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AVOIDING PRAGMATIC FAILURES IN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES

Business communication as a scholarly subject has a long history, stretching as far back as to the origins of rhetoric. Nowadays it emphasizes academic research in the field of pragmatics and discourse analysis, aiming at raising the effectiveness of business communication. With a wide range of rules and canons accumulated by the researchers concerning the content and structure of a business presentation, the choice of vocabulary, grammar, style, rhetorical figures, the manner of delivery, the audio and video support, and the overall appearance of the speaker, the communication success is still not guaranteed even in case both parties of interaction have the same cultural and linguistic background. The problem aggravates in a multiethnic or multicultural setting and becomes still more acute in a foreign environment due to the differences between the cultural backgrounds of the addresser and addressee of a business appeal. This is the reason why the focus of the researchers' attention has been shifted from such issues as the design and delivery of business presentations to the peculiarities of official and unofficial communication and cross-cultural issues of business interaction.

Considering cognitive and cultural aspects of business discourse and applying the contrastive methodology, the author analyzes different examples of the international business failures and derives a set of factors that negatively influence the business interaction process in a culturally heterogeneous environment. The study proves that communication dissonance originates from different cultural perceptions and interpretations of a proper way to communicate intentions, develop relations, and apply business strategies. Proceeding from these observations, the author offers a set of cognitive and linguistic models which may serve as rhetorical universals which facilitate business communication on a global scale.