

Communication Misunderstandings and their Impact on Dealing Between Multicultural Companies

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá rozdíly mezi jednotlivými kulturami a komunikacími nedorozuměními, které mohou tyto rozdíly způsobit. V první části je stručně popsán význam kultury a vývoj mezikulturní komunikace. V druhé části jsem se zaměřila na chyby a nedorozumění v komunikaci, jak mohou tyto chyby ovlivnit obchodní jednání a způsob, jak jim předjet. Poslední část se zabývá srovnáním české kultury a kultury Spojených Států Amerických. K porovnání jsem použila kulturní teorie Geerta Hofstedeho a Fonsa Trompenaarse.

Klíčová slova: interkulturní komunikace, nedorozumění v komunikaci, komunikační bariéry, mezikulturní obchodní jednání, kulturní dimenze, multikulturní prostředí

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis deals with various differences between cultures and with communication misunderstandings which can be caused by these differences. In the first part the significance of culture and the development of intercultural communication are briefly described. In the second part I focus on mistakes and misunderstandings in communication, the way mistakes can influence business dealing and possibilities how to prevent them. The last part deals with the comparison of the Czech and US cultures based on the cultural theories by Geert Hofstede and Fons Trompenaars.

Keywords: intercultural communication, communication misunderstandings, communication barriers, intercultural business dealing, cultural dimensions, multicultural environment

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays a typical keyword for business matters is the globalization. That brings the inevitability of an intercultural contact which takes place in a specific cultural context. Diverse cultures collide, mix together and influence one another. Considering the degree of today's globalization the knowledge of the mentality and culture of partner nations is a crucial skill for dealing. Companies that enter the international market need to communicate not only with their foreign partners but also with customers, suppliers, staff, offices, and so on.

The approach of this work is to point out the importance of the intercultural communication competence and show the ways it can affect the dealing among cultures. Providing managers involved in international dealing are aware of intercultural differences and are able to handle them the chances of good business results increase rapidly. Cultural communication is inevitable in various areas, for example business, politics, tourism, science or education. In this work I explore the branch of business dealing among multicultural companies.

In the title of the thesis and also throughout the whole work the word *dealing* is used. It covers both negotiations between multicultural companies and the status of the employees in the companies of different culture as well as the cooperation among the members of intercultural business teams.

At the beginning I introduce the definition and a brief explanation of terms culture and intercultural communication. Then I focus on the misunderstanding itself - what kinds of misunderstanding can occur, what the most common barriers are, how they can influence business dealing and how to deal with them. Findings from all sections are finally applied to real situations in the last chapter, which is devoted to practical comparisons of Czech and United States cultures. The first part looks at the comparison of typical features of business culture of both countries, in what situations they can collide and what to do in advance to avoid possible misunderstandings. In the second part the cultures are confronted on the basis of two theories on cultural dimensions – the Cultural Dimensions by Geert Hofstede and 7-dimensional Model by Fons Trompenaars.

The thesis offers a general overview of the issue and offers practical solutions and recommendations how to recognize, define and prevent possible problems caused by cultural misunderstandings.

1 CULTURE AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The knowledge of culture and intercultural communication principles is essential for every individual participating in dealing with a foreign company. This chapter defines and describes the terms *culture* and *intercultural communication* and also introduces the two important theories – the *Cultural Dimensions* by Geert Hofstede and the *7-dimensional Model* by Fons Trompenaars. These theories are widely used by various organizations to handle problem situations caused by the diversity of cultures. Further to this the topic of the cultural diversity is discussed and some different approaches are described.

The aim of this chapter is to clearly state in which context the terms *culture*, *cultural diversity* and *intercultural communication* are used in this thesis. It also emphasizes the impact of culture on business both throughout the history and nowadays. It describes the development of the intercultural communication from the 19th century up to the present.

1.1 The Definition of the Term *Culture*

The term *culture* can be understood in different ways. In this thesis it is used in the sense of the definition by Fred E. Jandt. He defines it as a total sum of “ways of living including behavioural norms, linguistic expressions, communication styles, thinking patterns, and beliefs and values of a group large enough to be self-sustaining, which are transmitted over the course of generation” (Jandt 2001, 499). On the basis of this definition there is a huge number of different cultures worldwide – they are too numerous to be listed. From some points of view there could exist even several millions of different cultures. Consequently there may be the same number of possible communication conflicts among the people that come from different cultural backgrounds. Culture is also a basis of the intercultural communication (see chapter 1.2).

From the academic point of view the term culture can be further divided into particular elements, such as the perception of time, the role of space or gestures. These features will be thoroughly discussed later in the chapter that deals with the barriers in the area of nonverbal communication (see chapter 2.2.2).

Culture has many layers – Fons Trompenaars often compares it to an onion in his speeches. The first layer, which is visible externally, is formed by outside expressions, like certain behaviour or language. These expressions often have different motives and above all different interpretations by people who come from different cultural backgrounds. The next important layer consists of norms and values which are shared by members of the

same culture or subculture. On the basis of these characteristics Trompenaars builds his theory on cultural orientations, which is discussed later. (Trompenaars 2009)

Another term related to culture is cross-cultural competence. This is the capability of an individual to put the acquired knowledge of national or ethnic cultures' special characteristics into practice. The basic elements of cross-cultural competence are language skills and a respect for different cultural backgrounds. (Prucha 2010, 46)

Generally we distinguish following dimension of the cross-cultural communicative competence:

- A linguistic aspect. It is an ability to correctly use and interpret a means of language which is used during the dealing (see the chapter 2.2.1 on language barriers).
- A paralinguistic aspect. This area deals with the various nonverbal expressions, such as body language or perception of time (see the chapter 2.2.2 on nonverbal communication).
- A sociolinguistic aspect. Managers are supposed to observe the formal rules connected with the business communication.
- A sociocultural aspect. It is important to be aware of and respect a different culture of the partners.
- A strategic aspect. The knowledge and proper implication of all above mentioned aspects help managers to be successful and to achieve set objectives. (Boňánková 2006, 5)

1.1.1 Cultural Typology by Geert Hofstede

To demonstrate the importance of culture in business dealing, I incorporated two most significant cultural theories that are used by a lot of organizations.

The first one is called Cultural Dimensions and was invented by a Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede. He created the most comprehensive study of nation cultures so far. For the first time he made his conclusions public in his book *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1980) in 1980, and since then he has been deepening and updating his theories in various books that he published with his son. Over a period of years two pieces of global research in 64 countries in the collaboration with the IBM Company were carried out.

Until now he has defined five dimensions of culture - power distance index, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance index and long versus short term orientation (the last mentioned was added later and the figures are available only for 23 countries). I deal with this topic in the last chapter, too, and I include the comparison between Czech and US cultures.

1.1.2 7-dimensional Model by Fons Trompenaars

To have a comparison with Hofstede's cultural dimensions I include another theory that deals with cultural differences in my thesis. This concept is called a 7-dimensional model and was created by Fons Trompenaars, a Dutch author, consultant and founder of the Center for International Business Studies, who was also nominated as one of the 50 most influential management thinkers alive. (Craven n.d.)

He defined seven cultural orientations – universalism versus particularism, individualism versus collectivism, neutral versus emotional, specific versus diffuse, achievement versus ascription, the perception of time (sequential versus synchronic) and the attitude to the environment (internal versus external control). The first five orientations are related to human beings, the sixth one to time and the last one to nature. (Trompenaars 2009) This theory is also applied below to compare the features of Czech and US cultures.

1.1.3 Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity is how people communicate with respect to their cultural differences. It is a very important issue for every company as it is a crucial topic for its innovation and sustainability. The following four points should be considered by every management in connection with cultural diversity:

- Equal opportunities for all existing staff versus the application of some positive discrimination in the area of recruitment or selection of employees.
- Provide the tough reports versus rapport and mutual respect.
- Equal opportunities for everyone to take part in the management of the company (rules mostly set by men) versus complete change of the rules (by women).
- Include different people in order to shape the company. (Trompenaars 2009)

In majority of cases neither the first possibility nor the second one is appropriate for the successful running of a multicultural company, and management should develop the approach based on both. There is a large number of specialized organizations that provide

help to the companies to cope with this issue, for example the company founded by Trompenaars himself – THTConsulting. (Trompenaars 2009)

Trompenaars also states four ways to approach cultural diversity:

- Disregard. People stick to their own culture because they think it is the best one, and have no respect for other cultures.
- Imitating. It is opposite to the first one – people abandon their cultural values and try to adopt the other culture's habits.
- Compromise. It is the combination of the first and the second attitude – in some cases people act according to the rules of their own culture in others they copy the behaviour patterns of the other culture.
- Reconciliation. The opposite views come to the blend – the strength of one is extended by the respect to the other.

According to Trompenaars the only approach guaranteeing a successful result of dealing for both parties is the last one. (Craven n.d.) Definitely not the first approach neither the second one can bring a positive effect. However, the last method (proposed by Trompenaars as the best one) can be very difficult to achieve, especially in cases where the points of view of individual partners are too different. Sometimes the only possible solution is to make a compromise, otherwise the business could not be completed at all.

1.2 Intercultural Communication

The term intercultural communication can be defined in three different ways. It can be meant as (a) the process of verbal and nonverbal communication between individuals or groups coming from different cultural background, (b) the scientific theory and research dealing with the real process of the intercultural communication, or (c) educational and supportive activities focused on practice. (Prcha 2010, 13) Jandt defines it in his book as “face-to-face interactions among people of diverse cultures” (Jandt 2010, 45). In this thesis the intercultural communication is discussed in general, all three different dimensions are included and incorporated into various theories and explanations.

The development of the intercultural communication itself is a direct consequence of the advantages of a modern society – international business, travelling, migration, co-operative scientific projects, etc.

In this thesis only the term *intercultural communication* is used. Other frequently used synonyms are cross-cultural communication or interethnic communication. (Prcha 2010, 17)

Other fields dealing with this topic are, for example, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, ethnography of communication or ethno-psycholinguistics. Similarly the findings can be psychologically, pedagogically or linguistically orientated. (Prcha 2010, 19-20) In my work I deal with the *economic* (business) orientation. The most findings in this field come from the studies based on the observations and experiments carried out with the representatives of different cultures.

1.2.1 The History of Development of Intercultural Communication

Despite the fact that intercultural communication itself has existed since the different languages developed, the *studies* of the intercultural variations are relatively a modern issue and they result from the development of international business activities. As a result of the rapid development of various technical devices the individual cultures are becoming closer and people can be easily informed about events in other parts of the world.

The first references to intercultural communication, as we understand it nowadays, appeared already about 100 years ago, when the first book on this topic was written (its title is: *On Human Relations* and it was written by the German author Adolf Knigge). However, the academic research of communication among cultures has a short history - it caught the attention of researchers only after the Second World War. The first bigger progress came after the establishment of the European Economic Community (the predecessor of the European Union) in 1958. (Prcha 2010, 18) This development was a natural reaction to the need of communication between member states. The research of intercultural communication as an independent discipline has been recognized since 1980s. (Šronk 2001, 34)

2 MISUNDERSTANDINGS IN THE INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

In this chapter, firstly, I will explore the reasons why cultural misunderstandings appear. Secondly, the most common kinds of misunderstanding which occur during dealing with partners who come from different cultural backgrounds are identified. Finally, I include a number of suggestions and recommendations how to anticipate and prevent various problems caused by cultural misunderstandings.

The aim of this chapter is to familiarise readers with various kinds of barriers and show what can be done to overcome concrete types of barriers or prevent their possible occurrence.

2.1 Why Do Cultural Misunderstandings Occur?

Every group of people who come from the same cultural background (it does not have to necessarily be the whole nation) feels and acts in a different way. The differences are not only in languages, but also cultural, such as mentality, the value system or various habits. The interaction of different cultures leads to a wide number of either positive consequences, for instance learning about new customs and ideas and broadening the horizons, or negative consequences, which give rise to various conflicts. The latter are mainly caused by misunderstandings in communication.

The language is the basic means of communication of any intercultural relation and represents the first layer of intercultural communication. Language proficiency is a significant prerequisite for an easy course of business dealing, however, it does not necessarily ensure the success of the negotiation. The second layer, which is often called the communication etiquette, must be taken into consideration as well. It is connected with conventions and rituals. Even if the participants of the intercultural communication master the appropriate language, but do not know or respect the rules of communication etiquette of their partners, a successful intercultural communication is not guaranteed. (Prcha 2010, 42) This principle is also apparent from the recommendation of the European Union: “Communication in a foreign language (...) is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (...) in an appropriate range of societal and cultural context (...) according to one’s wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding” (EUR-Lex 2006, 394/14). This shows that the problem of

intercultural misunderstandings is not only the matter of scholastic studies. It is taken into consideration and applied into practice primarily in international organizations, such as the European Union.

2.2 The Most Frequent Barriers to Misunderstandings

There is a wide number of various causes of conflicts in the field of intercultural business communication. The intensity of the barriers depends on the fact how big the differences between the two cultures are. The more the country is distant the more it is likely that the cultural differences will be bigger. For that reason the managers who are about to deal with foreign partners should learn as much information as possible about one another's cultural habits to prevent potential unpleasant situations or even a cultural shock (for further explanation see chapter 2.3.2).

In this chapter the most common barriers are introduced and divided into groups according to the type of the cause of their origin. The aim is to describe their basis in as much detail as possible in order to prevent the development of misunderstandings with the help of their knowledge.

2.2.1 Language Barriers

Language barriers are one of the most frequent phenomena, mainly because of the fact that there are about 3-6 thousands languages in the world, 50 of which in Europe. (Prcha 2010, 70)

In the early 1900's a great importance of language proficiency in the relationship to cultures was described by Sapir and Whorf in their theory, commonly known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. On the basis of their theory our thinking and behaviour is determined (or at least greatly influenced) by the language we speak. That means that people speaking different languages think in a different way (Chandler 1994). This language is predetermined by the culture we are born to. Every language is a carrier of the information about what is important in particular culture (the most frequently stated examples are the Inuits and their large number of expressions for snow, or the Hununov tribe and their 92 expressions for rice, which is the base of their everyday life) (Jandt 2010, 132). This point of view is also supported in a book by Jaroslav Světlík, who states that the language is one of the most important characteristics of each nation because it reflects the way of its thinking. Therefore what is for the society more or less important can easily be identified

through language (for example the frequency of the usage of the pronouns *I* or *we* expresses whether the society is individualist or collective orientated) (Sv tlík 2003 , 38, 186-187). This implies the absolute impossibility of exact translations from one language to another. In the course of years a number of pessimists have argued that a human presentation is not only limited to the language but it is also formed by a wide range of nonverbal expressions which can be identical for many cultures. However , it is almost certain that in the process of dealing between two partners speaking different languages with the assistance of an interpreter a larger number of misunderstandings caused by the inaccurate translation can appear, rather than in the case of using another (third) language familiar for both parties. In such cases it is most often English language that functions as the lingua franca (see chapter 2.4.3).

2.2.2 Nonverbal Communication

It is generally expected that languages differ but many people believe that nonverbal expressions are the same for most cultures. They usually did not realise their mistake until they had tried to communicate with someone of a different language and culture using nonverbal means of communication (Jandt 2010, 112). It is not clearly defined what nonverbal communication includes, however, one of the possible interpretations says that “nonverbal communication can be narrowly used to refer to an intentional use, as in using a nonspoken symbol to communicate a specific message” (Jandt 2010, 107). The nonverbal behaviour can be intentional or unintentional (Sv tlík 2003 , 189). People usually behave easily in a company of other familiar persons, which is not, however, the case of business dealings. Good managers should be trained in the area of non verbal communication and control their nonverbal behaviour. In many cases this knowledge is even used to his or her benefit.

In an intercultural contact nonverbal communication has a great importance because this is where the biggest differences can be found. Although these differences are not evident at first sight, they can cause serious problems.

The means of nonverbal communication complement the spoken language and show feelings, attitudes or can even be contrary to what we are saying (a negative signal of lying). They can also have different functions, such as:

- Replacing spoken language. The nonverbal means of communications are used in situations when it is not possible to use spoken words, for example , due to some noise

or the fact that speakers are not able to communicate the same language. In such cases signs, symbols or gestures are used.

- Express uncomfortable messages. It is not appropriate to express some messages that could be unacceptable for the other party, for example the disagreement or dissatisfaction with the development of a business dealing. These feelings can be expressed by means of nonverbal communication (gestures, facial expressions) to prevent the occurrence of a conflict.

There are other functions, for example the regulation of an interaction, reinforcement and modification of a verbal message or forming of an impression to guide communication, which are not further developed in this thesis. (Jandt 2010, 107-110)

The forms of nonverbal communication and differences among particular cultures (with the relation to business):

- Gestures. They belong to the category called *kinesics*. Gestures (often unconscious) are the most noticeable feature of nonverbal communication and can be very easily misinterpreted, because a similar gesture or motion often has a completely different meaning in diverse cultures. Gestures are often connected to the expressions of emotions. Generally it can be said that the more southern the country is (within Europe) the more emotions are transmitted during business dealing. Hence a situation may arise in which something is common in Italy but is totally unacceptable in Germany, Great Britain or other northern countries. (Sv tlík 2003, 190) As mentioned above, various types of gestures can be learned and intentionally used in order to invert the result of the dealing for one's own benefit.
- Territorialism. It defines the appropriate distance between communicating persons. Generally four basic groups are recognised: intimate space, personal space, social space and public space. The contact suitable for a business relationship between two partners should remain within the social, which is mostly considered 70 cm and more. Although in the determination of this distance other aspects, such as age, gender or status of the other person are significant, too. (Sv tlík 2003, 191)
- Eye contact and face expressions (belong to the category of *kinesics*). This way of communication can seem unimportant in comparison to other more obvious expressions of nonverbal communication, but there are cultures (mainly in the Asian region) where a direct eye contact during business dealing is interpreted as an offence to the partner and can spoil successful business dealing. It has been proved in some

studies that a particular eye contact acquired during childhood cannot be affected by later experience (or only very slightly). (Jandt 2010, 115)

- Use of time (also referred as *chronemics*). The significance of the different perception of time can be more important than it might seem. Especially in business time plays a significant role. The first conflict can occur straight at the beginning of a meeting – while, for example the Americans come five minutes before the start (and their partners are expected to do the same otherwise are considered unreliable), for most of the southern nations even a half an hour delay is common and excusable. Other problems can be caused by different system of calendars used in various countries, which means a different length of months, different public holidays or use of a different date format. (Sv tlík 2003, 192) Other matter of discussion should be the anticipated time in which the project (or, for example delivery) will be completed. Its assumed duration varies in various societies according to different perceptions of time.
- Touching. It is recommended to avoid any kind of touch during business dealings (except for a handshake, which again differs in various cultures). However, in some countries (usually in south Europe) touching and also kissing is common even amongst people of the same sex. (Sv tlík 2003, 191)
- Clothing. A certain clothing etiquette should form a natural part of a business sphere not only during intercultural dealing. However, cultural conventions of a business partner should be taken into consideration. Especially the inappropriate choice of clothes businesswomen put on can give the impression of untrustworthiness. This issue is also connected with the meaning and symbolism of colours (which, surprisingly, enormously varies among the regions) and it should not be ignored.
- Gifts. Giving gifts is a common practice during business dealing and has a long tradition. To choose a gift that would attract the attention of the beneficiary, but not offend someone, can be quite complicated. Culturally inappropriate gifts can cause more damage than if one forgets to give their partner anything at all. Managers should be careful mainly in the countries where a gift could be considered attempted corruption. One of the most used and safest practices is to exchange neutral promotional items with the logo of the company. (Sv tlík 2003, 195)

2.2.3 Stereotypes and Prejudices

While stereotypes can be negative as well as positive, prejudices are always connoted a negative meaning. Both terms can be attributed to people who form their judgments on individuals on the basis of their membership to some culture. Stereotyping is a quite common phenomenon. According to scientists it is described as an erroneous processing of a human brain, similar to the effects of visual illusions. (Jandt 2010, 86-91) This problem can only be prevented by the realisation of the issue and trying not to judge others before knowing them personally. However, on the other hand people who are highly prejudiced most likely do not change their attitude, not even after being confronted by new information proving the opposite.

2.2.4 Assuming Similarity Instead of Difference

It often happens that people who have little or no knowledge of the other culture assume that common habits and procedures are identical to those of their own culture. In a way every culture is different and unique, therefore conclusions like these can lead to big misunderstandings. Nevertheless it is not recommended to presume the opposite – to be prepared that everything will be different. If we do so, though, we could miss the things common for both cultures, which may be used as a base for building further business relationships. The best solution is not to expect anything and get as much information as possible about the real practices. (Jandt 2010, 82-83)

2.2.5 Anxiety

In general people tend to feel nervous when they are expected to face something they have no experience with. Therefore anxiety is one of the most common feelings that people experience when encountering new culture. Uncertainty and fear very often emerge as a barrier in intercultural communication and can cause trivial and unnecessary mistakes. (Jandt 2010, 82) The easiest way to avoid difficulties like these is to gather as much information as possible about other cultures in advance, and ask other colleagues about their own experience and recommendations.

2.2.6 Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is a very serious problem causing a whole range of cultural misunderstandings. Ethnocentric people consider their own culture the best and superior to others. One of many examples can be the use of the word *Americans* by the US citizens,

how they address themselves. In fact this expression refers to all inhabitants of North and South Americas. (Jandt 2010, 84-85) This problem is similar to the issue related to people with strong prejudices. Unless they realise their own mistakes and consequences, not much can be done for the other party.

2.3 Impact of Cultural Differences

The negotiation is a complicated process as such. Unless we do not know the cultural background of our foreign partners, it is probable that we experience unexpected and often incomprehensible reactions. On the other hand the knowledge of the cultural differences allows us to anticipate all possible responses.

In the level of organizations the misunderstandings can cause a wide number of problems of various importance – from the most insignificant up to the serious one which can mean even a termination of the business relations.

In relation to individuals the impact of strong and long-term cultural changes manifest in the form of cultural shock.

2.3.1 Impact of Cultural Misunderstandings on Dealing Between Multicultural Companies

The degree of the cultural misunderstandings impact can be divided into three groups according to the seriousness:

- Minor misunderstandings. It is inevitable to experience at least some misunderstandings caused by cultural differences during any intercultural contact. In this category can be included for example unintelligible or misleading body language (gestures or face expressions), usage of too familiar addressing (different level of formality), inappropriate gifts or clothing. There is no use to see these differences as serious barriers in business contact, however, avoiding them gives always impression of professionalism. It is also important to be tolerant to the mistakes of others.
- Complications. Misunderstandings, mainly those emerging from a different value system, can cause problems of a larger extent. The consequences can be the deceleration of the whole process of negotiation, necessity to get back to the previous stage of discussions or weakening the mutual trust. The behaviour causing these misunderstandings can be for example different term orientation (long-term versus

short-term agreements), system of decision-making or attitude to the questions of gender.

Serious problems. It is not usual, however, it can also happen that the misunderstandings in communication can cause significant problems, even the termination of the partnership. Nevertheless this situation occurs rarely and the communication problems would have to be serious and repeated, such as not respecting cultural habits of the partners, strong pressing for usage of their own conventions or immoral behaviour.

2.3.2 Impact of Cultural Differences on Individuals (Cultural Shock)

The expression cultural shock is known from the 60's of the 20th century and could be defined as the psychological confusion felt by people who are suddenly faced with cultural environment entirely different to their own (Šron k 2001, 52).

According to statistics the most common sources of the cultural shock (besides others) are for example nonverbal communication, business dress codes, attitude towards women, values and ethical standards. All of these are closely related to the intercultural business contact. Cultural shock causes problems mainly at the level of personal well-being. The bigger the difference is the more intense frustration the individual experience.

Cultural shock occurs usually in five stages – initial excitement, crisis, adjustment, acceptance and reentry. The most interesting and unexpected is the last phase called reentry shock. It refers to people who return to their original cultural background (after the long time spent in some other place) and experience almost the same cultural shock as in the foreign culture. This feeling is for most of them surprising.

Some researches inform that employees sent to work abroad are not successful not because of the lack of qualifications or experiences but because of the incapability to understand and become a part of a new culture. To avoid a situation like this the employee should be first of all sent to participate in short-term project (two to three months) abroad to find out if he or she is able to adapt to the new environment (Chaney 2007, 73-78).

2.4 How to Avoid Cultural Misunderstandings

One of the possible solutions could be to eliminate cultural barriers and to create some kind of global culture, shared by all people. However it would inevitably lead to the loss of national and cultural identities and it would be a very unnatural development for the human

society. According to the opinion of the majority a better way to avoid cultural misunderstandings is to try to understand and respect the cultural background of the others, to appreciate the challenges and intellectual enrichment that it brings.

For the achievement of the best possible results it is essential to familiarise with the different culture as closely as possible. It is necessary not only to be aware of certain habits but also to know why they have come into existence, if they are observed by everyone or only by certain groups, and whether it concerns our business partner. It is also important to realise that even though we have learnt all accessible facts, there are always a lot of exceptions within every society.

2.4.1 Adequate Preparation

The first step to bring international business dealing to a successful end is the realization of differences between both parties and the willingness to respect them. Managers who are acquainted with all cultural aspects and are prepared to cope with them can focus on the actual subject of the dealing (Šroněk 2001, 67).

It is not possible to learn all rules of all cultures and subcultures, but the general knowledge of differences and barriers helps to anticipate and prevent a major part of possible misunderstandings.

Another thing that helps to deal with foreign partners successfully is to be prepared for the stress that inevitably affects anyone who is exposed to the impact of foreign and unfamiliar environment, and to learn to cope with it in advance.

2.4.2 Empathy and Toleration

Empathy and toleration towards diverse cultures is a fundamental prerequisite for a successful intercultural contact. It is important to respect the communication habits of business partners. All unusual expressions should be judged from the view of the cultural background our partner comes from, not from our own one. For a better identification with the unfamiliar development of business dealing it is better to focus on features that are common for cultures of both parties rather than on differences. For all these reasons it is better not to leave the preparations for the last moment but to pay close attention to all necessary details in advance. In modern times a large number of specialized books and a lot of information on the internet are available, therefore cultural awareness should be a basic skill of every businessman that is expected to deal with other multicultural companies.

The trainer and expert on communication skills Snéha Khilay gives four basic tips how to communicate with cultural awareness:

- Use observation skills to reveal basic behaviour patterns influenced by other culture. It is recommended to mirror and match the body language of the partner, however, not to exaggerate it and avoid becoming an imitator (see the ways to approach cultural diversity by Trompenaars, chapter 1.1.3)
- Appreciate the differences instead of considering them barriers.
- Do not assume that every member of certain culture will behave the same and respect the individual concerns.
- Be patient and respect the difficulties intercultural communication can cause to your partner. (Khilay 2009)

2.4.3 English as a Lingua Franca

One of the possible ways to prevent misunderstandings in intercultural communication is the usage of the English language as a lingua franca (although it can function only in case of language barriers). The Merriam-Webster Dictionary offers a simplified (but sufficient) definition of this term: “lingua franca is any of various languages used as common or commercial tongues among peoples of diverse speech” (n.d.). The history of the usage of a lingua franca goes back to the expansion of the Sumerian language as far as the year 3000 BC. Throughout the European history this function was also carried out by Aramaic language, Greek or Latin. Historical roots of English as a lingua franca go back to 17th century when Great Britain became the sea and colonialist power. Due to colonists the English language as a language of businessmen, sailors, soldiers and missionaries spread. The economic growth of the United States, political reasons, culture (the boom of film industry, music, fashion or news) or educational system all had other strong influences. According to experts the English language could only undergo such expansion thanks to its simplicity. However, this opinion is relative because no other language can be considered equally acquirable for everyone. (Prcha 2010, 87)

Contemporary English is the only language which is used on every continent. Such expansion has no parallel in history. It is widespread both territorially (according to the territory of the use) and functionally (Prcha 2010, 84). English as a means of communication is used in business, politics, science, education, show business, travelling and many other areas. The weak point of this process is that for the purpose of the common

use the English language had to be simplified (mainly grammatically) , which means, for example, that in the area of a legal system it is more suitable to use the more accurate French language (Bouzek 2008, 68).

The development of English as a lingua franca in a view of a long-term perspective is uncertain. According to some opinions it is compared to Greek , which gradually disappeared, or Latin, which broke into other independent languages (e.g. Italian, French or Spanish). The second possibility is highly probable because already now different dialects of English throughout the world differ a lot. Successor languages could be Chinese, Spanish or Arabic as the number of native speakers of these languages is going to surpass the number of native English speakers soon (in case of Chinese it has already happened). Some other predictions are not so pessimistic. In their opinion the English language could even develop into a form of a universal international language. (Prcha 2010, 91-94)

3 COMPARISON OF CZECH AND US CULTURES

In the last chapter I apply all the above mentioned findings to the comparison of Czech culture and the culture of the United States of America. For a practical demonstration I have chosen the USA. I have several reasons for it. The first one is the common usage of the English language. There is no official language set by the law, however, the absolute majority of business matters (and especially international dealings) are held in English. Next, the economy of the United States is the most developed one in the world hence it is inevitably one of the most significant international business partners not only for the Czech Republic, but for almost all other countries.

In first two subchapters the most typical features of both cultures are stated. From the very beginning it is obvious that Czech and US cultures are very distinct from each other and are based on different values. Nevertheless it is only a basis of what every manager should be aware of to bring a negotiation to a successful end.

For a more detailed illustration of the differences between Czech and US cultures I state the typical characteristics specified by the cultural dimensions theories by Geert Hofstede and Fons Trompenaars. These characteristics are compared, the possible problems analysed and appropriate solutions proposed.

3.1 Typical Features of Czech Business Culture

Due to the facts that the Czech nation is united by the long history and the area of the state is small (in comparison to the United States), the stated characteristics are generally relevant to the whole area.

In a business area the Czech managers tend to be formal and rather indirect. It follows that also the language used in business matters differ from the common usage. The most characteristic feature of typical Czech company is developed vertical hierarchy and following centralised process of decision making. Thus decisions are reached slowly and the whole negotiation can last longer than expected before the result is reached.

Business and private life are strictly separated and it is not appropriate to inquire about the personal issues. Nevertheless for the better progress of the negotiations it is good to get to know the business partners better in order to develop a trustworthy relationship. During the business dealings the Czech managers are (especially at the beginning) reserved, formal and impersonal. As opposed to the informality typical for US managers, it is necessary to address the Czech business partners as Mr or Mrs followed by surname, or to use a proper

degree. Using first names or informal greetings without being invited could be considered as insulting or even humiliating.

As a result of the high uncertainty avoidance for the managers is very important to build the trustworthy relation from the very beginning and they need to be informed in detail, hence the presentations should be well-prepared, accurate and thorough with enough charts and relevant figures. It is extremely important to be punctual for meeting and the unexcused or unjustified delays are considered very unreliable. (Gorill 2007; Kwintessential n.d.)

3.2 Typical Features of the US Business Culture

It is difficult to define *typical* features of the business culture (as well as the features of other fields) in the United States of America. It is mainly because of the fact that most of the citizens are descended from relatively recent immigrants, who brought their own way of life from their country of origin. The largest minority groups are represented by Hispanics from Mexico and South and Central America, African-Americans and Asians. The main characteristics are based on the Western European culture (since the most of the inhabitants descend from European immigrants from England) with influences of many other cultures introduced by native peoples or various immigrants. This fact is intensified also by the considerable size of the country.

Due to their developed economy, business strategies and political and diplomatic powers the United States strongly influenced throughout the recent history the business cultures of other countries in the whole world.

US companies value first of all individualism, independency, equality and self-sufficiency. The business conventions are rather informal (the typical example is the common usage of the first names even in the business sphere). In the most of companies the feedback is very important and immediate. In this way are reached conclusions and set the future plans. The most important issue is money, hence the US culture is considered very materialistic. The typical businessman is future-orientated, optimistic and not afraid of challenge or competition.

The US business meetings are usually very effective. The managers follow the motto "time is money" and the priority is to do everything necessary as soon as possible. The participants are active, effective and direct with a minimum of emotional expressions during the meeting as well as in the business written communication. Due to their tendency

to the quick feedback they like to be prepared and receive the discussed materials before the meeting or presentation is held. (Bořánková 2006, 64-66)

To sum it up the most significant characteristic of the US business culture from my point of view (in comparison to the culture of the Czech Republic) can be considered the high level of informality. The US managers show extreme friendliness and affection towards their business partners from the very beginning. Because of this fact they can be considered naïve or insufficiently professional. However this casualness does not influence their negotiating and managing abilities. On the contrary, their business partners can be confused by the misleading impression of familiarity and their negotiating skills can be weakened. However it is easy to avoid such situation. The managers from other countries only need to be aware of this fact and to be prepared to maintain their own attitude to the business negotiation.

3.3 The Comparison according to Hofstede's Theory

In his theory Geert Hofstede describes five basic cultural dimensions. It can be applied to the wide range of areas, for example business, family, culture, religion or society in general. In the description of each dimension in this thesis are mainly stated only the facts connected with the business matters and the style of managing the company.

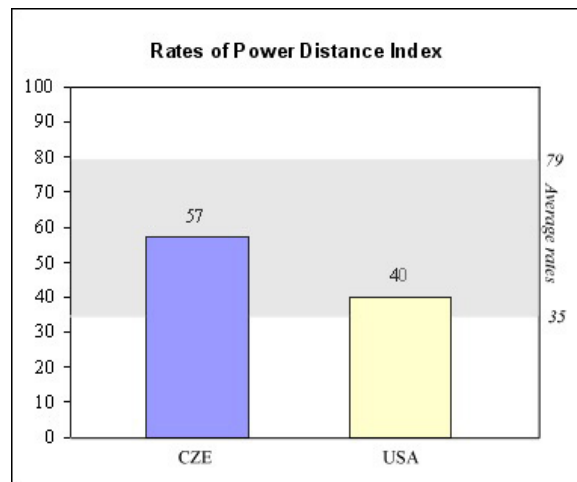
3.3.1 Power Distance Index (PDI)

This figure shows the unequal distribution of power within the company. The inequality usually appears in the areas of wealth, prestige and power. In fact within any company the inequality is inevitable and effective (the example can be the hierarchic structure) also because of the differences among people's skills and abilities. It is essential for keeping control over the organization.

During the survey the respondents were asked about questions related to the fear of superordinates, the style of their decision making and which one is preferred by ordinary employees. The PDI figures differ strongly not only among different countries but also among various kinds of occupation within one society.

The power distance index shows the relationship between the subordinate and his superordinate from the point of view of the lower. That means that the higher the number is the bigger is the gap between particular positions within the hierarchy and the more significant power has the boss over his subordinates.

In practice it means that the companies from the countries with the low PDI tend to have less structured hierarchy, the process of decision making is divided between more individuals, subordinates expect to be consulted about decisions affecting their work and managers rely rather on personal experience. On the other hand in organizations with the high power distance index is the process of decision making centralised, subordinates limit to be only told (not consulted) and managers rely on formal rules and strictly given corporate hierarchy. (Hofstede 2001, 79-121)



Graph 1: Rates of Power Distance Index (self-created)

The graph shows the figures of the Power Distance Index for the USA 40 and the Czech Republic 57. The difference between them is not big and both of them fall within the average (determined by the grey area). In this area we can expect misunderstandings but probably only with a lower degree.

According to the results Czech companies tend to be more structured (with a multi-level hierarchy). In the course of dealing the following situation can occur: a US party expects their partner to make a certain decision themselves directly at the meeting and is not aware of the fact that the process of decision making in the countries with the higher PDI is more centralised. It is probable that the negotiating manager does not have enough competence to make a decision alone. In that case the whole process of dealing must be postponed until a senior manager makes the decision. The US party can be surprised and consider the whole situation not very professional. The best solution is to make it clear in advance who is entitled to take important decisions and how long it will take.

The most significant difference among employees from the countries with the low PDI and from the countries with the high PDI is in the attitude to the issue of being discussed or just told. The difficulty can occur mainly in a Czech and US partnership in which someone from the US party is a junior to a Czech senior (for example to the leader of an international team), or in Czech companies that employ US citizens. In a situation where an employee is only informed about a decision that had been already taken (according to my experiences it is a common practice in a majority of Czech organizations). He or she is not asked his or her opinion, he or she can feel they are not respected, particularly when the impact on his or her work is negative. If an employee is treated in this way repeatedly, the partnership between a Czech and a US company can be even terminated. To give an answer how to prevent this situation is not simple because neither of them would be probably willing to change his or her attitude. From my point of view the best solution is to appoint a leader of the team from the same country as the other members, or possibly the leader could be from the country with lower PDI (USA) than the other subordinates.

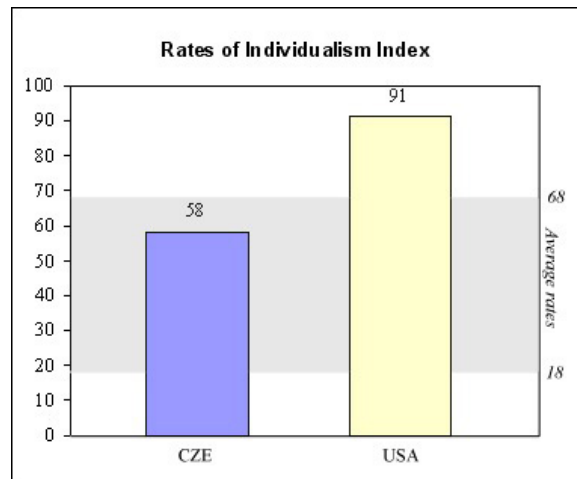
3.3.2 Individualism (IDV)

Individualism is on one side of the scale, the opposite is collectivism. It shows the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups and the relationship between individuals and group, which means that the individualism index strongly influences the attitude of the employee to the company. It determines to what extent is the individual willing to accept rules and requirements of the company. The individualism rate depends also on the size of the organization (with the size of the company increases the individualism rate).

In the business with the high individualism index are employees expected to behave according to their own needs and interests and the major aim of the management is to harmonize them with the interests of the company. The individual decisions are considered better, importance is attached to freedom of individuals and the employees have of the only the calculative involvement in the company. The employers should focus only on rules and skills when making promoting and hiring decisions. Employees are used to work alone, as individuals perform the best results.

On the contrary the inhabitants of the countries with a low individualism rate tend to join various groups and subordinate their own needs and interests to the group. The companies expect higher rate of emotional dependency and moral involvement from

employees. The individuals are considered only a part of the whole, group decisions better and also traditional procedures are recognized. (Hofstede 2001, 209-254)



Graph 2: **Rates of Individualism Index** (self-created)

While the rate of the Czech Republic is 58 and remains within the grey average area of the graph, the United States have the highest IDV rate of all surveyed countries (91). This fact can have several causes. The USA as a country do not have a long history, their society did not develop “together” and did not create traditional social relations. Since the very beginning the United States have been considered the country of people who due to various reasons had had to leave their native country and had found not only their new home but primarily the freedom there. From this fact the way of thinking of many US citizens is derived – the most important thing for them is the freedom of the individual and everything connected with it. The important fact is also that a lot of US inhabitants still maintain traditions of their original country. From this point of view the high index of individualism in the USA is not unexpected whatsoever. For similar reasons Australia, United Kingdom as well as the United States are listed as three countries with the highest IDV index.

In this dimension the gap between the index of the USA and the Czech Republic is the biggest. Therefore possible occurrence of cultural misunderstandings is the highest.

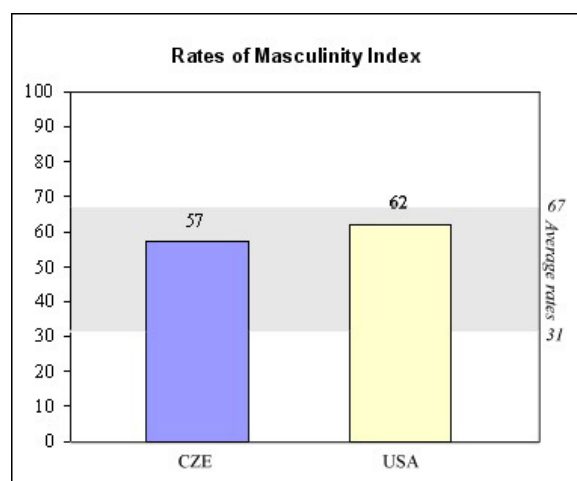
3.3.3 Masculinity (MAS)

The Masculinity index (with its opposite femininity) is connected with the distribution of the roles according to gender. The research revealed one interesting fact and that is that the women’s values differ only slightly among societies while there are quite big differences in

values among men from different countries. Women attribute more importance to the social relations, like relationships between colleagues, giving assistance to others or creating a friendly atmosphere. They prefer a position security and cooperation between managers. On the other hand the most typical characteristics for men in general are making a career and money. They are focused on advancement, earnings and want to be trained as much as possible.

In the countries with the lower MAS rates are the values of men and women holding the same post very similar. These values are rather feminine ones, such as modesty and care. For employees from these countries are relationships in work important the stress is laid on cooperation and the employment security is desirable. Women have an easier access to the higher management positions. Organizations with the low MAS index are in general considered better in providing service consulting or resolutions of various conflicts. The managers have above-average negotiation and communication skills.

The companies from the countries with the higher Masculinity index possess the characteristics typical for men. The employees aspire to achieve recognition in the business sphere, high earnings and any kind of victory over others. For these organizations is typical assertiveness and competitiveness. The competitive advantage of the companies with higher MAS index is in manufacturing industry, price competition and manufacturing heavy products. The higher the masculinity index is the bigger is usually the gap between men's and women's values. (Hofstede 2001, 279-333)



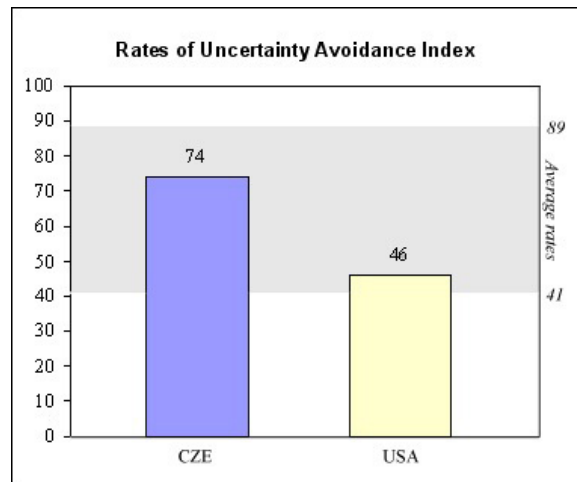
Graph 3: **Rates of Masculinity Index** (self-created)

The figures for both countries are nearly equal (57 for the Czech Republic and 62 for the United States) and no bigger misunderstandings are expected in this area. The US society is slightly more determined by values typical for men, such as competitiveness and a desire for career and money. On the contrary in countries with the lower MAS index the differences between men's and women's values fade away and more women can be found in higher positions within a company. Consequently it can be surprising or unusual for a US party to deal with a partner represented by a female manager. In such situation a woman should not avoid the contact or feel inferior, but on the contrary from the very beginning she should show her professional skills and knowledge. This way she gains respect and esteem essential for the good development of the dealing.

3.3.4 Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)

The uncertainty about future is one of the basic human attributes. Uncertainty avoidance index shows how much people feel uncertain in the unstructured situations. The societies with a high index try to minimize these situations with a number of restrictions, rules and laws. These people are also often more emotional and draw on an inner source of motivation. The companies prefer to solve the short-term problems instead of developing a long-term strategies. They try to avoid planning situations where the plan is dependent on some future presumption. The organizations have a clear structure – everything is transparent and the possible occurrence of the unexpected events is eliminated. The ordinary employees are generally suspicious of foreign managers. On the other hand people from the nations which accept the uncertainty easier are more tolerant to the opinions of others and they try to avoid rules as much as possible. They are more phlegmatic and usually are not expected to express emotions. They are tolerant to diversity and accept foreigners as managers easily.

The questions of the study were related to the job security, the importance of the rules and stress. The uncertainty avoidance index should not be confused with the avoidance or risk. In the Western Europe countries are the figures of UAI and PDI closely connected. (Hofstede 2001, 145-181)



Graph 4: **Rates of Uncertainty Avoidance Index** (self-created)

In this field misunderstandings can arise mainly during the collaboration in a longer term. While a US party (with its rate 46 is very close to the lower boundary of the average area) requires to make a long-term contracts or establish projects with future prospects, for a Czech side (according to the graph its rate 74 is within the average grey area) it is more important to reach immediate results, managers prefer smaller achievements but with the highest certainty possible. One of the most significant barriers could be the fact that a business strategy proposed by US managers would be based on a condition that is new to a Czech party (they have no experience with it) or it is too uncertain (the example could be the estimated fluctuations of certain kinds of goods). From my point of view this situation does not have an obvious solution. I would suggest to solve it with a compromise – the party with the lower Uncertainty Avoidance Index (in this case a US side) should present all facts and studies in as much detail as possible to acquaint the other party with the issue. On the contrary managers coming from the background with the higher UAI rate (Czech companies) should reduce their demands and accept a certain rate of uncertainty.

According to the results of this research Czech employees are suspicious of foreign managers and find it uncomfortable to work under their leadership. In this case a senior that comes from a different cultural background can suffer a lack of respect and loyalty, and can have serious problems to motivate his or her juniors, who will perform only on an average level. This problem does not apply for business negotiations between intercultural partners as in such situation the participants prepare to deal with cultural differences in advance.

It seems that it is easier for managers with the higher rate of Uncertainty Avoidance Index to deal with the other party from companies with a lower index, since the latter is generally more tolerant and willing to accept opinions and attitudes.

3.3.5 Long Term Orientation (LTO)

This fifth dimension was added later in 1985 and the research was carried out among students from only 23 countries. The original structure of this research was based on Confucianism but the findings can be applied to any society. The major differences were discovered among Asian and Western countries. This index is closely connected with the economic growth – the first five countries with the highest figures were China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and South Korea. These countries are known as an “Asian tigers” because of their highly developed economies.

The main characteristics of the long term orientated nations are thrift and perseverance. People do not expect immediate results or gratification of their desires and companies tend to built up a strong position in the market.

On the contrary people from the short orientated societies usually respect the traditions, fulfil social obligations and protect one’s good reputation. They expect to be acknowledged for their merits instantly. The major concern of the companies is the bottom line of the past period. Family and business sphere is always separated. (Hofstede 2001, 351-370)

The last dimension was added subsequently and figures for the Czech Republic are not available. Thus the comparison of the United States and the Czech Republic is not possible.

According to the research the USA have very low LTO index (29), i.e. the characteristics typical for these countries show considerably. It implies managers from US companies expect immediate results and concentrate on the current situation rather than plans for the future.

3.4 Comparison according to Trompenaars’ Theory

The 7-dimensional theory developed by Fons Trompenaars is the second most commonly used tool among companies. It is based on the Hofstede’s cultural dimensions and is extended to the dimensions dealing with the attitudes to time and environment.

3.4.1 Universalism vs. Particularism

Universalist societies follow in every sphere of their activity clearly established rules and prefer these formal rules to the personal relationships. On the contrary in companies which are characterised as particularist employees are convinced that every situation in every moment is different and therefore does not exist rule that could be applied generally. (Boňánková 2006, 19)

The Czech Republic is characterised as particularist country which means that in business are more important personal relationships than general rules. For example it is common that the choice of the supplier or other business partner is determined rather by acquaintances than objective selection of the best one. For US party can be this behaviour considered unprofessional and unreliable. Solution of this situation depends on the setting in which the negotiation is taking place. Visiting country should be in both cases tolerant to the established practise of the host country, however, the company with the particularist characteristics should be rather moderate in their friendly attitude at business.

3.4.2 Individualism vs. Communitarianism

Modern societies tend to be individualist and every individual is able to make important business decisions, for which is fully responsible. More traditional societies are typically communitarianist, each individual feels to be part of some group and the decision-making power is often centralised. (Boňánková 2006, 20).

This dimension is identical to the IDV dimension by Hofstede and the differences between individualist USA and communitarianist (collectivist) Czech Republic were already discussed in the previous chapter (see chapter 3.3.2).

3.4.3 Neutral vs. Emotional/Affective

Companies with neutral culture assign emotional expressions only to the sphere of private life, while in societies with affective culture is common to express emotions also at business dealings. (Boňánková 2006, 20)

Czech managers, which are characterised emotional according to this theory, can be considered unprofessional or unreliable by the US party due to their immoderate expression of emotions.

3.4.4 Specific vs. Diffuse

People from specific cultures protect their relatively small private zone, which is reserved only for close friends. On the other hand their public zone is quite large and shared willingly with others. In diffuse cultures public and private spaces are almost identical, therefore are both of them guarded carefully. (Boňáková 2006, 21)

The US managers are generally characterised as specific, which means that they divide private and business line strictly. However for that reason they sometimes give an impression of friendliness while doing business. This can be confusing for the Czech party and they can consider it improper. On the contrary the Czech managers are at the beginning very distant, because they protect their public zone which is quite identical with the private one. Nevertheless they make effort to get to know their partners closer before even starting a business. From their point of view this procedure helps to build a better relationship for further negotiations.

3.4.5 Achievement vs. Ascription

In societies where predominates the achievement culture is common to assign positions to the employees according to their real skills and achievements regardless of their origin. On the contrary in ascription cultures are the functions particularly based on the age, gender, origin or social status. (Boňáková 2006, 21)

The gap between the Czech Republic (ascription culture) and USA (achievement culture) is in this area quite large. While dealing with Czech party the US managers should have in team some older and experienced members, otherwise could be considered insufficiently competent regardless of their former achievements. Contrarily the other party should manifest enough knowledge and professionalism to show that they merit their position.

3.4.6 Attitudes to Time

Every society perceives the passing of time differently. For some are important results in the past and others attribute more importance to the future planning. Trompenaars also defines two different approaches in time perception – sequential (time is viewed as a sequence of independent events) and synchronous (passing of time is defined as a circle made of past, present and future). (Boňáková 2006, 22)

In this area both countries have the same attitude – they perceive time sequentially. It means that they perceive time as a continuous line of actions, which need to be properly planned and quickly completed.

3.4.7 Attitudes to the Environment

Definition of the different attitudes to the environment is based on the fact if people are convinced that they have their doing fully under control or if they believe in the impact of other powers that cannot be influenced. (Boňáková 2006, 22)

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to point out and demonstrate the importance of intercultural differences and their possible impact on business dealing.

In the first part the terms culture, intercultural communication and cultural diversity and their development throughout the history are briefly defined to demonstrate that the meeting and mutual influence of different cultures go back to ancient history.

Barriers influencing intercultural communication can be divided into two main groups – *language barriers* and *nonverbal barriers*. Language misunderstandings can be easily prevented by the use of another language (most frequently English) as a lingua franca. The most common nonverbal barriers include *gestures, territorialism, eye contact, perception of time, touching, clothing or gifts*. Next there also exist other causes for intercultural misunderstandings, which are not as obvious as those mentioned above, however, they can produce serious problems, too. These barriers are defined as *stereotypes and prejudices, assuming similarity instead of differences, anxiety and ethnocentrism*. The descriptions of these phenomena and possible ways to prevent the misunderstandings are also outlined.

The last part deals with the comparison of the Czech Republic and the United States of America. At first the chapter looks at general business customs of these countries and emphasizes what is important to be aware of. The cultures of both countries are compared on the basis of the cultural theories by Geert Hofstede and Fons Trompenaars. These theories are the most commonly used ones in different companies worldwide to cope with cultural differences. Each description of a cultural dimension is followed by the analysis of possible problems emerging from a distinct perception of values, and possible solutions are proposed.

It is clear from all stated theories, conclusions and comparisons that the awareness and respect for cultural differences of others can only have a positive impact and can considerably influence the progress and results of negotiations. It is neither time-consuming nor costly for a company to provide an appropriate cultural training for managers who are about to enter negotiations with a foreign company, and the chances of good business results increase rapidly.

The main aim of the thesis was to provide an overview of the issue intended for the general public. Each individual part can be further analysed and supported by research focused on a concrete area of misunderstanding, a country or a particular company.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

US	United States (of America)
USA	United States of America
CZE	Czech Republic
PDI	Power Distance Index
UAI	Uncertainty Avoidance Index
IDV	Individualism
MAS	Masculinity
LTO	Long-Term Orientation
etc.	etcetera (and so on)
i.e.	id est (that is)
vs.	versus

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