualism/collectivism (Hofstede, 1987; Markus & Kitayama, 1991): Some cultural groups prefer well-being and individual recognition, autonomy, self-interest, independence. Individuals are in competition and individual success stories highlighted. Others are more focused interest group, to the collective labor but also family and / or social. This is often associated with an emphasis on family, belonging to a group.

C) Environmental control (Hofstede, 1987): Some cultural groups operate within a framework based on the idea that it is possible to control the events of the future, anticipate, plan, organize, anticipate risks and to try to avoid or least lessen the effects. This is reflected particularly in the planning, the formalization of habits, the importance attached schedules, the emphasis on rules, the appeal for change and risk management. Others, conversely have more fatalistic attitudes, with the idea that one can control the context and events; it is perpetually in scenarios to accommodate the constraints and responsiveness. It is also in a context where few things are planned and organized over the long term.

D) Action/Thought (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2004): Some cultures value action. Thus, the passivity is rather frowned upon, think time could be judged as incompetent ("Do not stand there

waiting, do something!"). Others prefer the contrary, thought before action. Components analysis of the problem, possible solutions and a reasoned action are valued.

E) Intuition/Analysis (Orleman, 1992): In some cultures, intuition, feeling, emotion, perception of the situation lead behaviors and management. In others, the analysis of facts, specific measurable favoring instead the details lead behaviors and management. It shows a willingness to objectification of reality with a professional world unworldly emotional (emotional detachment).

F) Tasks/Relationship (Hofstede, 1987; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2004): Great importance is given to certain groups in efficiency, with a primary focus on the leadership task. Insurance, competitiveness and materialism are considered guarantors of effectiveness. Others are more focused on the quality of relationships, the need to trust each other. It enhances well-being at work, with management methods consensual. (Davel et al., 2008; Schneider & Barsoux, 2003). Hofstede talks about male culture (see the task) or female (see relationships).

G) Communication (Davel et al., 2008; E. T. Hall, Hall, & Kras, 1990; Worf, 1967): We can distinguish communications with a low or high loaded context. In the first case, the tendency is to go direct to the point. One keeps in messages that the elements necessary for understanding. In either case, communication is through a series of codes very formal, written messages are generally longer with elements of contextualization of the message and its sender. In some cultures, silence can create tension and frustration where it generates confidence and respect for others. The expression of emotions (joy, anger, impatience, etc.) can be seen in some cultures as a sign of immaturity, impulsiveness, lack of self control while other cultures see that this expression is essential to the relationship.

H) Time (E. T. Hall et al., 1990): We distinguish between polychromic and monochromic cultures. The former are characterized by a linear view of time and compartmentalized. Time is perceived as a limited resource, which tends to promote punctuality and a case of the time. It instead focuses on the present (see the future). Polychronic societies have a cyclical view of time simultaneously. Time to adapt to situations, tasks and relationships. Thus, a delay in a meeting is tolerated if an employee had to salute the way. Privileging the past and traditions, this culture grows rather to consider the impatience too much future orientation.

The opportunities to have communication problems related to multiculturalism are numerous. Many authors have worked on this issue but our originality will be to see how these dimensions might affect a specific type of relationships within the firm, namely virtual relationships. With virtuality, many companies are therefore related to people with different cultural settings, located in their local environment or in another country or region (D'Irbarne, 1991; Pesqueux, 2004).

2. Virtual communications in companies

ICTs are tools, media hosting a range of resources to manipulate (create, convert, store, manage, share and return) and exchange information (Anderson, 1988; Duipuich, 2009; Rolland, 2010; Scott Morton & Allen Thomas, 1995). We define virtuality as the emancipation from spatial, temporal and organizational borders through the use of the ICT (Cooper & Rousseau, 1999; Duarte & Snyder, 1999; Lipnack, 1997). Virtuality thus creates new interfaces in intercultural relations.

The tools used are many and very diverse (ex: electronic messaging, video conferencing tools, smartphones, etc.). They can intervene in relations between individuals but also in group relationships (ex: groupware, videoconferencing, etc.). There are generally asynchronous and synchronous ICT:

- Asynchronous ICT (Loilier, 2004) : they are characterized by the creation of a time difference between sending, receiving and response. This group includes emails, blogs, wikis, etc.
- Synchronous ICT (Zigurs, 2003) : they are characterized by an exchange done in real time (simultaneity between the sending, receiving and responding). Communication is mainly auditory but may also be visual. This may allow more easily than in the other category, the expression of the three levels of language (verbal, paraverbal and not verbal). Telepresence is an experience in giving the impression both to be present and to have an effect at a location other than its actual location (Zigurs, 2003), creating a sense of closeness in a distance (O'Hara-Devereaux M. Joansen B., 1994). This group includes tools such as videoconferencing, skips, different variants of mobile (GSM, smartphone, etc.), etc.

In business, asynchronous technology is most often used (Navarro, 2001). Nevertheless, the boundary between these two categories is less tight than it looks. For example, microblogging transforms some users into a messaging tool synchronously, which is more likely with a culture oriented relationship and / or polychronic cultural of time (Rolland, 2010).

We must not forget that different equipment exist within the same entity (group, team or even company) can create communication problems of incompatible systems (Rolland, 2010). According to the situation, this interoperability may or may not result direct costs (ex : non-performance, etc.) and / or indirect costs (ex : lost time, etc.).

Virtuality brings the potential of remote connectivity and thereby affects the organization's processes (Aloui, 2010). This allows several possibilities for workplace from a work done only in the company at a specified location to various mobility solutions (transit office, hoteling system, etc.). This autonomy of the workplace can respond to requests for workers but also to concerns of the organization (work performed at the customer, reducing real estate costs and travel expenses,

etc.) (Cascio, 2000).

It also allows to work with geographical distributed teams (Langevin & Picq, 2001; Voss, 1996). That may also broaden the range of stakeholders involved (new perspective for staff recruitment, new clients, new business partners, etc.) (Aloui, 2010; Langevin & Picq, 2001).

Through ICT, work teams can form and deform, disperse and regroup; this dynamic construction/deconstruction takes place according to the opportunities, strategies, projects and other business interests (Chatelain & Roche, 1999), creating a potential fluctuation of the geographical distance.

This distribution potential can induce a new vision of working time to the extent that different geographical areas may belong to different time zones (Isaac, 2007; Jawadi, 2005; Langevin & Picq, 2001; Rohmeyer, 2005). This can allow one team tends to work in (almost) continuous flow. Thus, when a team leaves work late in the day, another, located on a different time zone, takes over. The project therefore never stops (Perlo & Hills, 1998), potentially resulting in cost reductions by saving time (Cascio, 2000). However, it is clear that the confrontation of different schedules and work patterns complicates the organization of meetings and direct exchanges.

ICT also result in blurring boundaries between personal and professional life (Cousins & Robey, 2005) with the potential to connect anytime, anywhere (Brasseur, 2000). ICT can lead to a tangle of different social time (Isaac, 2007) with overlays of private tasks and work tasks but also several business tasks together (eg attend a meeting while addressing the mail of another colleague). This juxtaposition can certainly create flexibility and adaptability but also can promote lack of concentration (Davis G.B., 2002; Ettighoffer, 2001; Isaac, 2007).

Virtuality, including shared electronic calendars, can facilitate the coordination of activities (by making visible the professional agenda of others) (Vand den Hooff, 2004) but this can create a sense of intrusion and therefore strategies of resistance (eg encoding appointment fictitious to preserve the working time) (Lee, 2003).

Virtuality would speed up decision making because they limit round trips (Langevin et al., 2002), which would allow economies of scale and gains time (Cascio, 2000). These spatial and temporal distances also tend to make less frequent informal social interactions (eg exchanges during coffee break or discussions in the corridors) (Karjalainen & Soparnot, 2010; Parot, 2005).

3. Intercultural : context that make more complex virtual relationships

After dealing with cultural diversity and virtuality, we will discuss here the impact of

cultural distance on virtual communication within companies. As we said in the introduction, there are few studies on the impact of cultural diversity on virtual communications. By comparing the literature on cultural diversity and those on ICT, we constructed a series of working hypotheses.

3.1. Barriers related to language in a virtual context

The difficulties related to communication between people with different languages can be amplified in virtual relationships, with specificities related to the fact that a communication is synchronous (real time) or asynchronous (delayed time).

Regarding deficiencies linguistic knowledge, asynchronous ICT, given the weight of the writing, the absence of non-verbal and the time lag (Deroulede, 2009; Kalika M., 2006; Karjalainen & Soparnot, 2010), decrease the likelihood of remediation activities on the part of the speaker, unlike synchronous ICT (E. Hall, 1984). Less control over the language is good, more use of gestures, drawings, etc. will help support the report. The emotional information are transmitted more easily without the non-verbal (Karjalainen & Soparnot, 2010). ICTs offer opportunities synchronous telepresence can partially overcome this difficulty. However, asynchronous ICT able to take time back in writing the message can facilitate communication (Loilier, 2004; Rolland, 2010). For example, gaps can be partly filled by language tools (dictionary, grammar, etc.) May be provided by the virtuality. Thus, one can hypothesize that the language of surface deviations may be present in virtual situation but, given the potential for support provided by ICT, virtual communication does not seem to ask a linguistic knowledge higher than non-virtual context.

Therefore, the virtual communication does not seem to ask a linguistic knowledge higher than not-virtual context.

Regarding the gaps in registers pragmatic, our literature review leads us to hypothesize that the learning curve of other pragmatic records is made more difficult and longer in virtual context. The enfranchisement of potential spatial boundaries, time and organization by the use of ICT tend to reduce the richness of interactions while this socialization is a platform for learning the culture of others. Virtuality can afford to work by reducing the time needed for meetings and direct contacts (face-to-face) (Brasseur, 2000; Cascio, 2000; Karjalainen & Soparnot, 2010; Langevin et al., 2002). Even in work co-located, ICTs tend to reduce the interaction time for informal information flow is so easy it takes less time to make contacts (Karjalainen & Soparnot, 2010; Perlo & Hills, 1998).

	Synchrones ICT	Asynchrones ICT
Communication context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of telepresence • Lacks of social interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written and formal • Time lag • Lacks of social interaction
Weakness of linguistic knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of direct remediation activities • Supports from non verbal • No opportunity of stepping back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity of stepping back and using language tools • Lack of support from non verbal
Weakness of records of pragmatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning time of cultural ways of communicating potentially longer 	
Potential consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lose of information in the exchange • Simplification of language • Shortening time of meetings • Risk of loss of motivation and increased frustration 	

3.2. Organizational impacts of intercultural communication in virtual context

Some strategies for using ICT can be effective in one culture but not in another. Even if all forms of media are theoretically used effectively by everyone, every culture can have differing attitudes, expectations and preferences in relation to virtual communication (how to convey information, ask for something, use this or that media, etc..) and practical consequences that flow from this communication (how to achieve what is required, follow the work of employees, etc..) (Davel et al., 2008; Schneider & Barsoux, 2003). Cultures leads to reclaim the diversity of ICT differently. Thus, complications are likely to emerge with strong cultural distances.

To make progress in this area, from our investigation of the scientific literature, we constructed a series of working hypotheses on the potential impact that can have different dimensions of cultural distance on using virtual communication. These assumptions are formalized in the following table. These are potential trends that could have each pole of the different dimensions of cultural distance. Depending on the situation, context, path of life dimensions and configuration of a culture, these elements are more or less likely to occur.

Impact hypotheses cultural dimensions of virtual exchanges	
Hierarchical distance : high	Hierarchical distance : low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of increasing the degree of formality in the communication. • May reduce the degree of reactivity (that is to say, stimulate awaiting approval of an N to act). • Risk of increasing the level of procedure in the communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of decreasing the degree of formality in the communication • Risk of increasing the degree of reactivity (that is to say taking initiative without waiting for the approval of the N +1) • May reduce the level of procedure in the communication
Environmental control : high	Environmental control : low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of increasing the level of demand for compliance procedures. • Risk of increasing the level of information requested and provided. • May reduce the degree of autonomy and responsiveness of stakeholders. • May stimulate a centralized communication process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May reduce the degree of demand for compliance procedures. • May reduce the degree of information requested and provided. • May increase the degree of autonomy and responsiveness of stakeholders. • Stimulate decentralization of risk communication process.

Thought culture oriented	Action culture oriented Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of extending the time of virtual interactions (to have all the information). • May stimulate a greater need for information before acting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May decrease the time of virtual interactions (exchanges rather "Direct to the point"). • May require a low need information before acting.
Intuition/Analysis culture oriented	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May influence the way of expressing ideas. • Risk of influencing the choice (consciously or unconsciously) of the expressed ideas. • Risk of influencing the length of the message (rather synthetic in intuition cases / rather detailed in analysis cases) 	
Task culture oriented	Relationship culture oriented Relationship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of decreasing the length and frequency of online interactions (exchanges rather direct "Direct to the point", just what is considered necessary for carrying out tasks). • Promotion of the operability of ICT by focusing primarily on strictly professional information flows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of increasing the length and frequency of online interactions (to get to know one other). • Promoting the use of ICT easier to reduce the sense of distance (rather than turning to synchronous ICT)
Communication : high load context	Communication : low load context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of increasing length of the message (need to explain things). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of decreasing the length of the message (willingness to get to the gist.)
Communication : Silence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The length of tolerated silence should not have any impact on asynchronous ICT. However, it could create the same tensions as non virtual situation while synchronous ICT. 	
Communication : expression of emotions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asynchronous ITC should lessen the use emotions dive to the created distance, but it won't be the case in synchronous ICT. 	
Time: monochronic	Time polychronic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • . Risk of May wanting to streamline the length of virtual interactions. • May be more impatient in virtual interaction. • Risk of stimulating more strict deadlines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May stimulate the dematerialization of the boundaries between personal and professional life. • May be more turned to the present and the past in virtual interaction. • Risk of stimulating a looser approach in meeting deadlines.

We think that in itself does not create a dimension of difficulty; the complexity comes rather from the comparison of differences. Thus, it is not as culture but the cultural gap that is complicating factor. We will illustrate this impact from two examples constructed from various elements of the empirical literature.

For example, some cultures tend to advantage to stimulate the need for direct contact (high load pop culture in communication and prioritizing the relationship). In virtual environment, the members of that culture tend to promote synchronous oral type of ICT (different types of phones, video conferencing, etc.) and to consider the e-mail (synchronous ICT) as a junior media not to use for important and urgent things (Davel et al., 2008). By cons, other cultures oriented task with high uncertainty avoidance tend to generally promote the use of email as a primary mode to solve problems as they allow greater traceability of information and to provide more (Davel et al., 2008). Together these two cultures could complicate communication virtual context.

Another example, the roles and responsibilities of leaders and team members are highly variable from one culture to another which can cause a different relationship to virtual communication channels (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003). For example, in countries (ex: China) where there is a strong culture of deference to the head (high hierarchical distance), generally, if the

head of a team is copied into the mail, the primary recipients do not react as if they do not receive an order from the boss. This can be a problem if the new boss of the team culture is at close range to the authority. The latter will discover one day that all issues raised by email since he took office remained unresolved.

Thus, the use of a communication channel can be effective in one culture and not in another. Therefore, using a strategy not adequate, culturally learned, interfere with communication. This will impact on the team's ability to obtain information and to have good trade with these business associates (customers / users and suppliers). This issue of cultural distance may also be found in the work co-located. Indeed, for various reasons of different life paths, (groups of) people may have different inclinations with respect to the use of ICT and how to use it, which can cause the same kind of difficulties (Rolland, 2010).

Moreover, the cultural distance (especially in the cultural dimensions of: Intuition / Analysis, communication and relationship with Time) may bias the virtual communication to three stages:

- different potentially perception of the situation (Barmeyer & Mayrhofer, 2009) : The social referents mark out the interpretation of the environment and affect the way an actor is positioned relative to a context.
- different potentially explanation of the situation (Davel et al., 2008; Garcia, 2007) : there are things that do not necessarily mean as it is felt (consciously or not) they are self-evident, which can not be the case in another culture.
- decoding the potentially different explanation: The same presentation can be decoded differently from one culture to another.

All this is reinforced by the difficulties of speech in a foreign language. Thus, cultural distance can potentially create gray areas in communication (because of bias in three steps).

On the other side, ICTs also tend to complicate the visibility of activities, behaviors and context specificity of each of them by employees and by the hierarchy (Kezbom, 2000; Langevin et al., 2002; Parot, 2005). The time lag and the essentially asynchronous writes ICT do to realize the results of the work, not how the work was performed (Langevin et al., 2002; Loilier, 2004; Martins L. Gilson L. Maynard M., 2004; Parot, 2005). By cons, synchronous ICT telepresencial by their potential, can allow team members to be aware of how others conduct their work. However, ICT (even synchronous) are mainly used for moments of regulation, such as meetings, or for specific tasks requiring working together several members located in different places. Indeed, the empowerment of spatial, temporal and organizational made possible by ICT tend to individualize the work (strengthening of the horizontal division of labor) rather than make it collaborative, each entity performs generally dispersed only part of work (search for information, reflection on a theme, etc..) and then, once it is made, reports the results to others. So, again, the visibility of others' work

becomes more complex. The low incidence of informal relationships in virtual environment also tends to diminish the visibility (Karjalainen & Soparnot, 2010; Parot, 2005). For example, a line manager, away from the workplace of some (see all) employees will be more easily able to meet his team. Therefore, it will be less readily aware of the work done in the traditional context of work.

Thus, the virtual and cross-cultural diversity can lead both to create blind spots in the communication, thereby increasing the complexity of the exchange. Therefore, in certain circumstances, it may develop inconsistent processes of decision making because of the distance (Hayes, 1997). For example, the dispersion (spatial and temporal) of team members made possible by ICT, that these employees (including the team leader) are often forced to rely on information about a situation transmitted by the local member, without being able to make their own interpretation, through their own perception of the facts (Langevin et al., 2002). Thus, near the employee should report the situation to other situations they have not been able to collect given the working distance made possible by ICT. He will do through the prism of culture, which may potentially be different from the others. Thus, this communication may potentially be parasitized by two levels of blind spots.

4. Conclusion

This literature review is an exploration of the impact of cultural distance on trade in virtual enterprise with its stakeholders. From the dimensions we propose to construct the variable of cultural distance and information on ways to place virtual communications, we can make four assumptions that constitute a working basis for an interesting future empirical research:

- Hypothesis 1: Cultural distance complex virtual communication in language (either through misunderstanding or through simplifications) by the effects of communicative dissonance. Depending ICT used (synchronous or asynchronous), there are opportunities to support and corrections at the surface of the tongue. Therefore, the virtual communication does not seem to ask a linguistic knowledge higher than non-virtual context. But the most significant elements of complexifications are played at the registry level pragmatic, the largest component of the cultural unconscious and language.
- Hypothesis 2: Cultural distance can cause mismatches in communication strategies (use of a medium over another, how to use, mode of argumentation, etc.) and interoperability situations (with all the complexity that this implies). This mismatch can lead to pitfalls ranging from misunderstandings of organizational dysfunction through performance problems at work.
- Hypothesis 3: Cultural distance and virtuality can, as we have seen, potentially generating a perceptual distance in communication, that is to say blind spots. On the one hand, the culture

tends to cause a series of implicit and ways of seeing things that may differ from one culture to another. Thus, the same communication (the message, how to pass, etc.) Can be interpreted differently from one culture to another. On the other hand, virtuality (its potential for spatial and temporal dispersion, lack of informal relationship, a formal written communication primarily, etc.) Can create difficulties in visibility of other employees and their context.

- Hypothesis 4: The complexity of social interaction engendered by the virtual (ex difficulty in developing informal relationships, lack of visibility into the relationship and work, etc.) makes it more difficult awareness of differences and thus increases the time learning the specifics of the other culture, which has an impact on the other three hypotheses. Thus, we believe that virtuality can maintain longer the cultural distance between the various stakeholders.

Given these assumptions, intercultural communication and virtual, a challenge would be to manager the cultural distance and perceptual (cf. hypothesis 3), particularly by promoting the learning of multicultural competence and the recreation of relational proximity. The development of this skill certainly depends a mastery of language, to avoid the pitfalls associated with inadequacies in the level surface of the tongue, and especially by an awareness of the cultural aspect of communication to provide the ability to effectively modulate messages according to the intentions and correctly decode the message of the other. Learn or memorize all the necessary information on each of the cultures with which employees should interact seems impossible (by the magnitude of the task) and irrelevant (to the extent that people do not identify themselves to the same degree to their culture).

But a more transversal approach may be both lighter and more relevant to avoid various possible pitfalls discussed in this article. This is to overcome its prejudices by understanding that there are several modes of communication to capture the need to vary their communication strategies according to the caller. To do this, we must develop tools to understand the culture and way of communication of the speaker. This requires an understanding of the nature of culture and its influence on behavior at work so that both seek to relativize and cultural awareness. Thus, this multicultural competence is not intended to provide a quick guide on how to communicate effectively with such a culture but rather to provide the cognitive tools to build his guide in line with his situation.

In order to operationalize this multicultural competence consisting of learning effective ways to communicate with its employees culturally different, it is necessary to recreate the relational proximity. It is by being in relationship with each other we will learn to create his little guide in congruence with its particular situation. The quality of time spent on other remote employees, especially during physical encounters, can compensate for the low frequency of their interactions in face-to-face. Thus, some develop strategies to be more available during visits such as

switching off their mobile phone, not check their email until the evening, etc.. Responsiveness, that is to say, given the quality of monitoring the work of others can also help recreate the proximity and thus reduce the four distances (spatial, temporal, cultural and perceptual). This could contribute, firstly, to develop a sense of trust within the team and, secondly, to improve understanding of each other.

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