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Managing Intercultural Teams

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree
BSc in International Management

Submitted to Eva Aileen Jungwirth-Edelmann, MA

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Vienna, 04.06.2020

Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

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Date

Abstract

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The topic of this research is "Managing Intercultural Teams," with the primary focus placed on the analysis of difficulties in intercultural team management and ways of overcoming the challenges that occur in the working process. This research is based on the analysis of two engineering companies located in different countries and which collaborate daily. To get a more profound understanding of organizations' cooperation, qualitative research will be conducted, including thirteen interviews that will occur via Skype. The interviews are characterized as semi-structured with a determined direction. They comprise twenty-three questions and will be conducted only once.

The main findings of the research on difficulties in intercultural team management appeared to be linked to cultural differences between countries, with communication posing the most significant issue. Nonetheless, the majority of the participants named issues such as misunderstandings, differences of attitudes, inability to communicate efficiently without considering them to be consequences of cultural differences. Only the younger employees attributed the existence of issues to differences in cultural values. The older participants denied the possibility of cultural differences due to historical similarities in the employees' backgrounds (being citizens of the (former) USSR). However, the research showed that communication was made difficult not only by cultural differences but also by the failure of managers from both sides to use the correct techniques to build personal and professional relationships. Altogether, these led to additional spending in the collaboration due to delays, poor work quality, disagreements in the divisions, and absence of a personal approach.

Supervisor: Eva Aileen Jungwirth-Edelmann, MA

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SSE: SSE Engineering Moscow

KD: Kharkov Design – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYZ"

Chapter 1: Introduction

Now more than ever, the workforce is marked by the diversity of its members' backgrounds. This cultural heterogeneity may lead to challenges in structuring workflow and communication, provoking trust issues among colleagues. As organizations all over the world are striving to overcome these shortcomings and make the most of diversity, they are paying close attention to the identification of appropriate management techniques (Humes & Reilly, 2007).

1.1 Motivation and cognitive interest

The percentage of multinational corporations has been rapidly growing in recent years (Baraldi, 2006). With this phenomenon came changes in workforce diversity. Differences among employees have to be managed correctly to be beneficial to the companies. Proper leadership promotes more efficient decision-making and a better understanding of international collaborations, resulting in successful task execution (Baraldi, 2006). According to experts from Loyola University Humes and Reilly, in the globalized business world, the most effective teams are intercultural. Indeed, they found that diverse viewpoints of employees enrich discussions and help critical thought (2007).

Nevertheless, the authors added that intercultural teams might quickly become a hindrance to the working process if misunderstandings and conflicts between colleagues are left unaddressed. Intercultural management is a crucial area of investigation, and its importance is rapidly increasing. The reason for this is the continuous growth of multinational organizations that consequently adds to the importance of globally qualified managers (Jacob, 2003). In order to identify and prevent issues of inefficient multicultural management, many scientific articles have been written about this phenomenon. Authors from all over the world are discussing intercultural communication in a globalized world (Baraldi, 2006), the linguistic and cultural barriers to intercultural communication (Peltokorpi & Clausen, 2010), strategic competence for intercultural communication (Li-sheng, 2000) and a wide variety of its other relevant aspects.

However, the majority of publications center heavily around European and Asian countries, as well as the United States (Palmer & Varner, 2007). Therefore, this research will be focusing on countries that were considered less often, namely, Russia and Ukraine.

1.2 Outline of thesis: aim, secondary aims, research questions, hypothesis

The principal aim of the research is to analyze the difficulties of intercultural team management and ways of overcoming the challenges that occur. Through analysis of two countries – Russia and Ukraine, the purpose of suitable management techniques will be underlined. This thesis will offer a particularly detailed explanation for the importance of considering all cultural differences that could arise throughout the working process, even during insignificant decision-making stages. The choice of analyzed countries will also contribute significantly to the accomplishment of the set objective. The focus on two countries is done on purpose in order to concentrate on specific cultural differences and draw conclusions that could be relevant in other countries' analyses. Previous studies failed to sufficiently investigate and interpret the peculiarities of the collaboration process between representatives of the two nations. Therefore, this research is not aimed solely at the main patterns of the intercultural management process, also attempting to produce results that would expand knowledge of these specific countries and benefit organizations located there, as our findings will offer a new perspective on their daily working processes and have a positive effect on future engagement between cultures.

Therefore, these secondary aims of research will be pursued:

- Expand knowledge in intercultural management, specifically in Russia and Ukraine.

- Research the main current issues in the business world that arise in collaborations between Russia and Ukraine.

- Benefit companies analyzed in this research by pointing out problem areas in management

These countries will be examined through the prism of the relationship between two companies that often cooperate on joined projects: SSE Engineering Moscow and Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ. This analysis will expand the understanding of the cultural characteristics of Russian and Ukrainian employees, which might be beneficial not only for the local organizations but also for international companies. Indeed, with Russia facing global transformations (Medvedev, 2015) and multinational corporations entering Ukraine (Bridgewater, 2002), international engagement with the two countries is increasing rapidly.

The secondary aims of this research are directly linked to its primary objective and generally include defining the key elements of international team management, as well as its many aspects. This will be accomplished in two separate parts of the research, the first being dedicated to the notion of intercultural, and the second to the principles of managing intercultural teams. The framework of relevant theory will be outlined, starting first with simple definitions, such as culture, intercultural, intercultural workplace, and team management. The next step will include an overview of cultural dimensions and their characteristics, as well as a discussion of challenges related to cultural differences in the workplace and the possibilities of conflict management. The secondary aims will be achieved through in-depth literature analysis, with a particular focus on existing research, articles, and books on the subject.

To fulfill the purpose of this study, the following research questions have been formulated:

· What elements play a significant role in intercultural teams, focusing on cultures that are stereotypically similar to each other?

· What are the successful management techniques used in teams with two cultural backgrounds?

· What are the main challenges which can occur in intercultural teams, and how does one overcome them?

· What are the issues of managing intercultural teams with stereotypically similar cultural backgrounds, and how does one eliminate them?

> *Hypothesis:*
>
> *The beneficial cooperation of organizations from different countries directly depends on the qualifications of intercultural team management; inappropriate management will lead to problems which require additional resources, like financial, time and effort*

1.3 Limitations

This research will face different limitations, particularly its sample size and timeframes, but also the researcher's background that will inevitably influence perception. However, these limitations will be minimized throughout the research process, mainly with the help of an extensive literature review and qualitative interviews.

The sample size could become an issue as the focus of this paper rests only on two companies from different countries, Russia and Ukraine, thus making generalizations impossible. Nevertheless, these countries were chosen for a specific reason. The researcher has in-depth knowledge of the countries in question, as well as direct connections with represented companies. These factors will allow for a more in-depth analysis, as the working process will be viewed both from an inside and outside perspective, leading to significant results. Another advantage provided by a small sample size of respondents is that it makes possible the establishment of better contact with each subject, which will help to get a better understanding of all the functioning processes in the companies during the cooperation.

The time frame of the research is limiting in that it affects awareness in analyzing and drawing conclusions of collected information. It is impossible to interview every employee around the world to draw a concrete conclusion on managing intercultural teams globally. However, with the help of an extensive literature review, it will be possible to overcome this limitation, because the data containing information about companies around the globe will be taken into consideration concerning results obtained during the research process for the present paper.

There is a high possibility of encountering the personal limitations of the researcher. Seeing as this researcher's socialization took place in Russia, the fact of being brought up in one of the analyzed cultures enables one to see the differences and similarities of the business world through the prism of current political situations. The process of coming to particular conclusions could be otherwise constrained due to age, personal views, and ways of perceiving the information collected from the literature review and interviews with the employees of chosen organizations. To minimize the effect of personal biases throughout the entire research process, a significant number of publications will be taken into account.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In order to achieve the main objective, central terms will be reviewed in depth. For this purpose, an overview of the scientific background of the research will be provided, accompanied by an in-depth analysis of the related theoretical concepts.

2.1 Intercultural

The main element of this research is understanding culture as a whole and how its features transform from cultural into intercultural throughout the process of integration. In order to gain this knowledge, first, the concept of culture will be presented, including its development, elements, related models, and dimensions. Understanding of culture will make it possible to analyze intercultural with all the elements, including communication, workplace, and mix of cultures in organizations.

2.1.1 Definition of culture

Professor Schein, world-renowned in the field of organizational behavior, defined culture as a combination of differences, including values, beliefs, and behaviors, which will lead to success (1990). Therefore, it is clear that culture consists of knowledge, perception, and communication of a group of people sharing one territory.

According to one study (Lederach, 1995), culture is the knowledge that is created and shared by people in order to respond correctly to society and its realities. In other words, culture means that there is a collective programming of the mind (Hofstede, 1984) that appears during the daily routine of interaction between human beings (Useem & Useem, 1963). Having defined culture, it seems necessary to now give a detailed explanation of cultural dimensions.

In these circumstances, culture begins to be understood as a text, as the process of interpretation of symbols and actions of the «Other» assumes a key role (Geertz, 2000). However, culture cannot be understood as a permanent set of symbols and behavioral attitudes. This statement acquires particular relevance in the context of globalization processes, as dialogue and interaction of different cultures are actively developing (Grossberg, 1999). Therefore, the interaction of cultures cannot be

reduced to binary opposition, in which representatives of different cultures define each other. There are "intermediate spaces," in which a common interpretation is developed to build joint activities and knowledge (Bachmann-Medik, 2016).

Recognition of the existence of intermediate spaces is vital for the application of governance and economics because these exchanges of knowledge and experience between different cultures become the basis for the formation of intercultural teams (Greetz, 1973). It is also necessary to note that culture is human-made, confirmed by others, conventionalized, and passed on for younger people or newcomers to learn. It provides humans with a purposeful context in which to meet, suppose about themselves, and face the outer world (ibid.). Famous American anthologist defined culture as a tool which helps people "communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about attitudes towards life. Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action" (Geertz, 1973, p. 23).

For the activities of intercultural teams, it is essential to consider the key components of culture. In general, ten main aspects can be identified: nationality, ethnic origin, language group, personal communities, shared history, shared artifacts, values, rituals, worldviews, visible symbols (Geertz, 1973)
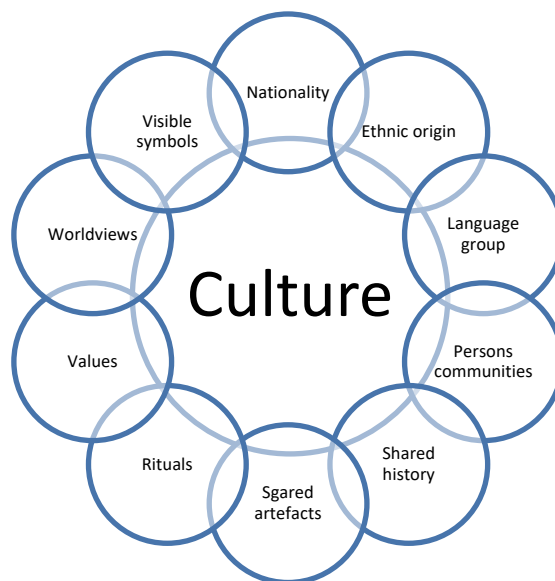
Figure 1. Cultural Dimensions

Adapted from: Geertz, 1973

Nationality. Nationality is relevant to the extent that it is a reflection of a person's belonging to a particular nation (Smith, 1998). It is important to emphasize that nationality expresses not only inclusion in small blood-related groups, but also belonging to some imaginary community (Anderson, 1983), which has its own myths and ontology. National myths and values are mechanisms that mediate social mobilization for concrete action (Calhoun, 1997). Moreover, nationality sets the guidelines for the integration of the individual into different communities in which members of the same nationality work together, including economic interactions, exchanges, etc. (Smith, 1998).

Ethnic origin. Ethnic origin is usually associated with primordial characteristics: language, blood relations, traditions, territory, which bind people into a single community (Smith, 1998). Within such communities, there is a high level of interpersonal trust and understanding. However, in the era of digitalization and globalization, ethnic ties can be maintained through the Internet. On the one hand, it supports the identity of a person in a foreign environment and allows him to maintain a sense of mutual support (Smith, 1991). On the other hand, it may contribute to its isolation from the multicultural environment, which may lead to fragmentation of social development (Song, 2009).

Language group. Language is an essential part of culture, as it facilitates communication between the representatives of the same culture(Jiang, 2000). This is achieved through the use of sustainable language structures, the meanings of which are recognized and shared by the representatives of the same culture: phraseological units, old words, literary expressions, etc. (Jiang, 2000). Language as a means of communication is the foundation of cultural identity, it is possible to change it, but at a slow pace. As a result, the emergence of misunderstanding at the level of language can become a barrier to joint activities in an intercultural environment (Song, 2009). Language produces the tunnel of reality - an individual subconscious prejudice, which consists of linguistic constructions and other symbols. According to the theory of reality tunnels, every person sees the world according to a subconscious set of mental filters formed from his beliefs and experience (Tart, 2001).

Person communities. Man does not exist in an isolated environment; he is integrated into various networks, communities, and groups that shape his personality and include in a collective identity (White, 2008). The concept of culture also implies the incorporation of its representatives into sustainable communities: ethnic communities, brotherhoods, visits to events of compatriots, etc. form and maintain interpersonal trust among members of the same culture, and allow to be within an environment with shared values and symbols (Wenger, 1998). Consequently, the lack of links between communities or their marginal isolation, together with the absorption of the individual, constitutes a barrier to intercultural communication (ibid.).

Shared history. Shared history is a component of culture because it includes conventional images based on which collective identity and self-understanding of the individual are built (Goody, 1986). First of all, shared history is the events that a person perceives most acutely, and on the basis of which he understands the past (Goody, 1986). Secondly, a shared story is heroes who act as role models and set behaviors perceived in a given culture as proper (Assmann, 2012). Thirdly, shared culture is a set of historical myths that have the property of relevance even in the present time, so they function as optics of the analysis of the surrounding reality (Halbwachs, 1992).

Shared artifacts. Another important concept of cultural studies is the artifact of culture, which can be any artificially created object having symbolic significance (Laurence, 2008). Artifacts of culture can include people's objects, things, as well as phenomena of the spiritual life of society: scientific theories, superstitions, works of art, and folklore. The use of cultural artifacts creates a cultural norm - a pattern of behavior approved by a majority of people belonging to a given culture (Bartlett, 2005). At the same time, cultural artifacts are evidence of belonging to a certain culture, which is expressed in clothing, appearance, various ornaments, etc. (ibid.).

Rituals. Ritual is a strongly stylized and carefully planned set of gestures and words performed by people especially chosen and prepared for this purpose (Turner, 1969). The ritual has symbolic meaning and is based on mythological and archetypal themes, expresses their content symbolically, fully involves a person, and causes him a sense

of sublime meaning and, at the same time, based on perceptions consistent with the spirit of the times (Turner, 1969). Rituals reflect the cosmology of a particular culture (Talal, 1993); therefore, they are aimed at consolidating and reproducing collective experience through the repetition of specific actions and procedures (Bell, 1997).

Values. Values are particular criteria that allow an individual, group or society to determine what is important and what is not, what is useful, what is harmful, what is good and what is evil (Schwartz, 1999). Values act as desirable, preferred for a given social subject; serve as a criterion for assessing the phenomenon; define the meaning of targeted action; regulate social interactions; motivate people, inwardly motivating them to work, orient individuals in the surrounding world (Clyne, 1996).

Worldviews. Worldviews - a system of views, estimates and figurative ideas about the world and the place of man in it, the general attitude of man to the surrounding reality and himself, as well as conditioned by these views basic life positions of people, their beliefs, ideals, principles of knowledge and activity, value orientations (Matsumoto, 2006). The worldview gives human activity an organized, meaningful, and purposeful character (ibid.).

Visible symbols. Visual symbols are attributes by which a person belongs to a certain culture is determined (Murray, 1983). These symbols include national clothes, jewelry, tattoos, certain aspects of gestures, and external behavior (Murray, 1983). External symbols are important because they reflect the attitudes adopted in a given culture and maintain cultural identity in a heterogeneous environment (Schudson, 1989).

Moreover, it is possible to develop a model of culture. This model includes three layers, which are the outer layer, the middle layer, and the core.
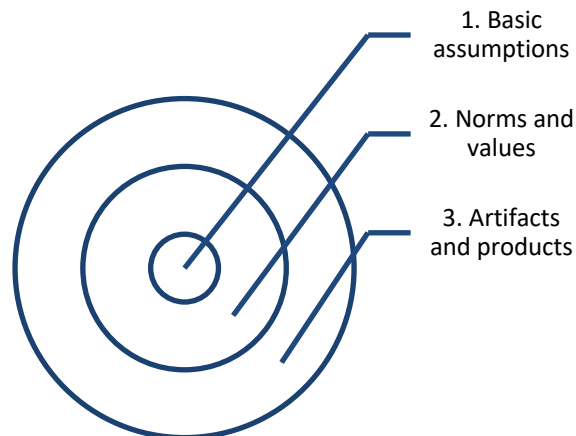
Figure 2. Model of culture

Adapted from: Trompenaars, 1993

1. **The outer layer** is clearly defined as belonging to a particular culture, which includes the observed reality of language, food, buildings, houses, monuments, agriculture, shrines, markets, fashion, and art. Different prejudices and stereotypes begin to emerge at this level.

Source: Trompenaars, 1993

2. **The middle layer** covers key norms and values. These norms and values reflect and promote a group's mutual understanding of what is "right" and "wrong." Norms can be developed at the formal level as written laws, and at the informal level as social control. On the other hand, values define "good and bad" and are therefore closely linked to the ideals shared by a group. While norms, consciously or subconsciously, give us the feeling of "this is how I normally should behave," values give us the feeling of "this is how I aspire or want to behave."

Source: Trompenaars, 1993

3. **The core** is the resources for self-organization in the face of danger or problem. Historically and now, we are witnessing how civilizations struggle with nature every day: each of them is organized to find ways to deal with their environment, taking into account the resources available to them. Such continuous problems are eventually solved automatically. "Culture" comes from the same root as the verb "cultivate," which means to the ground: how people act on nature. Groups of people are

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organized in such a way as to improve the effectiveness of problem-solving processes. As different groups of people developed in different geographical regions, they also formed different sets of logical assumptions. We see that any given organizational culture or functional culture is nothing but a way of organizing groups over the years to address their problems and challenges. Cultural changes happen because people realize that some old ways of doing things no longer work. It is easy to change culture when people realize that the survival of a community where survival is considered desirable is at stake.

Source: Trompenaars, 1993

Another model of cultural analysis is the Onion Model. This model was developed by G. Hofstede and is based on four circles that each culture contains (Walsh Kefi, 2002). The first is the outer circle - visual symbols observed by others (clothing, speech constructions, manners), the second circle - persons acting as role models and behaviors (heroes), the third - rituals that capture repetitive behavior and consolidate it in the collective experience of members of the same culture. The last circle - values and fundamental ontology, represents the correct and wrong. (Walsh Kefi, 2002).
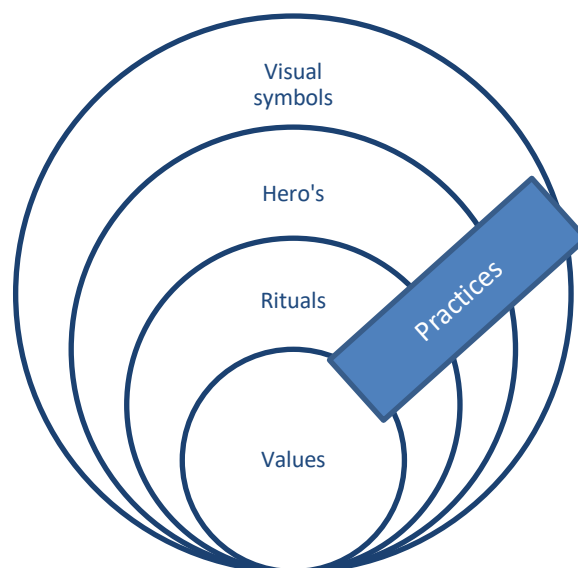
Figure 3. Onion Model

Adapted from: Walsh Kefi, 2002

This model illustrates similar conclusions to the cultural layer model, accurately that different elements are recorded at different levels of culture, each of which affects

human behavior (Masumi, 2009). In general terms, the fundamental values of the near circle are expressed in rituals, which in turn are expressed in role-playing patterns and external symbols (Masumi, 2009).

Another classic model of cultural analysis is the Iceberg model that reflects the complexity of culture, which inevitably influences the structure and intensity of intercultural communication (Hines, 2010). This model underlines two layers of culture. The upper layer of the iceberg consists of visible characteristics, on the basis of which conclusions can be drawn about a person's belonging to a particular culture. For instance, in figure 4, there are examples of what the upper layer consists of, namely, food, music, literature, etc. (Hines, 2010).
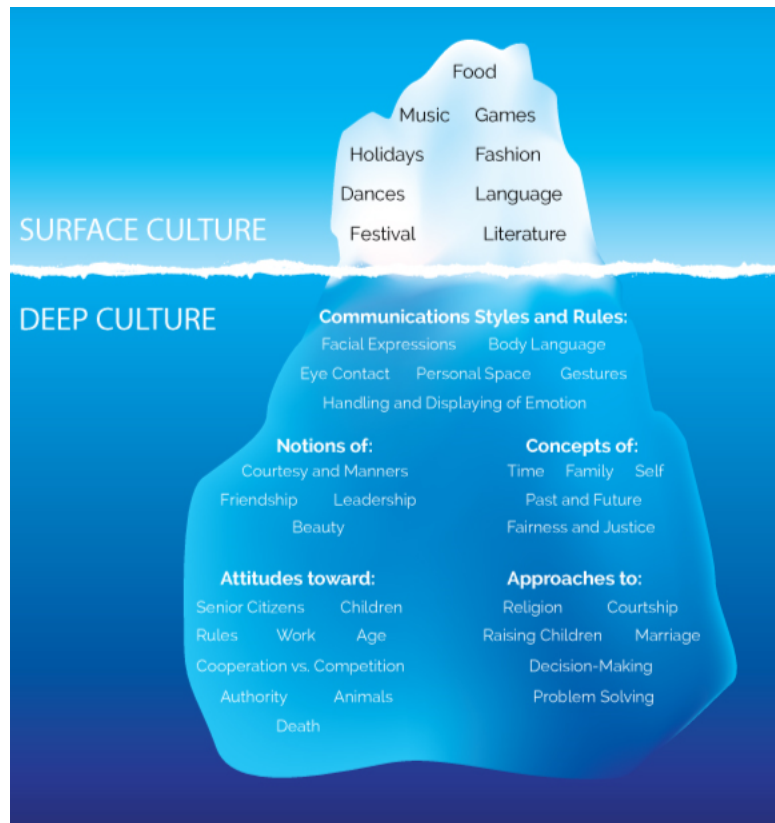
Figure 4. Iceberg Model

Adapted from: Hines, 2010

The lower layer of the iceberg contains the fundamental values and ontology of each culture, which are formed on the basis of historical experience and heritage. (Ford, 2004). This layer includes communication styles, notions, concepts, attitudes, and

approaches (ibid.). The lower layer also reflects mentality, the overriding principles, and the philosophy of culture: these factors determine the course of human behavior in different situations (Ford, 2004). The content of the lower part of the iceberg usually remains invisible to the external observer, which determines the duration of adaptation in the conditions of permanent intercultural communications (Neus, 2005).

2.1.2   The basis of cultural differences

In each culture, it is necessary to solve a limited number of common, universal problems (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). One culture can be distinguished from another specific solution it chooses for these problems. Anthropologists F. Kluckhohn and F.L. Strodtbeck identify five categories of problems, arguing that all societies are aware of all possible solutions, but prefer them in different categories (1961). Hence, in any culture, there is a set of "dominant" or preferred value orientations. As a consequence, all cultures are similar in the dilemmas they face but differ in solutions that they find that creatively surpass opposites. The critical questions in each culture are:

1. What is the attitude of an individual to others? (relational orientation)

2. What is the temporary orientation of human life? (time orientation)

3. What is the modality of human activity? (orientation)

4. What is the relation of man to nature? (man-nature orientation)

5. What is the nature of innate human nature? (orientation to human nature)

Source: Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961

As a result, one culture can be distinguished from another by organizing specific solutions that it chooses for each set of problem situations (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). Decisions depend on the importance that people attach to life in general and to their comrades, time, and nature in particular (ibid.). The universal values that underlie culture are anthropogenic, included in people within a culture, but superior

to people in that culture. In other words, the universal values of a group are inside them and force them to interpret things in a certain way, but they are also open to change if the group wants more efficient "solutions" problems of survival (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961).

All problems can be displayed in 3 headings: relationships with people, attitude to time, and attitude to the environment (Parsons, 1951). On this basis, relationships with people can be expressed via five orientations covering how human beings deal with each other (ibid.). It is possible to implement Parsons's five relational orientations as a starting point (Parsons, 1951).

Universalism vs Particularism	•Universalism: good and right always defined and applied. Particularism: obligations to the relationships
Individualism vs Communitarianism	•See yourself as a individual or a group , contributing to the community as they wish or want community asks for
Neutral vs Emotional	•Be objective or express through the emotions
Achievement vs Ascription	•Achievement: being judged on what you have recently accomplished and on your record. Ascription: status is attributed to you, by birth, kinship, gender or age, but also your educational record
Specific vs Diffuse	•When the whole person is involved in a business relationship there is a real and personal contact, instead of the specific relationship prescribed by a contract.

Figure 5. Parsons's Five Relational Orientations

Source: Parson,1951

The attitude to time includes both the attitude to the past and the reflection upon the present and the future (Parsons, 1951). It is necessary to emphasize that in some

societies, what somebody has achieved in the past is less important than knowing what they are planning for the future (ibid.) In other societies, one can make more of an impression with past accomplishments than present ones. These are cultural differences that have a significant impact on corporate activities (Parsons, 1951).

The other aspect is the attitudes to the environment (Parsons, 1951). Some cultures believe that the powers affecting their lives and the origin of vice and virtue reside within the individual (ibid.). Here motivation and values come from within. Other cultures believe external forces more powerful than human beings, seeing nature as something that should be feared or emulated (Parsons, 1951).

As it was mentioned before, culture is a universal term. Accordingly, there exist different types of culture:
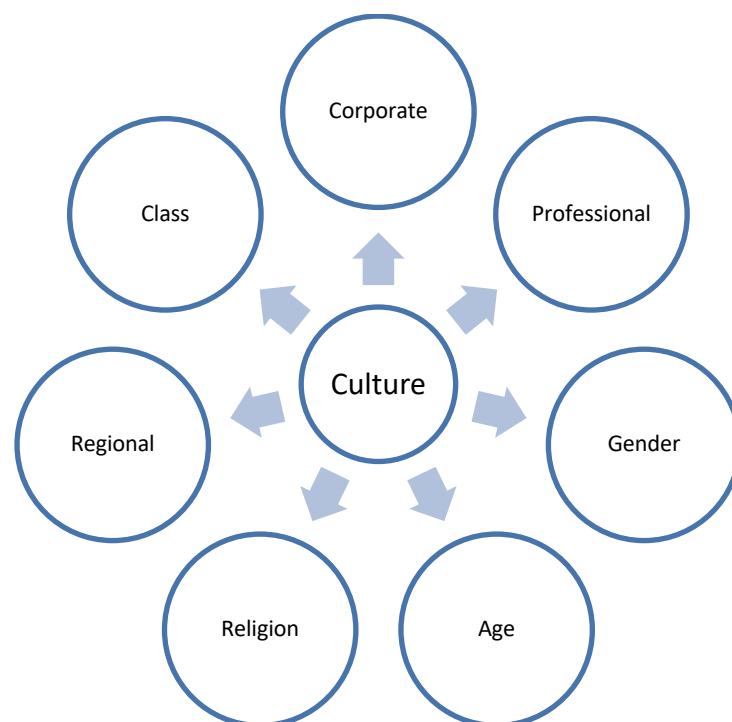
Figure 6. Types of Culture

Adapted from: Trompenaars, 1993

- **Corporate culture** (for example, the culture of Microsoft) - a set of behaviors acquired by the organization in the process of adaptation to the external

environment and internal integration, which have proved to be effective and shared by the majority of the members of the organization;

- **Professional culture** (for example, the culture of lawyers or doctors) is a universal system of professional knowledge and values, which are adopted in a particular professional field and regulate professional relations;

- **Gender** (the different cultures of men and women) is a system of attitudes, principles and behavior matrices that form socio-cultural aspects of gender (gender roles, gender relations, gender stereotypes);

- **Age** (the different cultures of young, middle-aged, and older people) is a system of behavior and perceptions of the world based on experience and age;

- **Religious culture** (for example, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam) - a set of methods and techniques available in religion, which are realized in religious activities and presented in its products bearing religious values;

- **Regional culture** (for example, Northern and Southern Italy) is a culture based on historical, literary, linguistic and other features of a particular territory;

- **Class culture** (working class, middle class, and upper class) - a set of patterns of thinking and behavior based on the position of the individual or social group in the structure of employment and wealth distribution.

Source: Trompenaars, 1993

However, distinguishing different cultural formulas and distinguishing different types of cultures does not meet the requirement of creating sustainable explanatory models. It is necessary to consider the most common and useful models of analysis of culture adopted in modern science in the following parts of the work (Trompenaars, 1993).

2.1.3 Cultural dimensions

Dutch social psychologist and engineer G. Hofstede analyzed data from IBM employees in the late 1960s and early 1970s (2011). The database consists of employees working in 72 national subsidiaries of the company, who followed 38 different professions and spoke 20 languages (ibid.) More than 116,000 questionnaires were generated, each containing more than 100 questions (ibid.).

Hofstede published his findings in 1980 in a work called Culture's Consequences, which had a considerable impact on the further development of this research area (2011).

The theory of cultural dimensions developed by Geert Hofstede is the approach used to understand cultural differences between countries and to define ways of doing business in different countries' cultures (Hofstede, 2011). Hofstede (2011) defines cultural dimensions that are applicable worldwide and are reflected in all aspects of life, including family life, child-rearing practices, education, employment, and health care. His model describes the influence of culture on the values of its members, and how these values relate to behavior, using a structure derived from factor analysis (ibid.).

There are six internationally recognized cultural dimensions, on every one of which countries can be scored on a scale of 0 – 100 (Hofstede, 2011).
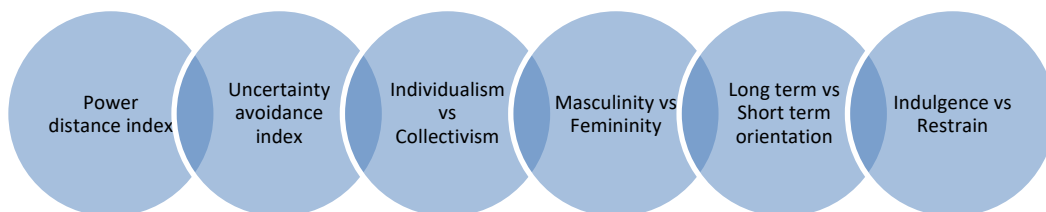
Figure 7. Cultural Dimensions

Adapted from: Hofstede, 2011

Power distance index. Chen and Starosta stated that "the dimension of power distance specifies to what extent a culture adapts to inequalities of power distribution in relationships and organizations" (Chen & Starosta, 2005, p.52). Inequality is closely related to power, and each country experiences it but to different degrees (Hofstede, 2011). According to this dimension, a high power distance index indicates that inequality and power differences are acceptable for a given culture, which demonstrates high respect for rank and authority and encourages bureaucracy (ibid.).

On the contrary, a low power distance index shows that such a culture encourages organizational structures and decisions that focus on the distribution of power, decentralized decision-making, and participatory management styles (Hofstede, 2011).

Uncertainty avoidance index. This dimension helps to measure the degree to which a culture is accepting of controversial events and can overcome future uncertainty (Chen & Starosta, 2005). In other words, how comfortable or uncomfortable members of a culture feel in unfamiliar circumstances (Hofstede, 2011). Accordingly, a high uncertainty avoidance index intimates disapproval of risks and uncertainties. Traditionally, the fear of the unknown is minimized by strict rules, customs, etc. At the same time, a low score in this dimension means that such cultures are accepting of risk and uncertainty. The openness to uncertainty is taken for granted and necessary for development (Chen & Starosta, 2005).

Individualism vs. Collectivism. Here the focus is on admiring and admitting individuals' achievements and encouraging and supporting self-reliance in thinking and acting (Arasaratnam, 2011). In other words, this dimension considers the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups and their perceived obligation and dependence on groups. Therefore, a high level of individualism shows that more attention is given to achieving personal goals and self-realization. The self-image of a person in this category is defined as "I" (Arasaratnam, 2011). On the contrary, a high level of collectivism (or low individualism) indicates that, in a given culture, the group's goals and well-being prevail over the interests of the individual. For this reason, the self-image of a person in this category is defined as "We" (Arasaratnam, 2011).

Masculinity vs. Femininity. Chen and Starosta (2005) describe this dimension as "the extent to which stereotypically masculine and feminine traits prevail in the culture." Mainly masculine cultures are represented, among others, by Australia and the U.K., while Denmark, Portugal, Thailand are considered feminine (Chen & Starosta, 2005). This index is also referred to as a "tough versus tender" opposition. It takes into account societal preferences for achieving gender equality, identifies attitudes towards sexuality, etc. In this context, masculinity implies strong gender roles,

assertiveness in action, focus on real purposes, and the promotion of well-being (ibid.). For femininity, typical characteristics include flexible and changeable gender roles, modesty, educational and caring qualities (Chen & Starosta, 2005).

Long term orientation vs. short term orientation. This dimension is used to measure a culture's preference towards planning to achieve a bigger goal in the future, rather than looking for immediate satisfaction (Dainton & Zelley, 2011). Summarizing, we can say that this index considers the extent to which society views its temporal horizon. Long-term orientation indicates that a culture aims to achieve well-being in the future and thinks success in the short term impossible (Dainton & Zelley, 2011). Long-term orientation, therefore, emphasizes perseverance and long-term growth (ibid.). On the contrary, short-term orientation points to the importance of the near future. It, therefore, implies short-term success and places greater emphasis on the present than the future. Short-term orientation gives priority to quick results and respect for traditions (Dainton & Zelley, 2011).

Indulgence vs. restraint. Hofstede associated this dimension with "a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun" (Hofstede, 2011, p.15). This index considers indicators such as the readiness of society to fulfill its wishes. Therefore, the key characteristics are the ability of a society to control its impulses and desires (Hofstede, 2011). The indulgence end indicates that a society recognizes the relatively free satisfaction associated with enjoying life and resting (ibid.). At the same time, restraint indicates that a culture suppresses the satisfaction of needs and regulates it through social norms (Hofstede, 2011).

In a research context, cultural dimensions are instrumental in understanding and analyzing the effects of culture on different areas of human activity and thought, including business management (Fink & Meierewert, 2004). However, many aspects of Hofstede's theory have come under criticism over the years. McSweeney (2002) stated that the differentiation of cultures along these dimensions was driven only by national differences, while it is equally crucial to consider organizational and sub-cultural ones. He questions the presence of interaction between different cultural

levels in this model (McSweeney, 2002). Another critic includes the inappropriateness of using the same scoring techniques of cultures for more than 30 years without changes, as culture is dynamic, and its changes have to be investigated regularly (McCoy, 2003).

Globalization is the primary reason for such re-examinations, as it influences the expansion of geographical links between products, markets, firms. Production and distribution continue to increase; more products are becoming available in a growing number of countries. According to Papaconstantinou, G. (1995), this factor affects the corrosion of traditional cultural differences and mediates cultural exchange.

Another aspect of globalization that further discredits Hofstede's model is the development of technology (Papaconstantinou, 1995).New technologies (Internet, social media, e-mail) help to overcome barriers of distance, language, and culture. New channels of cultural exchange are emerging that create new experiences for the individual and influence cultural values changes (Papaconstantinou, 1995).

The second reason is the new generation of sample countries. Many countries emerged after 1973 and were not taken into account in Hofstede's original study (McSweeney, 2002).Over the past thirty years, this new generation has become the primary source of labor force and reflects the changes that have taken place in society. Moreover, Hofstede's works were based on studies carried out between 1967 and 1973 (Hofstede, 2011). During this period, the economic and political situation in most of the countries mentioned in his studies was much different from today's (Papaconstantinou, 1995).

The education system can also be seen as a factor influencing the cultural and behavioral changes (Papaconstantinou, 1995). Globalization affects education by changing the roles of students and teachers and leading to the transition of society from the industrial order to the age of information (ibid.). These changes affect the emergence of new social structures and the form of cultural imperialism (Papaconstantinou, 1995).

Furthermore, many commentators, including Peltro (1968), Triandis (1990), name the lack of theoretical support and a small number of questionnaire items in Hofstede's work (Jackson, 2002). These commentators believe that there is a weakness in the argumentation and findings in each of the dimensions due to the issues mentioned above (Jackson, 2002).

To sum up, despite the success of Hofstede's model, his findings are not without fault Hofstede's conclusions were drawn from working with one IBM company, to begin with, and his informants worked only within the industry of information technology (Papaconstantinou, 1995). Further, Hofstede's methodology is equally not without limitations. Its fault is that the method of questioning is not valid. The McSweeney Report (2002) states that the survey was managed and held accountable by IBM. Moreover, some questionnaires were completed in teams rather than individually. McSweeney (2002) pointed out that while the conclusions were extended to 66 countries, definitive data and results were obtained from only 40 countries. The IBM survey suggests that the samples of this study are not homogeneous.

2.1.4 Definition of intercultural

The term "intercultural" often refers to attitudes or interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds (Lustig & Koester, 2006). It can be expanded to understand how culture affects these people's behavior and worldview (Lustig & Koester, 2006). At the same time, it is essential to distinguish between intercultural, multicultural, cross-cultural.

Multiculturalism refers to a society composed of several cultural or ethnic groups. People may live side by side with each other, but that does not necessarily mean that distinct cultural groups interact (Guilherme & Dietz, 2015). In intercultural communication, differences are understood and recognized and can lead to personal change, but not collective change. In intercultural societies, one culture is often regarded as the "norm," and all other cultures are compared or opposed to the dominant culture.

Regarding multiculturalism and cross-cultural interactions, the term intercultural describes communities where there is a deep understanding of and respect for all

cultures. Intercultural communication focuses on the mutual exchange of ideas and cultural norms and the development of deep relationships (Marotta, 2014). In an intercultural society, no one is left unfulfilled because everyone learns from others and builds together (Marotta, 2014).

Once a sound theory was put forth, the Multicultural Sensitivity Development Model (DMIS) codified observations of people who become more competent intercultural communicators in both academic and corporate contexts (Bennett, 2017). The idea was to observe the sequence of acquisition of competences and then apply a holistic theoretical structure that could explain this development as moving through different stages (ibid.). The term "stage" refers to successive positions along the continuum rather than discrete conditions. With this theory, it would be possible to determine where individuals can be placed along the continuum and facilitate progress in terms of the theoretical structure (Bennett, 2017).

Bennett stated that the transition from communicative competence in one's culture to communicative competence between cultures is a crucial concept of DMIS (2017). It assumes that comprehensive solutions, on the other hand, are not a natural or historically significant part of the adaptive strategy of any culture. This perception is inadequate for active communication with cultural outsiders, as it incorrectly unites people of different cultures and does not allow meaningful consideration of their unique views (Bennett, 2017). The movement along the continuum from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism is carried out by developing categories for an alien so that ultimately the perception (and hence the experience) of cultural differences is as complex as pivotal events in their culture (ibid.). This ability to have more complex personal experiences with otherness is called intercultural sensitivity. Intercultural communicative competence is the molding of intercultural sensitivity into behavior that coordinates meaning in different cultural contexts with more or less the same ease as within an individual's own culture. Notable behavioral forms of intercultural sensitivity are empathy (generation of appropriate behavior in alternative contexts) and meta-coordination ("third culture" contexts, which generate the value of cultural diversity) (Bennett, 2017).

The stages (positions) of DMIS are interpreted both in terms of the basic structures of perception in relation to the Other and in terms of specific "questions" relating to

cultural differences that are generally related to each of the phases (Bennett, 2017). The names of the stages refer to the problems, while the description of each phase's experience refers to its perceptive structure (ibid.). The first three stages of denial, projection, and minimization are ethnocentric; they refer to issues related to the experience of one's own culture as more "central to reality" (Bennett, 2017). The last three stages of acceptance, adaptation, and integration are ethnorelative; they deal with issues related to the experience of all cultures as alternative ways of organizing reality (ibid.). Moving through stages is not a certainty; it depends on the need to become more competent in communication outside the mainstream social context (Bennett, 2017). When such a need arises, it is addressed by creating more complex patterns of perception that can address increasingly complex issues related to cultural differences (Bennett, 2017).

DMIS is a model of a common culture; when more complex perception structures are created for any culture, they apply to all cultures. Moreover, the stages can be compared according to common characteristics (Bennett, 2017).
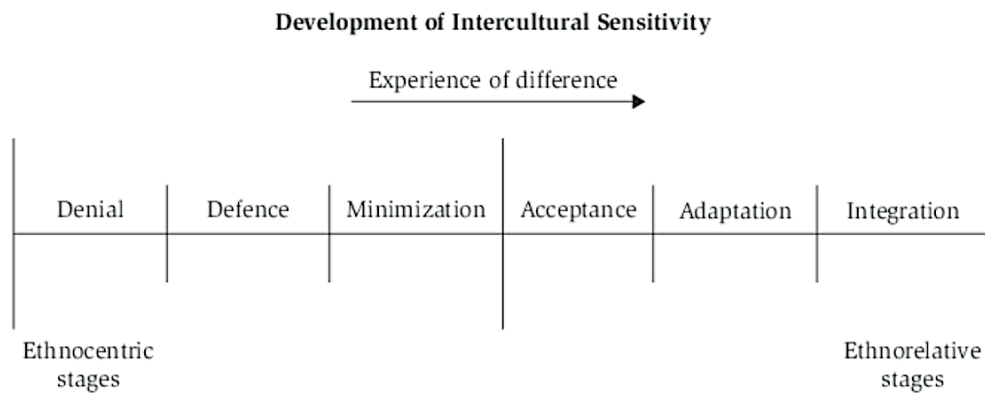
Figure 8. Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Source: Bennet, 2017

Denial: The starting point of DMIS is the denial of cultural differences — a lack of understanding of the existence or significance of other cultural differences. Categories of perception are not sufficiently developed to discriminate between different types of other persons who may be vaguely perceived as "aliens" or "minorities" or not perceived at all. Some people feel more "real" than others, even to the point that others may not seem entirely human. Individuals at this stage are not interested or

perhaps even hostile to intercultural communication. In organizations, a waiver is a condition where there are no structures (policies and procedures) to recognize and address cultural diversity. The problem arises when people who prefer stability (the same) are forced by some circumstances to recognize others (the difference).

Source: Bennet, 2017

Defense: In a situation where the resolution of problems of the previous stage creates opportunities for this, people can move on to a sense of protection against cultural differences. The perceptual structure of this stage is a dichotomy, the categorization of "us" and "them," where others are perceived more comprehensively than in denial but in very conventional forms. People at this stage tend to criticize other cultures and blame cultural differences for the common ills of society; they see "us" as superior and "them" as inferior. At the defense stage, people switch the poles so that "they" are superior, and "us" are inferior. The inner contradiction arises when "us" and "they" are forced to come into contact. Greater visibility and exaggerated stereotypes of others generate threat experiences, fueling, exclusive membership, and other segregationist strategies.

Source: Bennet, 2017

Minimization: The solution to the problem of "us" vs. "them" allows individuals to move to a stage of minimization of cultural differences. At this stage, cultural differences that were originally defense led are now minimized in favor of supposedly more significant similarities between individuals from one culture and those from another. These similarities are based on familiar elements of their cultural outlook and values. People assume that others share their own experiences, or that certain core values and beliefs transcend cultural boundaries and apply to all (regardless of whether they know it or not). Similarity generates "tolerance" in which more significant cultural differences are perceived as variations of common universal themes of humanity. However, minimization obscures profound cultural differences for both individuals and organizations. The problem of minimization for people is their desire to project similarities onto a broader world, and the stubborn resistance of this world to lose this difference means that the more people seek contact with others in

the name of shared values, the more likely they will be forced to confront significant differences.

<div align="right">Source: Bennet, 2017</div>

Acceptance: Leaving the ethnocentric state of minimization allows people to organize cultural differences into categories that are about as complex as their own. Thus, people are aware of themselves and others in cultural contexts that are equal in complexity but differ in form. Keeping in mind that acceptance of cultural differences does not mean approval — cultural differences can be experienced negatively, but the judgment is not ethnocentric in the sense that it is not automatically based on deviation from one's own cultural position. The stage of acceptance is the need to reconcile cultural relativity with ethics. People at this stage want to respect other cultures, so they can take a naive and paralytic stance: "It is not bad or good, it is just different." However, any conduct requires judgment, and the requirement is to end the fundamentals of judgment, which are not ethnocentric either in defense or minimization.

<div align="right">Source: Bennet, 2017</div>

Adaptation: Addressing the issue of ethics makes it possible to move towards adaptation to cultural differences. This stage is associated with the creation of a perceptive mechanism - it is a "forward-looking approach" or empathy. This kind of context bias is supposedly provided by a neurological executive function that allows an individual to experience the world "as if" one was involved in another culture. This imaginary participation generates a "sense of appropriateness" that guide the generation of authentic behavior into an alternative culture. The critical issue of adaptation is the authenticity of feelings and behavior. If people can be among several cultural contexts, in which contexts do their authentic personalities live? The solution to this problem is to extend the definition of identity to a broader range of events, which may contain a more extensive set of ways of being in the world. At the organizational level, adaptation is the essence of "integrating" both global and internal diversity into organizational processes.

<div align="right">Source: Bennet, 2017</div>

Integration: The final level of cultural sensitivity, which is not achieved often. People at this level maintain a marginal self-identity and can help others with understanding different cultures.

Source: Bennet, 2017

The study of intercultural communication is closely connected with the formation and development of intercultural competences. Intercultural competence is the proper and effective management of the interaction between people who have an affective, cognitive, and behavioral orientation towards the world (Spitzberg, 1989). These guidelines are most often expressed in normative categories such as nationality, race, ethnicity, tribe, religion, or region. Thus, intercultural interaction is, to no small extent, tantamount to cross-group interaction (Bennett, 2017). However, it is essential to note that it is not groups but individuals who interact (Spitzberg, 1989). The extent to which individuals exhibit or are inspired by aspects of their group or cultural affiliation and characteristics is what makes interaction an intercultural process (Spitzberg, 1989).

Howard Hamilton, Richardson, and Shuford (1998) give a relatively typical parallel list of competency components. In the relationship component (i.e., motivation), interculturally competent managers are expected to assess their own group, the fundamental equality of groups, the risk, and the role of intercultural interactions as a quality of life (Hamilton et al. 1998). Such values complement knowledge. Competence includes understanding cultural identity, group boundaries, and history of oppression, and the impact of cultural differences on communication processes. Such motivation and knowledge would be compatible with the necessary skills of self-thinking, articulating differences, analyzing perspectives, vigorously challenging discriminatory practices, and interculturalism as a whole (Hamilton et al. 1998). Such composite models and measures aimed at practical application often represent several levels of abstraction in an ad hoc manner (Spitzberg, 2007).

Thus, "challenging discriminatory acts" is a much more specific and narrow range of actions than participating in self-reflection (Spitzberg, 2007). Also, composite models and their measures often erroneously accept what constitutes an internal affective or cognitive factor, as opposed to a behavioral factor (i.e., skill) (ibid.). Thus, participation

in "self-reflection" and "acceptance of multiple points of view" may be internal information processing activities and do not have apparent references in the behavioral sphere (Spitzberg, 2007).

2.1.4 Definition of intercultural communication

The general definition of communication denotes the exchange of meaning, involves sending and receiving information between the sender and the recipient (Gibson, 2015). Different channels and methods mediate communication (ibid.). First of all, depending on whether words or gestures are used, communication can be verbal or non-verbal (Gibson, 2015). The message received may be different from the message sent. The idea or feeling of the sender is put in characters, encoded in a message that is transmitted through the channel to the recipient (ibid.). A channel is the medium used for communication (for example, recording) (Gibson, 2015). The message is interpreted (decoded) by the recipient, that is, the one who responds. Context is the environment in which communication occurs. Noise here means anything that distorts the message (Gibson, 2015).
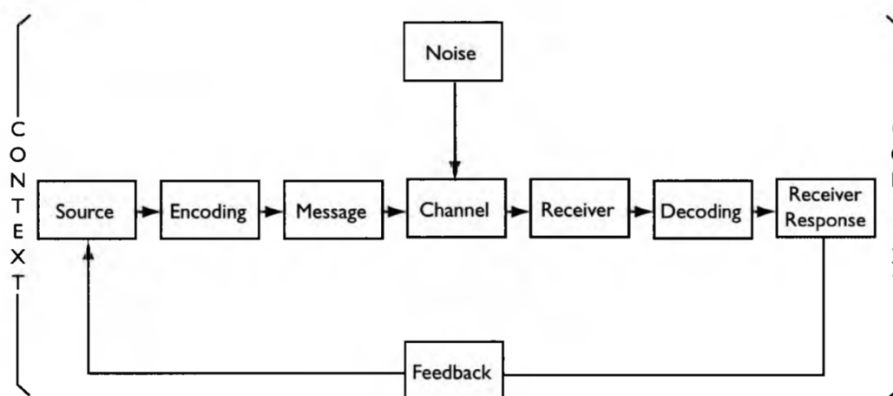
Figure 9. Communication Model

Source: Gibson, 2015

Gibson states that many problems of intercultural communication arise from differences between affective and neutral approaches (2015). Communication is, of course, the exchange of information, be it words, ideas, or emotions (Gibson, 2015). Information, in turn, is the carrier of meaning (ibid.). Communication is possible only between people who share a system of meanings, so here we return to our basic

definition of culture (Gibson, 2015). Deardorff and Bok list tools — language, body language — and include messaging and ideas into their definition (Deardorff & Bok, 2009).

Verbal communication is the exchange of information and semantic meaning, an interaction between people that occurs through speech, natural language (Deardorff & Bok, 2009). Through verbal communication, the encoding and decoding of information (messages, meaning) is carried out: in the process of speaking, the sender encodes, and the recipient decodes this information in the process of hearing (ibid.).

It should be acknowledged that verbal communication is always complemented by other factors such as rhythm and timbre (Deardorff & Bok, 2009). However, the interpretation process always runs through the use of specific words and phrases that make up the core of the message. Regardless of rhythm, tempo, or humor, this must be taken into account (ibid.)

Another intercultural problem arises because of the tone of voice. There are typical patterns for Anglo-Saxon, Latin, and Oriental languages (Deardorff & Bok, 2009). For some societies, sharp ups and downs in speech suggest that the speaker is not taking the discussion seriously (ibid.). However, in most Latin American societies, this "exaggerated" way of communication demonstrates that the speaker is interested in discussing the issue at hand (Deardorff & Bok, 2009).Eastern societies tend to have a much more monotonous, self-controlled style that shows respect for others (ibid.). Often, the higher the position of a person, the lower and flatter their voice (Deardorff & Bok, 2009).

Figure 10. Tone of Verbal Communication

Source: Deardorff & Bok, 2009

Non-verbal communication (body language) is an interaction that takes place without using words, that is, without speech and language means represented directly or by any sign form (Jiang, 2000). The instrument of this "communication" becomes the human body, which has a wide range of means and means of transmitting or exchanging information, which includes all forms of human self-expression (ibid.). A standard synonym for nonverbal communication is "body language" (transmitting information to others or influencing them through images, intonation, gestures, facial expressions) (Jiang, 2000). Psychologists believe that the correct interpretation of non-verbal signals is essential for effective communication: research has shown that at least 75% of all communication is non-verbal (Jiang, 2000).

Knowledge of sign language and body movements allows not only to understand the interlocutor better but also to anticipate what impression the speaker will make upon them before their turn to speak (Bartlett, 2005). Such an unspoken language can warn whether behavior needs to be changed or something else has to be done to achieve the desired result (ibid.). However, non-verbal communication also has its characteristics and is context-dependent (Bartlett, 2005). For example, knowing if touching other people is permissible, how much space a person should be given, and assumptions about privacy are all further manifestations of affective or neutral

culture. In some contexts touching a woman may be regarded as sexual harassment or may be prohibited in certain cultures (e.g., Arab) (Jiang, 2000).

It is also important to analyze the difference between cultures in communication. For example, Edward T. (1959), an American anthropologist, made a distinction between high- and low-context cultures and how *context* affects communication. A high-context culture relies heavily on context and less so on explicit signs (words or messages) (Edward, 1959). Examples of cultures that engage in this type of communication are China, Spain, Japan, Saudi Arabia (Edward, 1959). In low-context cultures, most information is contained in explicit codes or speech. "Germany, Sweden, and the United States are cultures that engage in low-context communication" (Moran & Youngdahl, 2008, p. 26).
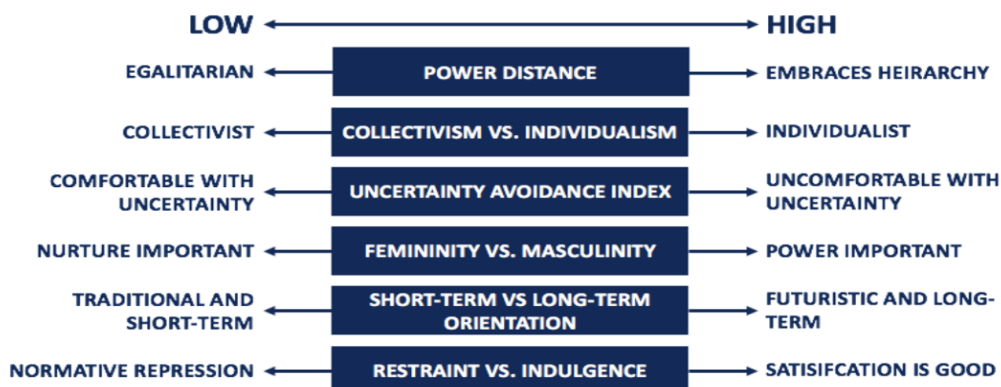
Figure 11. Context Cultures

Source: Moran & Youngdahl, 2008

Moreover, there are numerous other barriers to international communication, including stereotypes, misinterpretation (Moran & Youngdahl, 2008). A stereotype can be defined as a fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but that which is not valid. It is recognized that generalizations and categories are necessary, but when they are too rigid, they can be an obstacle for an adequate interpretation of a situation (ibid.). However, in intercultural communication, in particular, it is vital to distinguish between what is part of the cultural heritage of a person and what is part of their personality (Moran & Youngdahl, 2008). Hofstede (2011) uses the pyramid model to illustrate "three levels of

uniqueness in human mental programming". Each person is somewhat similar to all other people but is different in other ways (Hofstede, 2011). Some thoughts and actions occur to us because we are human: we want to sleep, eat, and survive (ibid.). These are universal and inherited characteristics (Hofstede, 2011). Our culture dictates other ideas: it can determine, for example, when we eat and sleep, and how much we try to survive (Gibson, 2015). These are characteristics that are specific to a particular group of people and can be studied. Individual personalities equally influence some actions and thoughts (ibid.). These characteristics are specific to us as individuals, and they are both inherited and assimilated. When trying to understand human behavior, it is imperative to consider all three of these levels (Gibson, 2015).

Another barrier is misinterpretation, a situation where people interpret the same statement in entirely different ways. Gudykunst (1994) suggests three ways of checking our interpretation of the behavior of others:

1. **Perception Check.** The purpose of the perception test is to make sure that our interpretation of another person's behavior is what they intended (Gudykunst, 1994). First, we must describe what we believe the other person was referring to before asking whether that interpretation is correct (ibid.) Even this process is culturally sensitive, and for people belonging to specific cultures, it may be too direct. For example, when communicating with collectivists, it would help to remember that they may be reluctant to answer direct questions (Gudykunst, 1994).

2. **Active listening.** It is necessary to distinguish between two types of listening: hearing as a physical process and listening, which requires more attention and absorbing new information, compared to what has already been learned (Gudykunst, 1994). Active listening is intended to show the dynamics that we are involved in the conversation, trying to understand and understand them better(ibid.).

3. **Providing feedback**. This is a verbal or non-verbal response in the process of communication (Gudykunst, 1994). Of course, feedback methods vary widely depending on culture, but it is often useful to follow these guidelines:

• Be specific.

• Separate the feedback from the person.

• Present the problem as a mutual one.

• Mix negative with positive feedback.

• Provide feedback at an appropriate time.

• Use T-statements wherever possible.

<div align="right">Source: Gibson, 2015</div>

The next barrier is cultural shock (Furnham, 1988). Cultural shock is emotional or physical discomfort, disorientation of the individual caused by entering a different cultural environment, collision with another culture, an unknown place (ibid.). The essence of cultural shock is the conflict of old and new cultural norms and orientations, the old ones inherent to the individual as a representative of the society left behind, and the new ones of the unfamiliar group (Furnham, 1988). Cultural shock is a conflict between two cultures at the level of individual consciousness (Furnham, 1988).

Cultural shock includes several properties, among which the following should be highlighted:

1. the sense of loss of identity and deprivation of identity in respect of values, status, profession, friends, and ownership;
2. tension of identity as a result of the efforts necessary for the necessary psychological adaptation;
3. rejection of identity by members of the new culture;
4. confusion of identity, especially with regard to ambiguity and inaccuracy of roles;
5. impotence of identity as a result of an inability to cope with this new environment

<div align="right">Source: Furnham, 1988</div>

The following factors influence the advancement of cultural shock consciousness (Furnham, 1988). Individuals with a voluntary motivation to leave a familiar culture and move to a new cultural experience (such as Peace Corps volunteers) tend to be

more successful in coping with their cultural upheaval than people with involuntary motives (e.g., refugees) (Murray, 2006). Thus, the motivation to leave one's own country and culture for a new one has a substantial impact on an individual's sense of cultural upheaval (Murray, 2006).

Personal expectations have long been understood as a decisive factor in the management of cultural shock. Expectations are related to the pre-emptive process and the predictive outcome of the upcoming situation. (Ward et al., 2001). Cultural distance factors may include differences in cultural values, language, verbal styles, non-verbal gestures, learning styles, decision-making styles, and conflicting negotiation styles, as well as religious, socio-political, and economic systems (ibid.). The socio-cultural adjustment refers to the ability to integrate into a new cultural environment and to engage in appropriate and effective interactions (Ward et al., 2001). It may include factors such as the quality or quantity of relations with nationals of the host country and the length of residence in the host country (Ward et al., 2001).

Thus, it is possible to develop the first definition and concept of intercultural communication (Gibson, 2015). Intercultural communication occurs when the sender and the recipient are of different cultures (ibid.). Communication can be very complicated if there is a big difference between the two cultures; if there is too much "cultural noise," it can break down completely (Gibson, 2015).

The knowledge and skills of intercultural communication are necessary to solve problems, resolve conflicts, and create new perceptions at both the global and domestic levels (Bhawuk et al., 2002).

Intercultural communication occurs when factors of belonging to cultural groups (e.g., cultural values) influence our communication process (Schwartz, 1999). Intercultural communication is often referred to as a process of symbolic exchange between representatives of different cultures in their attempts to create common meanings (ibid.). In the process of symbolic exchange, conditional and cultural interpretations are formed (Schwartz, 1999).

Intercultural communication is defined as a process of symbolic exchange in which individuals from two (or more) different cultural communities try to discuss shared

values in an interactive situation within an entrenched social system (Hofstede, 2001). Consequently, we can study the key characteristics of this exchange stated by Clyne (1996):

The first, it is a symbolic exchange that refers to the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols by two or more people to ascertain shared values. Although word symbols represent the digital aspects of our messaging process, non-verbal symbols or signals (i.e., the smallest identifiable unit of communication) such as smiles are similar aspects of our messaging process that relate to the interdependent nature of intercultural meetings. Once two strangers come into contact and try to communicate, they enter into interdependent relationships.

The second, it is important to recognize the transactional nature of intercultural communication, which involves simultaneous encoding (i.e., the sender chooses the right words or gestures for the expression of its intention) and decoding (i.e., the recipient translating words or non-verbal signals into understandable values) of the message exchange.

The third, characteristic relates to the existence of different cultural communities. The cultural community values a group of interacting persons within a limited unit who support a set of shared traditions and lifestyles.

The fourth, characteristic covers the purposes of cultural communication and expresses the negotiation of common meanings. In intercultural negotiations, the desire to convey the message in the most understandable form is paramount.

Source: Clyne, 1996

The flexibility of intercultural communication depends on three components of content — knowledge, attitudes, and skills (Brantz, 1993). Flexible intercultural communication recognizes the importance of integrating knowledge and an open attitude and incorporating that into adaptive and creative practices in everyday and professional communication (ibid.). Inflexible intercultural communication is continuing to use one's own cultural values, judgments, and procedures in communicating with other cultures (Brantz, 1993).

Knowledge here refers to the systematic, conscious study of the main themes and concepts in the context of the flexibility of intercultural communication (Brantz, 1993). Conscious learning can be developed through formal learning (ibid.).

Interpersonal (and intercultural) relationships can include both cognitive and affective layers (Brantz, 1993). The cognitive layer is the willingness to understand our ethnocentric judgments and to be open to the study of intercultural differences (ibid.). The affective layer is an emotional commitment to engaging in a cultural perspective and educating a sensitive heart bypassing cultural affiliation. It also means that we have spent time thinking about our own identity and emotional vulnerability when considering changes in our own affective state (Brantz, 1993).

Skills are our operational ability to integrate knowledge and responsiveness with adaptive intercultural practices (Brantz, 1993). Adaptive communication skills help us communicate consciously in an intercultural situation (ibid.). Many interaction skills are useful for promoting flexible intercultural communication (ibid.). Some of them, for example, are skills explaining value, careful tracking of skills, attentive listening (Brantz, 1993).

Communication efficiency can improve task performance (Flamholtz & Randle, 2011). Productivity is closely linked to the resulting factors, such as the emergence of new ideas, new plans, new impulses, and creative directions in solving intercultural problems at hand (Flamholtz & Randle, 2011).

The adjective "intercultural" means "derived from different cultures," therefore intercultural communication can be seen as communication across more than one cultural border, or when people with different cultural backgrounds communicate with each other (Pate & Siraj, 2015). One study claimed that "communication is the vehicle for influencing others, getting things done, breaking down barriers […] and the tool used to share your reality and explore the reality of others" (Halverson, 2008, p.14), therefore it is the only way of understanding other cultures. During intercultural communication, there is a higher possibility of appearance issues related to understanding and finding a common language with people from different backgrounds (Kegeyan, 2016). The type of communication discussed above is an

essential component of the intercultural workplace, and in order to prove this statement, we must characterize the intercultural workplace itself (Kegeyan, 2016).

2.1.5 Definition of intercultural workplace

Intercultural workplace implies the term "diversity," it being defined by Evans and Suklun as "racial differences, to include sex, political affiliation, cultural affinity, gender identity, religion, and sexual orientation" (Evans & Suklun, 2017, p.12). Therefore, we could claim that an intercultural workplace is a type of workplace where a wide range of diverse demographic backgrounds exist among employees within an organization (Kegeyan, 2016). To ensure a more thorough understanding of this term, it would be useful to discuss its other characteristics and the challenges they pose (Kegeyan, 2016).

The main characteristic of an intercultural workplace is that a diverse workforce is beneficial to any organization (Hudson, 2014). This is due to the stimulation of open-minded thinking and seeing the world from different perspectives, including a better understanding of the global market place (ibid.). Additionally, the sense of equality that prevails in the diverse workplace could be profitable for the organization, if the right management techniques are used in order to prevent issues (Hudson, 2014).

2.1.5.1 Challenges in the intercultural workplace

Understanding and respecting other cultures is essential in culturally diverse working spaces; otherwise, collaboration is likely to be unsuccessful (Kegeyan, 2016). The chance of miscommunication is high; therefore, companies with an intercultural workforce have to implement diversity training throughout their organization's hierarchy, which might be expensive (Hudson, 2014). However, forging a sense of unity among the employees and having a no-tolerance policy for discrimination and workplace harassment in place may help avoid any further costs, like lawsuits, for instance (Evans & Suklun, 2017). The discussion of culture and intercultural attributes leads to a new, unknown terminological layer related to team management, which needs to be defined.

Organizational communication, encompassing sent and received messages within formal and informal groups in an organization, becomes more complex as the structure of the organization develops and becomes more complex, including such diverse activities as issuing orders and directives, advising workers, interviewing new employees, evaluating staff performance, improving employee motivation, analyzing problems, conflict resolution, establishment, and management of working groups (Evans & Suklun, 2017). The solution to these problems becomes even more difficult in the case of an intercultural workplace, as the vision of these issues varies from one cultural perspective to another.

The following questions are typically problematic for the intercultural workplace:
- motivation of employees to work, development of motivation

- giving orders and orders

- delegation of responsibility

- group problem solving

- resolution of interpersonal conflicts, grievances, and discontent

- personal conversations

- use of informal communication

- official presentations

- conduct of meetings

- negotiations and agreement on terms

Source: Evans & Suklun, 2017

It is instrumental not only to know but to apply the principles of international communications in practice, with their subsequent improvement (Evans & Suklun, 2017). Any international communication begins with a simple awareness and recognition of the reality of cultural differences between different people (ibid.). The ability to act as a mediator between different cultures is an invaluable skill for communication in an intercultural workplace (Evans & Suklun, 2017). For these reasons, the development of intercultural organizations is always associated with teamwork, conflict management and constant changes in the organization structure (Evans & Suklun, 2017).

2.1.6   Organizational culture

There are many different ways to understand the definition of organizational culture, but all of them share one main component – organizational culture benefits and predicts the company's development phases (Hofstede, 1991). British professor Andrew Pettigrew (1979) stated that cultural principles in organizations predict employees' decision-making processes. He made this assumption due to perceiving culture as the set of values, which, in the end, will define future steps of the organization. According to American management consultant Noal Tichy (1982), organization culture serves as a "glue" that holds all the company's parts together, including employees' different characteristics, to make the whole mechanism work properly.

Furthermore, the term culture in this context could be described as a combination of values shared by employees within an organization and differ significantly from one company to another (Evans, 2017). A quality-oriented organization's culture is the most advantageous in the long term and is measured by "performance excellence" where employees work as a team to accomplish the main goal: meet all the customers' needs (Evans, 2017). Many organizations seek to implement this measure to improve their performance as one big organism during the cooperation process (Scheider et al., 1994).

The dual nature of organizational culture must be taken into account (Evans, 2017). On the one hand, corporate culture is influenced by goals, dominant ideas, and values, outstanding leaders, accepted norms, standards, and rules; on the other hand, it forms a system of corporate values (Evans, 2017).

Organizational culture is based on the philosophy of the enterprise, which is developed within the framework of generally accepted laws and regulations: the Declaration of Human Rights, religious teachings, the Constitution, labor laws, the collective agreement, the statutes of the enterprise, the code of conduct, laws of civil society. When developing the enterprise's philosophy, it is necessary to consider the ethnic composition of employees, the number of employees, the cultural level of personnel, regional specificity, type of production (branch), and level life (Weick,

1995).   It is the philosophy of the enterprise that is the basis for the development of the mission, goals, general principles, and rules of conduct, i.e., the basis of the enterprise's organizational culture (ibid.). The prevailing philosophy unites people belonging to different faiths, is a cementing link in times of crisis (Weick, 1995). Neglecting the company's philosophy leads to the development of conflicts between the administration and employees, between suppliers and consumers, as well as to the reduction of the enterprise's image, and in the future, its crisis, and ruin (Weick, 1995).

Organizational culture is closely related to the general, national culture: the organization is a part of society; therefore, it is the bearer of a common culture (Schneider, 1988). In order to overcome international barriers in highly productive firms, national cultures, traditions, and other characteristics of different countries are continuously studied (ibid.). General company events are planned taking into account national holidays and traditional values (Schneider, 1988). Thus, Japanese enterprises' organizational culture is based not only on initiative, independence, excellent work performance, subordination to order, responsibility for the task entrusted to employees, but also traditional Confucian values that set guidelines for behavior (Weick, 1995). A striking example of this is one of the concepts of organizational culture, successfully implemented in the company "Matsushita Denki" for many years - the concept of "independent responsibility" (ibid.). This concept is based on the fact that the main person in the labor process, the "hero of events" should not be the one who sets the task, but the one who performs it (Weick, 1995). Only then will his actions determine conscience, beliefs, boldness, and abilities, knowledge, and desire to be invested (Weick, 1995).

Most of the functions of an organizational culture are valuable to both the organization and its employees (Weick, 1995). They harmonize relations both within the organization and with its external environment (ibid.). Nevertheless, we must not forget that organizational culture cannot be too rigid, permanent, stable (Weick, 1995). An organization with a solid internal culture tends to ignore signals from the external environment (ibid.). Environmental conditions and internal requirements are changing; the company must continuously form new goals and values, revise the

system of relations regulation, and use new strategies (Weick, 1995). If it is overly conservative, organizational culture can lead to strategic mistakes: once-and-for-all values inhibit the appropriate change of internal systems (Weick, 1995). Organizational culture should not interfere, but help to fit the company into the context of society and nature (ibid.). Organizational culture has no other goal than the harmonious development of the company (Weick, 1995).

The concept of culture has been significantly reinterpreted in recent years and has become much broader than the concept of enterprise philosophy (Scheider et al., 1994). The principal concept of organizational culture is the "human environment," as culture is seen as a product of interactions occurring in this environment (Scheider et al., 1994).

Organizational culture consists of six core characteristics:

1. Sensitivity to others
2. Openness of available communication options
3. Friendliness and congeniality
4. Interest in new ideas
5. Willingness to take risks
6. The value placed on people

Source: Scheider et al., 1994

Organizational culture is the basis of the norms of organizational behavior adopted by the enterprise (Scheider et al., 1994). Each organization develops a set of rules and regulations governing the daily behavior of employees in their workplace (ibid.). Until newcomers master these rules, they will not be able to become full members of the organization (Scheider et al., 1994). The culture of the enterprise is expressed through maintaining relations with suppliers and consumers, it is in the quality and appearance of products, in the content of advertising, in the appearance of employees, in the interior of the office, etc. (Scheider et al., 1994). Organizational culture helps to maintain sustainable relationships and relationships both within the organization and its relations with the external environment. Despite their existing different interpretations of the concept of organizational culture, they have common points

(Weick, 1995). Almost always, there is an underlying ideology, which is accepted by all members of the organization: values that guide the individual to his relationship with others; "symbolism" by which the basic the values of the organization are transferred to the members of the organization (ibid.). Values are transmitted through symbolic means of the spiritual and material intra-organizational environment. Many firms have special documents where they describe their values and orientations (Weick, 1995). The influence of culture on an organization can be expressed in the following ideas:

3 Provides a sense of identity

4 Generates commitment to an organizational mission

5 Clarifies and reinforces standards of behaviors

Source: Scheider et al., 1994

Within the organization, there may be several cultures, as each representative of the organization has their own experience, values, and interests (Schein, 2004). In this case, the main goal is to prevent serious conflicts between different cultures and their interaction for the benefit of the organization (ibid.). Leaders and institutional structures have a leading role to play. It is the leaders who set the basic rules and norms of conduct in the organization (Schein, 2004).

A leader's ability to assess, control, and support subordinates, their reaction to critical events and crises, and the deliberate impact on labor roles, training, criteria remuneration, and promotion are all effective mechanisms for maintaining an organizational culture (Argote, 2013). Organizational structures are an important factor in maintaining culture in the organization (ibid.). They support the relationship within the organization and the relationship between the organization and the external environment (Argote, 2013). The structure should be adaptable to changes, flexible, and mobile (ibid.). The cumulative effect of actions of leaders and organizational structures facilitates personnel socialization and development of fundamental principles of culture in the organization (Argote, 2013).

The definitions of culture, its dimensions, and organizational culture lead us to further analysis that includes the word "intercultural" in different word combinations: intercultural communication and intercultural workplace.

2.2. Managing intercultural teams

Team management plays a significant role in the organizational process and needs to be examined carefully when different cultures are on the same team (Kuhn et al., 1982). The main task of the team is finding new ways of self-improvement in the work field and more effective teamwork execution (ibid.). Many studies have proved that teamwork significantly affects the behavior, productivity, increasing the productivity of the enterprise (ibid.). A competently selected team thus has a positive impact on improving enterprise and workforce productivity (Kuhn et al., 1982).

Teamwork requires a high degree of informativeness and self-management of each member of the group (Kuhn et al., 1982). The tasks set by the manager are performed more efficiently due to the different skills of each team member, with the lowest time costs (ibid.).

A team is a small group of people, with different skills and abilities, gathered to interact and jointly solve tasks, in order to increase productivity (Kuhn et al., 1982). The team trains both the professional and personal qualities of each participant; this leads to an increase in employee productivity and the entire enterprise as a whole (ibid.). The need to create a team arises from the very beginning of the enterprise. (ibid.)Teamwork results in a noticeable increase in productivity, as overall work requires greater professionalism from team members (Kuhn et al., 1982).

2.2.1 Definition of team

According to Katzenback and Smith (2018), the definition of a team stands for a small group of people whose focus is on achieving the same goal, which makes them work together.

Once a team is formed, it is expected to be "good." Hayes (1997) defined a "good team" as a group of people who were forced to work together, but who understand

the belonging to the group and are willing to interact positively. Additionally, the author states that efficient collaboration happening between team members could be reached through the formation and/or sharing of positive negotiations and beliefs (Evans, 2017). Organizations give priority to divide the workload within teams than individuals (Evans, 2017). This can be explained by the companies' desire to keep up with changes and take advantage of the rapid response rate in the teams. Team management has to be taken into consideration to guarantee a productive working process in the team (Evans, 2017).

In one study the team term was defined as a small number of people (most often 5-7, less often 15-20) who share goals, values and common approaches to the implementation of joint activities and mutually define belonging to their own and partners to this group (Tannenbaum et al., 1992). Researchers also indicate that team members have complementary skills, take responsibility for the final results, can perform any intra-group roles (Tannenbaum et al., 1992).

Graham and Bennett (1998) define the term team as follows: "A team is a special kind of group", where each individual has a role and duties. In every team external authorities (e.g. senior manager of the company) appoint a leader of the team, who is responsible for group performance (Graham & Bennett, 1998). Thus, the team in modern management can be understood as a small group of specialists created and working in the organization for special purposes that are formed under the influence of external factors but are highly determined by relations, principles of interaction, internal factors (Weick, 1995). Next, it is necessary to consider how the team approach is used in the theory of management (Weick, 1995).

2.2.2 Definition of management

Management can be defined as production management through the development and creation of organizational structures, the most efficient use of resources, and the control of socio-economic systems (Bantz, 1993).

Management, at any level, is a complex system (Bantz, 1993). For example, for a production organization, the manager must continuously take care of the market

share, anticipate the requirements of customers, ensure accurate delivery times, produce increasingly high-quality products, set prices according to the conditions of competition and to take care in every possible way of maintaining the reputation of the company among consumers (Fligstein, 2004). Within the organization a manager's task is to achieve productivity growth by better planning, more efficient organization and automation of production processes, while at the same time taking into account the requirements of trade unions, maintaining a competitive position in the market, ensuring to shareholders dividends at such a level as not to lose their trust, and to leave the firm a sufficient amount of retained earnings to ensure its growth (Bantz, 1993). An important task of management is to unite, integrate all parties and aspects of the activities of the organization and sites, their individual goals, in order to achieve the common goal of the system (Ackoff et al., 2007).

Management theory applies scientific methods of analysis in order to develop specific methods and recommendations for management practice (Fligstein, 2001). The effective application of these methods and recommendations depends on a combination of specific circumstances and conditions (ibid.). For example, the Japanese experience of using "quality circles" has not found full application in American industry conditions due to differences in social relations in production (Fligstein, 2001). Therefore, one of the important conditions for effective management (that is, achieving the organization's goals with minimal costs) is the adequacy of the applied methods of management of the organization's external and internal environment. It is useless to apply in industry methods of management adopted in the army, and vice versa (Fineman, 1983). Similarly, in a market economy, management policymaking methods will not achieve the intended results used in the USSR. Conversely, the use of management and marketing methods in the economy of the USSR would be of academic interest only (Fineman, 1983).

As in any other sphere of intellectual and practical activity of people (military affairs, medicine, etc.), the scientific nature of management and the art of management complement each other (Fineman, 1983). The management system's effectiveness is ensured by the ability of managers to master the art of creative application of scientific principles of management in specific situations (Weick, 1995). Management,

that is, actions that ensure the achievement of the goals, should be distinguished from the "impact" (ibid.). "Impact" refers to leadership that changes organizational structures, conditions of external and internal environment of organizations, but does not achieve the objectives set (Weick, 1995). In most cases, such activities pose a danger to the life of the organization (Weick, 1995). Thus, leadership actions that fail to achieve the goal are not management (Fineman, 1983).

Due to these reasons, the central trend of modern management is management and investment in human resources (Ritter et al. 2018). This is also due to recent technological development (ibid.). Technological development is a component of rapid and large-scale social changes that require a new approach to the production, transfer, and acquisition of knowledge and competences that transform the usual forms of education (Ritter et al. 2018). In particular, new forms of education are losing their connection with prestigious educational institutions and include broad groups of the population in the educational process (Ritter et al. 2018). In many cases, organizations seek to create an environment that simultaneously facilitates the development of new knowledge and skills among employees and their application in production (Mubarik et al., 2018). As a result, the main provisions of modern management in relation to the human factor are:

1) assistance to the employee in awareness of their capabilities based on applying the concepts of behavioral sciences to the construction and management of organizations;
2) the main goal is to increase the efficiency of the organization by increasing the efficiency of its human resources;
3) the correct application of behavior science will always improve the efficiency of both the worker and the organization.

Source: Mubarik et al., 2018

Thus, modern management is characterized by the complication of management processes and the growth of factors considered (Mubarik et al., 2018). The most important condition for effective management is the development of human capital

and interaction within the organization (ibid.). Therefore, it is necessary to consider such a direction as team management (Mubarik et al., 2018).

2.2.3 Definition of team management

Nielsen (2012) sees team management as the administrative process of work division between team members within an organization in order to achieve priorities and objectives set by the team. Besides, team management is described as a coordination process of the group to stimulate successful performance (Burton et al., 2019).

In the process of team management, managers commit to bringing positive attributes into cross-group relations and ensuring that the team succeeds in its endeavors (Hayes, 1997). Managers have to foster the mechanism of a team and simulate efficient results (ibid.). Outlining this basic concept is essential for moving further in the analysis of team management, including the description of its tools (Hayes, 1997).

Team management is a modern approach to team creation, based on the joint participation of employees with the head in the management of the organization, as well as the use of the potential of the head of each worker or group as a whole.

The team significantly increases the ability of the organization to survive and thrive in unstable modern conditions due to each participant's characteristics. The team has the potential for:
- conducting work according to the rules drawn up at the enterprise, in an informal way;
- increasing communication skills and productivity, use of opportunities of each employee;
- increasing the competitiveness of the organization.

Source: Chandler, 1990

When performing the tasks set by the company, the group will achieve the goal much faster and more effectively (Chandler, 1990). Therefore, the enterprise creates teams, that is, groups that can work effectively to solve complex tasks (ibid.). However, the disadvantage is that in large groups, communication break-downs are more likely (Chandler, 1990).

Thus, teamwork can also be challenging and unproductive. Hard work, lack of cohesion, and lack of success in carrying out tasks often lead the group to break up before all development opportunities are used (Campbell et al., 1991). Over time, groups turn from undertrained amateurs into high-performance teams, provided that they increase their potential in the field of organization, qualification, and cooperation at every stage of development, as there is a personal interest in the development of the group (ibid.). In this way, groups become teams (Campbell et al., 1991). Teams are easily adapted due to the matrix principle of the internal device: separate subgroups are created for different tasks and can quickly be reformed (Campbell et al., 1991).

Management of a group with such a subculture is connected with the need to create a rational structure, ensure a high degree of professionalism of employees, the difficulty of achieving an optimal ratio of external control and independence of the sub-working group (Bantz, 1993). The manager should be flexible and have confidence in themselves as well as their employees. Influence in a team is not based on status or position, but professionalism and competence (Bantz, 1993).

In a team, it is customary to learn the value of continuous development and develop such abilities as the ability to improve in any aspect of team activity (Weick, 1995). Groups become productive teams only if they develop and increase their capacity in the fields of organization, skill, and cooperativeness (Weick, 1995).

According to the research of specialists in the field of management (Ziegler, 1997), ideas about the team are an individual concept for each team member, but an idea which all members of the team believe is its primary assignment. The main purpose of the team includes elements related to victory, superiority, progress. Here there is a difference between the primary purpose and the team's goals (ibid.). The team's goals allow it to follow its progress towards success, and the main purpose has more to do with its characteristics and gives all the individual goals energy and meaning. No group can become a team until it agrees that it is accountable as a team (Ziegler, 1997). According to the forced factor, the overall reporting cannot occur, but when

the general purpose, approaches, and goals are shared, the reporting will come naturally (Ziegler, 1997).

2.2.4 Team management tools

In order to prevent challenges, managers employ different techniques, such as delegation, motivation, development, communication, discipline, all of which are interconnected (Eppler & Sukowski, 2000). Thus, delegating some of the power to employees and dividing responsibilities among them will make the work more efficient and motivate them, bringing a more positive approach to team building (ibid.). Likewise, managers should pay close attention to the personal improvement of their subordinates, as all members might have different skill levels, and it would be the managers' responsibility to develop their abilities by challenging them, but without going to extremes (Chenhall & Langfield-Smith, 2000). Communication is an essential element in teamwork regardless of whether it is happening in real life or online, just as Yang, Huang, and Wu highlight that "teamwork has been identified as a factor influencing team performance positively" (Yang et al., 2010, p. 2). Without communication, the last technique – discipline – would be useless, as disciplinary norms should be clearly articulated (Jacob, 2003).

These methods play a crucial role at all stages of the formation and activity of the team (Weick, 1995). **The first stage** is adaptation, which is characterized as the stage of task analysis and mutual information (bid.). At this stage, the group members look for the best ways to solve the tasks (Weick, 1995). The interaction of the participants slowly but steadily leads to the formation of the dyad, the stage of dependence and verification, which involves the orientation of the group members toward the nature of each other's actions, and the search for mutually beneficial behavior in the group. First, the team members gather with a cautious feeling and a sense of coercion (Yates, 1989). The group's effectiveness at the initial stage will be low because of the small levels of mutual trust (Yates, 1989).

The second stage — cooperation and grouping — entails the forming of small subgroups based on interests and sympathies (Eisenberg, 1990). This stage consists of counteracting the members of the group to the requirements presented to them by the content of the task, after revealing discrepancies in the personal motivation of

each group member with the main objectives of group activities (Eisenberg, 1990). Group members react emotionally to the requirements of the task, as a result of which subgroups are formed (Eisenberg, 1990). Each group begins the formation of self-consciousness, which affects the general self-consciousness, forming the first intergroup norms (Weick, 1995). Subgroups understand that it is impossible to work effectively without interaction with other subgroups, which in consequence leads to general rules of communication and intergroup norms, which are characteristic of the whole group as a whole (Lawrence & Spybey, 1986).

The third stage is characterized by the emergence of the principles of group interaction, and either collective work or intra-group communication is consolidated (Kay, 1997). At this stage, intergroup activity completely disappears (ibid.). The process of forming a well-prepared, psychologically and organizationally cohesive group can be offset by autonomy, which is characterized by selfishness and isolation from its objectives (Kay, 1997).

The fourth stage can be seen from a business perspective as a decision-making stage where constructive attempts are used to make decisions successful (Fligstein, 2001). With the establishment of a role-playing structure, which is a kind of resonator, the group problem is played out (ibid.). The team is ready to reveal and resolve the conflict (Fligstein, 2001). Here a variety of approaches and styles to solving the problem is considered. The group reaches the highest level of social and psychological maturity and is highly prepared (Fligstein, 2001).

Methods of team management can be reconstructed based on approaches to its organization. The four most common approaches are the following:

- the purposeful approach is based on setting goals for team members and allowing them to navigate the process of selecting and implementing group goals better;

- the interpersonal approach based on improving interpersonal relationships in the team, with the primary goal of increasing group trust, encouraging joint support, and increasing efficiency of intra-group communications;

- the role-based approach based on the distribution of roles among members, command, and management of team members based on their roles. With this

approach, it is necessary to distribute rights, duties, responsibilities, executive, and managerial functions, to investigate the propensity of team members to perform specific roles in advance. This approach maximizes the benefits of the division of labor and personal behavioral characteristics.

- the problem-oriented approach involves managing the team through problem-solving and constant development of team problem-solving procedures and procedures for achieving a necessary team task.

Source: Fligstein, 2001

As a result, the critical methods of team management are communication, delegation of authority, conceptual modeling, flexible specialization (Weick, 1995). The use of these methods allows to reduce the risks of uncertainty and create a basis for group control and self-organization (Weick, 1995).

After analyzing the intercultural workplace and team management concepts, it is time to combine these two elements into one – management of intercultural teams. The following part of our paper will be dedicated to methods of managing intercultural teams and their challenges, including conflicts and ways of overcoming them.

2.2.5   Ways of managing intercultural teams and their challenges

In the context of an intercultural team, language becomes the facilitator of interaction (Eagleton, 1990). Language is inextricably linked to the reality surrounding humans and depends mostly on the need to take into account not only the language form but also the content. This is the only possible way to explore any phenomenon fully (ibid.). The content, semantics, meaning of language units, first of all, the word, is the correlation of an audial (or graphic) complex with a specific object or phenomena of the real world (Eagleton, 1990).   Language semantics connects the world of language to the real world (ibid.). These two worlds are connected by cultural knowledge about the objects and phenomena of the cultural world, each of them inherent to both the group and the individual native speaker (Eagleton, 1990).

The cultural picture of the world, in relation to the linguistic picture of the world, is primary (Weick, 1995). Since it is richer and more vibrant in comparison with language, language itself reveals the cultural view of the world of the people concerned, as well as stores and transmits information accumulated over time. Language does not capture everything but describes everything (ibid.). At the same time, it is known that the word, as the most essential and fundamental unit of language, not only represents the name and phenomenon of the element of the surrounding world but is an element of reality (Weick, 1995).

In the context of intercultural interaction, the right choice of communication strategies, and the choice of metaphors that would be perceived identically by the parties of interaction are important (Halverson, 2008).

In order to create a high-performing team, it is vital to know the whole development process behind its formation, which is presented in Tuckman's well-known framework by the following five stages: forming, storming, norming, performing, adjourning (Halverson, 2008). In diverse teams, it is challenging to address tasks, leadership, and relations at every stage, but with clear communication and transparency regarding all issues discussed, it becomes more achievable (ibid.). Clear communication is possible through productive meetings, with Halverson clarifying that to guarantee excellent performance "in multicultural teams, where there are different beliefs, assumptions, and values that impact how people behave and how they think, it is important to be aware of group process" (Halverson, 2008, p.111). Group process comprises four components: leadership, communication, conflict management, and decision making (Olsson, 1985).

However, the focus point of all attention should be the different cross-cultural interpretations of the same behavior (Halverson, 2008). Employees tend to judge team behavior by their own cultural standards, for instance in some cultures young members are expected to be more silent and attentive to older people while in other cultures, to the contrary, young people are the representatives of the creative chaos so useful in the working process (Halverson, 2008). Therefore, norms and standards for teams should be discussed in advance to overcome possible challenges. Establishment of norms should be part of the leadership style, with the most suitable style for multicultural teams being the "multi-directional influence relationship"

(Connerley & Pedersen, 2005). This relationship consists of sharing leadership functions, implying that team members can influence the charting of the group's path to success (ibid.) Systematic rotation of roles can be beneficial for the multi-directional influence, as employees' equal participation will help to maintain fairness between them and generate a more productive atmosphere (Halverson, 2008). Nevertheless, it is important to mention that this leadership style might lead to some challenges due to a more collectivist, rather than an individualistic vision of the working process since each member has a different perception of their role in the team owing to their different cultural backgrounds (Levi, 2001).

Brett, Behfar, and Kern (2006) figured out a strategy for mitigating issues arising from cultural differences between team members, which consists of four steps:

1. Adaptation – includes a discussion of all the cultural differences to help to build awareness for each team member and prevent conflicts during the decision-making.

2. Structural intervention – includes the ability to reassigned reason of conflict; it could be one or more members, and this action should be done to prevent the growth of problems to the critical point.

3. Managerial guidance – includes a mission statement for the team with an established set of rules before the formation in order to guarantee the suitable collaboration process and bring a clear understanding of expectations from the members.

4. Exit – includes the right of each member to leave in case of an inability to fit into a team; it important to acknowledge these failures as soon as possible to find a suitable replacement that will be more beneficial for the organization.

Source: Brett et al., 2006

Equally noteworthy is the intercultural conflict interaction style model, which highlights four strategies of conflict behavior:

1. Discussion — a strategy characterized by direct communication and a high level of emotional restraint;

2. Engagement — strategy corresponding to direct communication style and high emotional expressiveness;

3. Accommodation — a strategy combining indirect communication and emotional restraint;

4. Dynamic is a strategy that includes the use of indirect communication and emotional expressiveness.

Source: Hammer, 2004

Intercultural communication is characterized by the fact that when representatives of different cultures meet, each of them acts per their own cultural norms (Eagleton, 1990). The problem of intercultural communication is not limited to language (Eagleton, 1990). Knowledge of the language, the vehicle of a different culture is necessary but is not enough for an adequate understanding of participants of a communicative act (Halverson, 2008). Full interaction within an intercultural team requires the adoption of common or complementary thinking patterns that ensure continuity and sustainability of interaction (Brett et al., 2006). This requires a long experience of interaction, often accompanied by conflicts. The next step is to consider how to overcome conflicts within intercultural teams.

2.2.6   Ways of overcoming conflicts in managing intercultural teams

Conflicts are typically defined as "deep-rooted differences that are hard to resolve" (Burton, 1986). Conflicts in a diverse environment arise because communication is becoming more dynamic and challenging, as the world's boundaries shrink (Halverson, 2008). The word "dynamic" means that communication is not only happening face-to-face but is becoming increasingly virtual, which might affect the sense of understanding (ibid.) In order to prevent any ramifications of conflict, a multicultural work team needs to develop an orientation towards different techniques: communicating skills for dialogue, active listening, group projects focused on expressing feelings and concerns (Green, 2002).

Conflict situations usually occur when the wants and needs of two parties interfere with each other (McKenna, 1995). In the case of intercultural teams, the most suitable model of handling conflict is the collaborative one, which implies trying to come up

with a mutually beneficial or satisfying solution, a so-called "win-win" (ibid.). Research by Oertig and Buergi (2006) shows that, besides handling conflict, other tactics that might help to overcome the existence of conflicts are important. These techniques include having creative leaders with a collaborative leadership style, who will help to manage cultural attitudes and the perception of the working process for the employees (Oertig & Buergi, 2006). Face-to-face meetings are deemed to have a hugely positive effect, even though virtual communication does prevail in the 21st century because it helps to develop "swift trust" and pays off time and resource cost-wise (Oertig & Buergi, 2006). Thus, investment in training multicultural teams would reduce potential skepticism in working procedures and motivate employees to efficient collaboration (ibid.). To overcome intra-team conflicts, it is possible to use structural methods of conflict management: clarification of expectations, use of coordination and integration mechanisms, setting secondary objectives, and using the correct remuneration structure (Oertig & Buergi, 2006).

Clarification of expectations. One of the best methods of preventive management of dysfunctional conflict is to clarify what is expected of each staff member and unit. In particular, it is necessary to inform people about the level of effectiveness, who should provide and receive information, how authority and responsibility are allocated, explain policies, procedures, and rules (Weick, 1995). Subordinates must clearly understand what is expected of them in a given situation (Weick, 1995).

Use of coordination and integration mechanisms. The next method of managing a conflict situation is to apply coordination mechanisms, of which the chain of command is most common (Bantz, 1993). As Weber and theorists of the School of Administrative Management noted many years ago, a clear hierarchy of powers streamlines interaction between workers, decision-making, and information flows in an organization (ibid.). If two or more subordinates cannot reach an agreement on a matter, the conflict can be avoided by contacting the general chief, who will make the decision (Bantz, 1993). The principle of unity of command enhances the effectiveness of hierarchy as a method of conflict management since, in this case, the subordinate knows whose decisions they should obey (Bantz, 1993). In the management of a conflict situation, such means of integration as management hierarchy, personnel

providing communication between divisions, multifunctional and target teams are advantageous (Schaller-Demers, 2008).

Studies have shown that organizations that have achieved the right level of integration are more effective than organizations that have not done so (Kuhn T., Poole M., 2000). For example, a company faced with a conflict between the sales department and the production department can solve the problem by creating an order coordination department that will coordinate sales and production and address issues such as marketing requirements, capacity utilization, pricing, and delivery schedules.

Setting secondary objectives. The next effective structural method of conflict management is the establishment of smaller goals – these are objectives that require the joint efforts of two or more staff, teams, or divisions (Rahim, 2002). The main idea is to direct the efforts of all parties to achieve a common goal (Rahim, 2002).

Use of correct remuneration structures. Remuneration can be used to manage conflicts, which, by influencing people's behavior, force them to act in a way that avoids dysfunctional consequences (Wilson, 2004). Individuals who contribute to the achievement of smaller goals, help other groups of the organization, and comprehensively address the problem should be rewarded with praise, recognition, or promotion (ibid.). Equally important is that the reward system does not encourage the unproductive actions of individuals and groups (Wilson, 2004). In general, the systematic and coordinated use of rewards to promote actions that contribute to the achievement of the organization's goals as a whole can be said to help people understand what behavior in a conflict situation expects from them management (Wilson, 2004).

It is important to understand that there are no "right" or "wrong" strategies, whether appropriate or inappropriate (Starbuck, 2003). Each of these strategies is effective only under certain conditions, and none of them can be singled out as the best(ibid.). An experienced manager should be able to effectively use each of these strategies and consciously make a choice, taking into account specific circumstances and their own

preferences (Starbuck, 2003). Conflict in the organization usually involves a violation of relationships, loss of psychological and emotional balance (ibid.). However, a conflict can be useful for both the conflicting parties and companies (Starbuck, 2003). Nevertheless, the conflict should not shift from business into the field of personal relations or turn into mutual discrediting, destroying the interoperability developed over the years (ibid.).

Additionally, the choice of conflict resolution strategy is influenced by the fact that the stages of conflict and its management stages are compatible (Starbuck, 2003). Taking into account this correspondence allows us to determine the priorities of the manager's work with conflicts and to choose an appropriate strategy (ibid.). For example, at the stage of the emergence and development of a conflict situation, in the process of forecasting or preventing conflict, the main focus should be on working with the actors who create conflict situations or are prone to creating such situations. Hence, the strategy of evasion or avoidance is applicable (Starbuck, 2003). At the stage of conflict awareness in the course of conflict prevention, it is important to work with actors aware of emerging conflict situations (ibid.). In this case, it is necessary to keep them from moving to active action by preventing destructive conflicts or directing their actions in a legitimate direction while stimulating constructive conflicts (compromise strategy, cooperation) (Starbuck, 2003).

2.2.7 Organizational support

According to Evans (2017), organizational support is a framework for effective teamwork. Further, he states that this support is provided by the organization as a whole, specifically by managers. Three main steps can set organizational effort to support the working process. Firstly, the manager needs to explain clearly to the team its objectives, and what is expected from the members. This could be called "team charter" (Wen et al., 2019). Different studies confirmed the usefulness of transparent management's guidance, charters, and expectations in order to achieve employees' performance improvement. For instance, researchers Doolen and et al. (2006) investigated twelve variables used by managers to deliver the workload, and clear purpose was graded as the most efficient. Secondly, there is a need for training within the teams to improve particular skills that are essential for productive teamwork, and

the organization has to coordinate its employees' development (Evans, 2017). Usually, all the trainings lead to the performance appraisal of individuals rather than a team (MsGregor & Bennis, 1972). Unfortunately, focus on the individual rewards system tends to harm teamwork, as it discourages or even destroys cooperation between individuals (ibid.). Another problem may arise due to the inability to measure long-term results meaning that employees will not be motivated to plan more material steps for the future, as they cannot be measured easily in the present and bring employees honored rewards (Levinson, 1976). These issues do not mean that training and team development are irrelevant. Managing the team as one organism and incentivizing long run achievements is important. Thirdly, in order to create a productive environment for the working process, the organization has to support teamwork by providing all the necessary resources, including workspace, tools to get the job done (e.g., tables, chairs, board, computers) and elements of décor (e.g., flowers, good lighting) which stimulate the working process (Evans, 2017).

However, successful organizations understand that doing things the same way will produce the same result and that sometimes changing things is necessary to take them to the next level (Levinson, 1976). In these cases, organizational support plays a crucial role (Levinson, 1976). So whether it is transitioning to a new software program, introducing new policies and procedures for processing material, changing the office or the employee benefit plan, change needs to be effected to be successful (Graeber, 2018). Often people resist change from fear of the unknown, including how they personally will be affected (Levinson, 1976). When people do not know all the answers, they feel like they have lost control, which makes them feel hopeless (ibid.). This can fuel new conflicts and controversies (Levinson, 1976). 22Therefore, organizational leaders have the responsibility to manage change efforts to minimize the negative impact on employees (Graeber, 2018).

It is crucial to help people understand what the change will entail and the reasons behind the decision to manage change efforts effectively (Scheider et.al., 1994). The more detailed the communication about the vision for the change, the better employees understand the need for it and the less resistant they are (Scheider et.al., 1994).

Employee involvement is important for organizational support (Argote, 2013). Whether it is changing the work process, improving customer satisfaction, or finding ways to reduce costs, employees have experiences that can benefit the change planning and implementation process (Argote, 2013). Since employees are typically closest to the process, they must understand the reasons behind the change and participate in devising the new process (Doolen, 2004). Moreover, it is critical that management shows support of employee engagement and demonstrates it when communicating and interacting with staff (ibid.).Thus, organizational support is a mechanism that maintains the organization's stability in times of change and influences the prevention of conflicts and contradictions (Doolen, 2004). Accordingly, organizational support includes both material support of employees and their inclusion in the management processes (ibid.).

Chapter 3: Methodology

The following part will offer a more in-depth look into the methodology used to carry out this research; we will be going into more detail regarding the structure and organization of the thesis. The figure below shows the different steps necessary for its execution.

Step 1	•Research topic and aims of the thesis •Research questions and hypothesis
Step 2	•Litreture Review
Step 3	•Creating and formulating questions for the interiews •Conducting interviews
Step 4	• Evaluation, summary, interpritation and analysis of interviews • Conclusion of the interviews
Step 5	•Conclusion of the thesis

Figure 12: Structure of the Thesis

3.1 Aim

The central aim of this research is to analyze the difficulties of intercultural team management and ways of overcoming the challenges that arise. This objective will be achieved by analyzing two companies in different countries – Russia and Ukraine. The result of this thesis will feature the purpose of suitable management techniques. This thesis will offer an especially detailed explanation of the importance of considering all cultural differences that could arise throughout the working process, even during insignificant decision-making stages.

3.2 Research Design

This analysis requires full disclosure of information to answer the research question; therefore, the qualitative research method will be most appropriate. In one publication, the authors stated that qualitative research yields a deeper understanding of social phenomena than quantitative methods (Gill et al., 2008, p.3). Qualitative research provides an opportunity to evaluate more valuable details, as it is based on the study of human experiences and observations (Qu & Dumay, 2011). In-depth details present content that could be essential in analyzing findings and overcoming biases (Maykut & Morehouse, 2011). This method will be implemented in light of the constructivist grounded theory approach, as the study relies on participants' perceptions and attitudes toward the working environment. Grounded theory is a suitable design for this particular research, as there is already a model available, though it was developed and tested on samples other than those of interest (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Moreover, grounded theory methodology involves building theories on data analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2006). Thus, the collection of relevant information would be the first stage of theory construction in our paper.

Interviews will be conducted via Skype, which is a free communication method and is accessible worldwide via the internet (Janghorban et al., 2017). This way of holding interviews is the only appropriate one for this research, as respondents are located in two different countries, which places geographic and temporal limitations on the investigation. However, technological development has made it possible for Skype interviews to be treated as equivalent to onsite interviews (Janghorban et al., 2017). Each interview's length would be approximately 20-40 minutes, which is a worldwide standard for the qualitative interview (Gill et al., 2008). The interviews' design matches that which was proposed by Gill (2008). The author suggests starting with easy questions and continuing with more complicated topics, which will help to generate rich data. Questions would be focused on yielding as much information on the phenomenon under study as possible while addressing the main aim of the research. The interviews will be recorded upon informing the participants and getting their permission to do so. Additionally, "field notes" on the respondents' observations will be taken during and straight after each interview so that a more in-depth analysis of the interviewers can be conducted.

3.3 Unit of Analysis

The chosen tool for this research is the interview. Creswell and Poth (2006, p.32) claimed that interviews are mainly used in qualitative research, and are most applicable in this case because detailed insights from all participants are necessary. The interviews that will be used for data collection can be characterized as semi-structured, one-on-one interviews, conducted only once. The semi-structured interview type includes several key predefined questions that help determine the direction of the research, as well as follow-up questions that contribute to further elaboration, such as more detailed responses (Gill et al., 2008). The choice in favor of this type was made mainly because discoveries could arise throughout that might be relevant to participants and were not taken into consideration during the forming of the data collection process.

Literature review	→	Developing the interview questions + interview guide	→	Select the interviewees	→	Evaluation of interviews
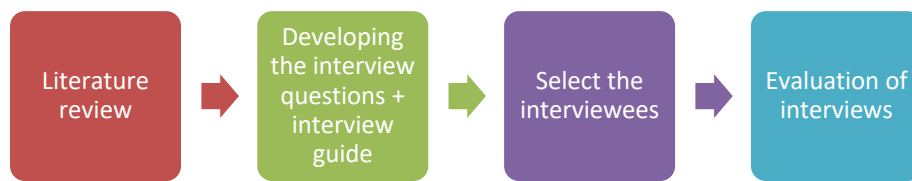
Figure 13: Semi-Structured Interview

Adapted from: Gill et al., 2008

3.4 Data Preparation and Analysis

Data analysis will take place after conducting and transcribing all the interviews. The next step will include translating all the interviews from Russian to English. The following phase would be to go through all the information collected and to reflect on its overall meaning with the help of summarizing. We will focus further on the interpretation of qualitative results that will help compare and better understand the analyzed companies' collaboration (Maykut & Morehouse, 2004). Furthermore, with the help of interpretation, collected data could be compared to the researched literature and highlight the similarities and differences of findings. Data interpretation usually implies coding, which is the process of data organizing and labeling with the help of categorizing words (Creswell & Poth, 2006). Relevance to code could reveal itself through the repeated use of keywords and phrases within different interviews.

The final step is to draw the conclusion based on all the findings and (if possible) give recommendations with the help of the inferences.
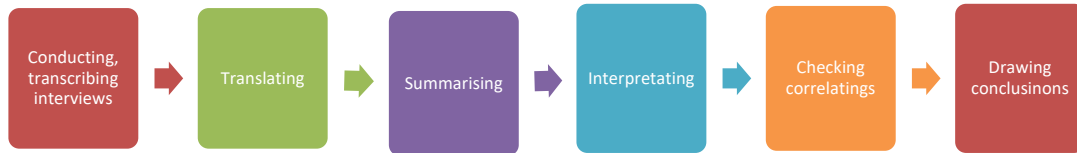
Figure 13: Steps of data analysis

Adapted from: Creswell & Poth, 2006

3.5 Participants

In this cross-cultural research, a geographically heterogeneous sample will be taken to compare respondents' answers to find similarities and to analyze differences in the management styles of the two organizations. The sample's heterogeneous character will help generalize results and make them feasible in further business inquiries into the particularities of intercultural teams from the two countries (Robinson, 2013). The sample size of this research will be set by a guideline of 10-16 participants for a single study (ibid.). The sample size will not be more than 16 interviews, because the total number of employees from different engineering companies that collaborate during projects does not exceed 40 members. The selection of respondents would happen through stratified sampling. The whole team of employees would be divided according to their status within their respective companies (employees at manager level and below), and after that, respondents would be chosen at random from these groups. However, to see the correlations between employees' positions and their views, it is important to include employees from different companies that hold similar positions. In his research, Robinson (2013) claimed that stratified sampling offers greater precision, as it is a safeguard against unrepresentative samples. Therefore, the outcome of our research into intercultural management would be more accurate, as a mixture of hierarchical levels will be represented.

3.6 Construction of the interviews

Interviews are made up of 23 questions broken down into two main sections: the first section aimed at gathering statistical data and the second section geared toward gaining further insights into the topic in question, which is intercultural collaboration between two companies. For the most part, all questions are formulated as open-ended questions. The choice of this form was made with the intent to understand respondents' views without limiting them in their possible answers. Closed-ended questions are also presented in the interview. This type of inquiry is used for all ranking questions, making it possible to compare respondents' attitudes and views toward collaboration.

A detailed analysis of interview construction can be found below:

Section 1: As mentioned above, this section will help gather statistical data, basic information about each respondent. Additionally, this section will be used for finding similarities between the respondents' answers that could manifest further. For instance, an employee's views on intercultural collaboration could vary depending on their position in the company.

- **What is your name?**
- **What is your gender: male/female/other**
- **How old are you?**
- **In what company are you working?**
- **What is your position in the company?**
- **How long have you been working in this field?**
- **How long have you been working for the company?**

Section 2: In this section, there are three main topics: "collaboration, communication, management of collaboration," which include questions 8 – 23. All the questions are formulated to facilitate the collection of detailed answers for the research.

1) Topic – "collaboration":

6. **How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?**

- A baseline question that will tune in the talk about companies' collaboration and check if all respondents are going to have a similar answer or not (could affect the final results)

7. **What is the role of each company in the collaboration?**

- Same as question 9 will be useful to see the correlations between respondents' answers or to identify why answers differ.

8. **In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)**

- A closed-ended question is used here to capture the individual opinion on the ranking of the collaboration and will help conclude how employees from different companies perceive their teamwork.

9. **In your opinion, what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?**

- This open-ended question will explain the positive sides of the collaboration, including personal opinion. This question is constructed as an open-ended one to gain unexpected insights.

10. **What were the main challenges during the collaboration?**

- This question's purpose is identical to question 11; it focuses on the negative sides of the collaboration. Opinions and feelings expressed in response to these types of questions will add value to the answers.

Before moving on to the second topic, the definition of intercultural teamwork will be provided: "*the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.*" The importance of bringing up the definition lies in the ability to monitor the possible changes in respondents' answers.

2) Topic – "communication":

11. **How was the communication process established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)**

- A baseline question that will illuminate the main ways companies chose for their communication process. This will lead the conversation to follow-up questions about the pros and cons of the established communication.

12. **What worked particularly well when communication between the two companies occurred?**

- This question is similar to the construction of questions 11 and 12 in the previous topic. We expect to see the respondents' personal opinions in the answers, which will make it possible to determine commonality and differences in the respondents' attitudes.

13. **What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?**

- In this question, the same as in the previous one, the idea is to seek a deeper understanding of the collaborations between companies in order to conclude this research.

3) Topic – "management of collaboration":

14. **Have you experienced any challenges in the management process? If yes, give an example.**

- This question is constructed as a closed-ended question; the answer could be yes or no. However, at the same time, if the answer is definite, an example is required, providing insight into previous or existing challenges.

15. **In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.**

- This question is similar to question 16, starting with a closed-ended question. Nevertheless, an explanation is needed for the same purpose, regardless of whether the response was positive or negative.

16. **Which strategies were attempted in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)**

- An open-ended question is used here to gather all possible strategies that succeeded in the end. Moreover, comparing answers to this question could show how different employees perceive positive strategies.

17. **Challenges of intercultural collaboration. Please, rate them from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging).**
    ➔ **Cultural differences**
    ➔ **Corporation differences**
    ➔ **Communication**
    ➔ **Interpersonal conflicts**
    ➔ **Delegations of responsibilities**
    ➔ **Conduct of meetings**
    ➔ **Employee motivation**
    ➔ **Time difference**

- A ranking question is used to compare respondents' views on challenges and determine the most and least challenging factor in their collaboration. For this purpose, eight main challenges are listed after the question, and each respondent has to grade it from their personal experiences. Listing options makes it impossible for respondents to forget mentioning elements relevant to the research.

18. **Are managers successful in leading intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If not, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?**

- The structure of the question is similar to question 17. It includes two parts: first, a closed-ended question is asked, followed by open-ended questions to get a more profound understanding of managers' methods.

19. **Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?**

- This question is asked in order to understand the pattern of collaboration, which could be relevant for the structuring of our findings.

20. **Has the political situation of countries affected the collaboration? If yes, how?**

- This question is asked, as all the collaborations between companies could be affected by the collaboration between countries where companies are located, and it is essential to consider these factors or exclude them (if the answer is negative).

21. **What is your forecast for the companies' collaboration in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.**

- The purpose of this question is, in general, to see respondents' opinions on the future of collaborations and draw the conclusion with the help of the percentage of optimistic and pessimistic perceptions. Current opinions about the future could represent the real opinion of employees.

3.7 Limitations

The validity of this research might have several weaknesses. The first is that in the process of collecting information we can only hope for the participants' honesty, and there will be no opportunities for result clarification as data collection will only be conducted once. Therefore, clarifying possible biases is essential for the objectivity of our research (Talja, 1999). Similarly, the results of this qualitative research might not extend to a broader populace, as there can always be multiple opinions on the management of intercultural teams because the present-day work environment is diverse. Such findings' degree of certainty can also be called into question (Daymon et al., 2002).

Ethical issues need to be addressed during all five stages of the research process: before conducting the study, at its start, when collecting and analyzing data, reporting, and sharing it (Creswell & Poth, 2006). The first stage includes receiving permission from the heads of companies and participants and informing respondents about the study's ethical principles (Gill et al., 2008). The study's beginning is marked by confidentially outlining and disclosing the purpose of the research in more detail,

as having an idea of what to expect will increase the likelihood of participants' honesty. During the collection of information, it will be of primary importance to "respect potential power imbalances and exploitation of participants during interviews" (Creswell & Poth, 2006, p.234), which will be achieved through the protection of respondents' personal information and avoidance of disclosing possibly harmful information. Participants will also be made aware of audio recordings (Janghorban et al., 2017).

It is similarly important to thank all respondents for their participation and make sure that there is nothing that they would want to add, as it might lead to the discovery of new knowledge (Gill et al., 2008). While analyzing data, it is critical to remain impartial and not take sides and be mindful of the need to respect the interviewers' anonymity (Creswell & Poth, 2006). The last stage of reporting and sharing information is founded upon the basic requirement of providing results in a clear way and refraining from plagiarism and classification of any collected information.

Chapter 4: Summary and Interpretation of Interviews

1.1   Participants

During this research, 13 interviews were conducted, 6 participants from Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ" and 7 participants from SSE Engineering. Participants were selected based on their position in the company to find correlations between both corporations. The table below demonstrates the basic information about participants yielded during the interviews from questions (1- 7) from section 1.

	Name	Gender	Age	Years of experience in the field	Position in the company	Years of working in the company
SSE Engineering						
1.	Zagorodny Yevgeny	Male	59	37	CEO	2
2.	Joltikov Roman	Male	44	22	Deputy CEO	2
3.	Andreev Oleg	Male	53	28	Deputy Technical Director	10
4.	Kihaeva Zemfira	Female	61	30	Chief Engineer	0.8
5.	Zinger Mikhail	Male	64	43	Chief Engineer	2
6.	Korishov Segei	Male	30	3	Project Manager	1.4
7.	Simonov Aleksey	Male	31	9	Project Manager	1.8
Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"						
	Name	Gender	Age	Years of experience in the field	Position in the company	Years of working in the company
1.	Neznamov Dmitriy	Male	42	20	CEO	13
2.	Abdulin Aleksey	Male	40	20	Deputy CEO	11
3.	Astashenkov Alexander	Male	46	24	Technical Director	12
4.	Ivashenko Yuriy	Male	45	22	Chief Engineer	12
5.	Borovskiy Alexander	Male	66	11	Chief Engineer	11
6.	Sokolenko Andrey	Male	38	16	Chief Engineer	12

Table 1: Background information on interview participants

From the data presented in the table, it is possible to draw several conclusions:

- In both corporations, employees are predominantly male (with just one female employee from SSE). From this information, one can deduce that the opinions given in the interviews mirror the male perspective more than the female one. This fact is unsurprising since this is still a male-dominated field.

- In both corporations, older employees outnumber the young. In SSE, the age of employees ranges from 44 to 64 years old, with two exceptions 30 and 31 years old. In KD, the age of employees ranges from 38 to 66 years old. Therefore, the present research will mainly analyze the perspective of the older generation. The lack of younger perspectives sets possible limitations on the findings.

- The data from the "years of experience" column indicates that SSE includes young specialists with little working experience (e.g., both Project Managers) in the working process, while KD favors more experienced employees.

- SSE's employees have mostly worked in the company no more than two years, except the Deputy Technical Director, who has been with the company for ten. In KD, the situation is different - every interviewee has been working for the company for at least eleven years. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that KD might be lacking in new, modern views on the working process due to the absence of younger employee flow.

As mentioned above, our work will further feature comparisons where the participants will not only be featured as a collective but also, where it is necessary, as members of distinct groups depending on their positions. Thus, we will compare CEO to CEO, Deputy CEO to Deputy CEO, Deputy Technical Director to Technical Director, Chief Engineers to Chief Engineers. In the case of Project Managers from SSE, they will be included in the general comparison. Additionally, it is crucial to indicate that the inability to interview employees from lower positions can consequently only produce analyses of the perspectives of employees holding higher positions.

1.2   Summary and Interpretation

In the present segment, all questions from section 2 will be summarized and explained by finding similarities and differences in the participants' answers. Starting with the first topic - collaboration - that includes five questions from 8-12. The first question following the section dedicated to gathering the participants' background information was focused on the frequency of collaboration between the two companies.

> *"How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?"*

All participants answered similarly, which means that every employee, regardless of their position within the company, has a clear understanding of the basis of the collaboration: frequency.

➔   Collaboration happens daily

Examples:

Neznamov (CEO of KD): "cooperation is happening all the time."

Zagorodny (CEO of SSE): "Cooperation is carried out every day as part of ongoing project implementation activities."

Simonov (Project Manager in SSE): "Quite often."

Borovskiy (chief engineer in KD): "Often."

Hence it can be said that these two companies work closely together daily. Therefore, one can assume based on the answers given that the information about the challenges and positive aspects of such a collaboration will be accurate.

The next question was focused on the role of each company during the collaboration.

> *"What is the role of each company in the collaboration?"*

Answers to this question varied, and personal attitudes to the collaboration could be seen. This general question led to the expression of personal attitudes towards the collaboration, which will be highlighted in the table in grey color for illustrative purposes and discussed below.

		SSE Engineering	
	Name	SSE's role	KD's role
1.	Zagorodny	- Project management	- Engineering center of the company - Development of design and working documentation
2.	Joltikov	- Owner of the contract	- Sub-designer under the agreement with the SSE
3.	Andreev	- Holding the contract	- Developer of design and working documentation
4.	Kihaeva	- Verification and approval of drawings and structural analysis.	- Documentation provider
5.	Zinger	- Customer	- Contractor
6.	Korishov	- Provides contracts	- sub-designer in the implementation of the project
7.	Simonov	- Project Manager - Verifies documentations	- Development of documentation

		Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"	
	Name	SSE's role	KD's role
1.	Neznamov	- Holder of the contract - General designer - Search for new projects	- Issuance of the project documentation
2.	Abdulin	- Search and receipt of projects - Communication with foreign customers and partners - "An unreasonable desire to act as a technical ideologist of projects, with the aim of increasing its share in the separation of funds under the contract."	- The project team with a large inexpensive integrated resource of technically competent and experienced specialists

3.	Astashenkov	- Providing new contracts	- High quality engineering services
4.	Ivashenko	- Contract holder - Communicator with the customer	- Developer of the documentation
5.	Borovskiy	- Providing new contracts	- Developing design documentation
6.	Sokolenko	"Our companies should be equal partners aiming at mutually beneficial relations, but now SSE Engineering sometimes shows that its role in cooperation is greater than the role of KD."	

Table 2: Companies' roles

From the majority of the answers, the roles of companies could be understood as such:

SSE – the owner of the contract who is the Project Manager of the project and communicating with the customers.

KD – the contractor who gets payment from SSE for providing services such as sub-design/ engineering, documentation developing.

Similar answers provided during the interviews by all parties show a clear understanding of roles and assigned tasks, which is vital for successful collaboration.

However, already from this general question, it is apparent that some employees from KD – Abdulin and Sokolenko – are not satisfied with the collaboration in its present state. Both respondents stated that SSE intended to have or to show its dominance in the collaboration. One of the respondents mentioned that SSE acted this way to "increase its share in the separation of funds." It is possible to see the problem that may stem from the cultural differences between companies and which lies at the heart of the employees' dissatisfaction further in the interviews' analysis. From these personal opinions, it is possible to conclude that participants from KD's side have been experiencing indignation towards the collaboration for a long time and, therefore, could not stop themselves from expressing their feelings from the start. Overall, this displays the existence of issues between corporations.

The following question was structured as a rating question, which could help see how participants would grade the success of the collaboration between companies.

Participants were able to grade their cooperation from 1 to 10, where 10 is to mean "very successful."

"In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)"

In the graph below, employees from SSE and KD were separated for a comparison.
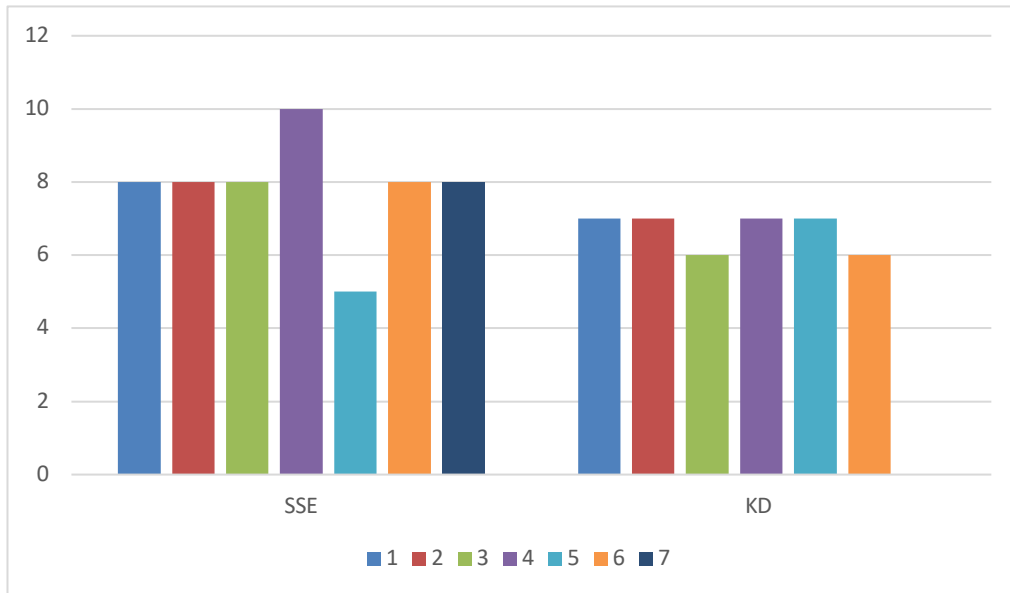
Figure 14: Collaboration Ranking

The graph illustrates that, on the whole, employees from SSE graded their collaboration higher than employees from KD. SSE's employees' grades average at 8 (5 out of 7 employees). Employee Kihaeva gave the highest grade – 10; this outlier could be explained by the fact that this Chief Engineer is a newcomer to the team (started working in the company eight months ago) and could still be unaware of the existing collaboration difficulties. The other Chief Engineer from SSE, Zinger, evaluated the cooperation with the grade 5, which is the lowest given grade. Zinger Mikhail has not been with the company for long (2 years), but this period is more extended than Kihaeva's working experience; therefore, his grade seems more accurate.

KD's employees generally assumed that the collaboration merited a 7, which is one point lower than SSE's assumption. At the same time, two other KD employees put it at 6. As mentioned above, it is clear that the satisfaction with the present state of cooperation is one-sided (SSE's outlook is favorable). However, Astashenkov, one of

the employees from KD who gave it a 6, elaborated that it is a "6 with an upward trend" because he believes that the success of cooperation is proportional to the number of joint projects. In his opinion, the more the two companies work together, the better their cooperation will be. This shows an optimistic attitude towards collaboration. Therefore, on the whole, collaboration is on an ameliorative trend in the perception of KD employees.

The answers to this grading question lead to the probability of KD employees being less satisfied with the collaboration, confirming the hypothesis of the existence of negative feelings (indignation) on the part of KD employees.

To get the opinion of every participant about the positive aspects of the collaboration, the next question was asked.

"In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration? "

The table below presents relevant parts of participants' answers that have to be taken into consideration during the analysis of positive factors.

SSE Engineering		
	Name	Positive aspects
1.	Zagorodny	- Enables to set competitive level of prices (lower than competitors')
2.	Joltikov	- Increase competitiveness
3.	Andreev	- Engineering resources
4.	Kihaeva	- Effectivenesss of decisions - Professionalism of employees
5.	Zinger	- Complementary competences - Flexible pricing policy options
6.	Korishov	- Efficacy of working process - Possibility to communicate when questions arise
7.	Simonov	- Optimization of design costs - Exchange of experience.

Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"		
	Name	Positive aspects
1.	Neznamov	- Stability to the working process with help of reliable partner represented by SSE
2.	Abdulin	- Productivity
3.	Astashenkov	- Work experience - Complementing competences - Achieving goals and getting profits
4.	Ivashenko	- Availability of work - SSE's contact base - Successfully completed projects
5.	Borovskiy	- Availability of orders
6.	Sokolenko	- Discussions of issues and barnstorming plans

Table 3: Positive aspects

On the one hand, SSE employees mainly pointed out such positive aspects of collaboration as increased competitiveness due to the ability to optimize cost and set lower prices. On the other hand, KD employees highlighted another decisive factor: availability of work and usefulness of SSE's contacts. At the same time, employees from both companies agreed that collaboration is mutually beneficial. The combined knowledge and experience of the two companies facilitated the exchange of expertise and productivity. Direct communication about problems arising during the work process facilitates project completion.

The results in the table above suggest that the purpose of the collaboration is seen as:

- For SSE: beneficial, as collaborating with KD, a Ukrainian company, increases the competitiveness of SSE on the market, due to the ability to cut expenses and charge lower prices.

- For KD: beneficial, as collaborating with SSE, a Russian company, ensures a steady workload for the company, as it has a broader contact network.

From the presented information, it is possible to conclude that both organizations could see what benefits the collaboration brings them. This means that employees from companies do not underestimate the influence on each other and should be motivated to make the working process effective.

The following question was asked in order to find out the main challenges that occur in teamwork.

"What were the main challenges during the collaboration?"

The table below is made to compare the answers of employees from different companies.

SSE Engineering		
	Name	Challenges
1.	Zagorodny	- Delays - Lack of understanding
2.	Joltikov	- Deadlines not met - Not listening
3.	Andreev	- Time: takes longer - Quality
4.	Kihaeva	- No problems
5.	Zinger	- Disagreements
6.	Korishov	- Discussion - Non-compliance with the deadlines
7.	Simonov	- Different interests of companies
Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"		
	Name	Challenges
1.	Neznamov	- Interests vary - Communication - SSE does not appreciate effort
2.	Abdulin	- Not enough partnership between Project Managers/ companies

3.	Astashenkov	- Distribution of money - Misinterpretations
4.	Ivashenko	- Lack of communication
5.	Borovskiy	- SSE exploitation of KD (low cost/ short deadlines) - Personal communication between employees
6.	Sokolenko	- Only small problems that are able to solve

Table 4: Challenges

In both companies, employees see "communication" as the main challenge. Problems in communication include a lack of understanding, disagreements, disregard, misinterpretations. This issue entails all the challenges mentioned in the table above.

- "Delays." If companies could communicate effectively and share the progress at every stage of cooperation, delays would not occur, or they would not be unexpected. The knowledge of possible delays could help eliminate them. It is important to include Borovskiy's answer, "SSE is using KD by imposing short deadlines that are impossible to meet." This answer confirms the fact that communication is at the core of the delay problem.

- "Interests vary." One employee in each company stated that SSE and KD have different interests, which is an issue. When collaboration is happening, both parties have the same goal, e.g., complete the order and satisfy customers, but they could apply themselves differently to achieve it: SSE - finds order and monitors progress; KD – works on the documentation. Therefore, the statement "interests vary" is not correct. This idea could appear in employees' minds because of a lack of communication between companies.

- "Quality and money." These challenges, once more, demonstrate the existence of a break-down in communication. If the companies communicated effectively, they would not find themselves repeatedly encountering the same problems every time they collaborate.

- "Partnership." KD's Deputy CEO mentioned the lack of partnership between the heads of companies and managers. The only way to build a strong relationship

between companies is to communicate closely and report on successes and challenges.

One Chief Engineer from each company, Kihaeva and Sokolenko, stated that challenges were insignificant or even nonexistent. In the case of Kihaeva, who denied the existence of challenges, this could be explained by her lack of experience in contributing to such collaborations (in 8 months of working with SSE). Sokolenko from KD assesses challenges as "small" because he believes that they are easily solved through communication: "... these are always ways to solve them that suit both parties through communication", he stated.

The interpretation of the participants' responses confirmed the particular importance of communication during the collaboration between the companies that was discussed earlier in the literature review part of this research. Communication by itself is an essential part of successful collaboration, no matter where it takes place: real life or online. Besides, misinterpretation during communication could be illuminated with the help of one out of three ways suggested by Gudykunst (1994) – active listening. This technique will be beneficial for SSE and KD in their collaboration. If implemented, it would help the companies to avoid conflicts on time/cost/quality.

Before moving on to the second topic - communication - which includes three questions, respondents were provided with the definition of intercultural teams. This was done to point out companies' cultural differences and monitor modification or immutability of the participants' attitudes presented in the answers.

The first question of this section was about the chosen means of communication.

> *"How was the communication process established?"*

For this question, participants were provided with options, such as phone calls, emails, meetings. The chart below illustrates the percentage each option is used.
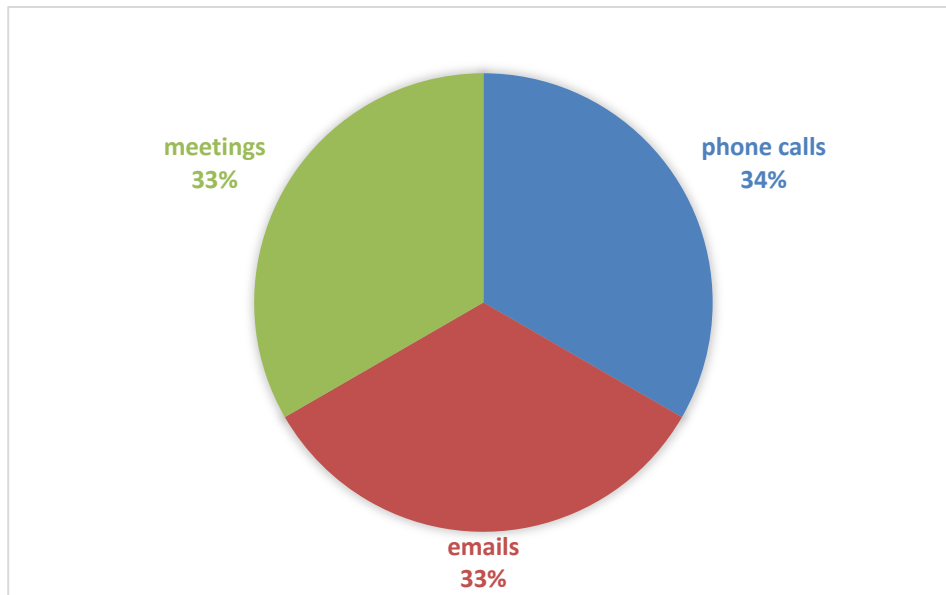
Figure 15: Means of communication

From the chart, it is clear that all three options are used equally. However, it is important to take into consideration that the meeting option also implied video conferencing. Actual physical meetings are not happening because the companies are located in distant locations, as stated by a couple of employees: "Physical meetings are very rare." SSE's CEO mentioned another way of communication – official letters. Only employees in higher-level positions mentioned this method, which leads us to believe that official letters are the only way to communicate in this case (from top to the bottom levels).

The CEO of KD's answer leads to yet another conclusion. Neznamov stated: "There is a lack of informal communication in informal settings." This could be one of the reasons why communication poses a problem during collaborations (discussed in the analysis of the previous question). Based on the theory analyzed in this research, the application of informal communication is one of the techniques that should be used in the intercultural workplace to create a prosperous atmosphere for efficient performance.

The next question was asked to underline the successful use of techniques during the communication process.

"What worked particularly well when communication between the companies occurred?"

All the answers are presented in the table below for illustrative purposes.

SSE			KD		
	Name	Worked well		Name	Worked well
1.	Zagorodny	Live negotiations	1.	Neznamov	Personal meetings
2.	Joltikov	In-person meetings	2.	Abdulin	Personal meetings
3.	Andreev	Video conferencing	3.	Astashenkov	Video conferences
4.	Kihaeva	Online meetings	4.	Ivashenko	Video meetings
5.	Zinger	Personal meetings	5.	Borovskiy	Unsure
6.	Korishov	Personal communication	6.	Sokolenko	Meetings
7.	Simonov	Video conferencing			

Table 5: Worked well in the communication

The table shows that all the employees agreed on the fact that communication that takes place during online or offline meetings contributes positively to the collaboration. The Deputy CEO from Ukraine explained that personal meetings allow to elucidate such vital aspects of the collaboration as task division between the parties and their roles. Besides, Sokolenko (KD) pointed out that personal discussions of the issues, as opposed to those held over messages/emails, make it possible to find better solutions.

Therefore, the analyzed answers suggest that, ideally, communication has to be done through the meetings, even if said meetings are only held online (due to the location factor). This way of communication eliminates the possibility of misunderstandings and contributes to efficient decision making. However, it is important to refer this answer to the previous question, where it was shown that meetings are used in equal measure with other communication methods. If everyone involved in the collaboration agrees that meetings are the most efficient and useful, the number of online or physical meetings should be increased and become the number one option when choosing the means of communication. As literature suggests meetings are really important in the business relations, as during the meeting interpretation of non-

verbal language could be conducted. Many phycologists believe that at least 75% of the communication is nonverbal (Jiang, 2000). Therefore, companies have to take this point into consideration.

The last question in the present section is related to the challenges that occur during the collaboration between parties.

"What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?"

	SSE			KD	
	Name	Challenges		Names	Challenges
1.	Zagorodny	Delays Language	1.	Neznamov	Costs division Misinterpretations
2.	Joltikov	Division of responsibility	2.	Abdulin	Lack of partnership
3.	Andreev	Business trips due to political situation	3.	Astashenkov	Joint discussion (SSE making decisions unilaterally)
4.	Kihaeva	None	4.	Ivashenko	KD's opinion is not considered
5.	Zinger	Not listening to each other	5.	Borovskiy	Lack of personal relations
6.	Korishov	No problems	6.	Sokolenko	KD's issues not taken into account
7.	Simonov	Language Listening			

Table 6: Challenges in the communication

According to KD employees, the main challenge is the failure on the part of SSE to include KD in the decision process - "KD's opinion is not considered." These discussions include all possible topics; for instance, the CEO mentioned the cost division issue. This central challenge leads to another -- the "lack of personal relations," mentioned by two employees. Therefore, it is possible to claim that there is a causal relationship between not taking KD's opinion into consideration and weak personal relations.

From SSE's side, two employees mentioned that language also hinders communication. Citizens of Ukraine know the Russian language, while employees from the Russian company struggle with Ukrainian, as stated by Zagorodny: "Russian people do not really know Ukrainian, especially in the written form." Some documents pare formulated in Ukrainian, which poses an issue for understanding. Other difficulties -- "not listening; delays; division of responsibilities" -- could be cumulatively attributed to the factor of insufficient communication that was discussed previously in the part of our research dedicated to challenges in the collaboration process. As it was discussed in the literature review communication is closely linked to productivity (Flamholtz & Randle, 2011).

There is a distinct challenge that was mentioned by Andreev, an SSE employee. In his opinion, communication was strained because of the political situation between the countries where the companies are located: Russia and Ukraine. The political situation affected the frequency of business trips, which decreased due to the crisis.

The question about challenges in the communication process leads to the conclusion that collaboration is made difficult by one component of culture – language. However, existing faults in communication could be connected to other cultural factors. These factors could include differences in people's values when it comes to collaboration (KD wants SSE to value them more and consider their views) or body language that could easily mislead the conclusions. Furthermore, it is critical to note that the definition of the term "Intercultural team" did not affect participants; their attitudes remained unchanged.

The last topic of the interview focused on the management of collaboration and comprised eight questions. The answers to these questions will help to make judgments about the efficiency of management techniques in both corporations.

The first question of the topic was dedicated to challenges in the management process.

"Have you experienced any challenges in the management process?"

SSE Engineering		
	Name	Challenges
1.	Zagorodny	- Lack of understanding how communication should be worked
2.	Joltikov	- Have not experienced
3.	Andreev	- Inability to make an agreement
4.	Kihaeva	- Have not experienced
5.	Zinger	- Neglect of corporate principles – profiting on the individual level
6.	Korishov	- Evaluation of the workload
7.	Simonov	- Have not experienced
Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"		
	Name	Challenges
1.	Neznamov	- Have not experienced
2.	Abdulin	- Non-performance or low performance of agreements and obligations
3.	Astashenkov	- Have not experienced
4.	Ivashenko	- Not taking into account the interests of partners in common projects.
5.	Borovskiy	- Lack of support from managers from the SSE side
6.	Sokolenko	- Have not experienced

Table 7: Challenges in management

The table above offers responses that give contradicting impressions. Three employees from each company stated that they had not experienced any challenges. However, the company roles of employees who made these statements are not comparable to each other (excluding Chief Engineers):

SSE – Deputy CEO, Chief Engineer, Project Manager.

KD – CEO, Technical Director, Chief Engineer.

The fact that in SSE, the CEO mentions challenges, and his Deputy says there are none is alarming. The opposite can be observed in KD: their CEO has no complaints about challenges while his Deputy does. The only conclusion that could be drawn from this is that some of the respondents did not provide honest answers for different reasons, e.g., they were unwilling to admit to mistakes that they should be accountable for, or did not fully commit to the interview due to possible laziness.

Moving on to the challenges which on KD's side again correlate with their opinions that are not taken into account. Such difficulties stem from management problems. Due to unmanaged misunderstandings between companies, KD is not being heard out. Another issue for KD is the "non or low performance of the agreements." This challenge leads to the conclusion that

performance excellence is the "sore spot" of the collaboration, meaning that employees are not working as a team and, at the same time, heads of teams, in the research case CEOs, are not effectively motivating their employees to improve mutual performance and start working as a single unit.

Challenges mentioned by employees from SSE are similar to those discussed in the previous segment. Misunderstandings in the communication process include the inability to make agreements, correct evaluations of collaboration, and lack of motivation to achieve a common goal. All these difficulties attest that coordination of the groups is unsuccessful and that the companies must identify their major problem – faulty communication -- to make their performance successful. As Bhawuk's statement was analyzed in the literature review, the knowledge of the problem will lead to the development of essential skills for illuminating this problem (2002).

The next question relates to intercultural teamwork, enquiring about the success of the companies' teamwork.

> *"In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient?"*

SSE Engineering			
	Name	Age	Yes/No
1.	Zagorodny	59	- Yes, similar history, cultural background and language were beneficial
2.	Joltikov	44	- Yes, number of successfully implemented projects is large
3.	Andreev	53	- There are no cultural differences
4.	Kihaeva	61	- Yes, efficient, but no cultural differences
5.	Zinger	64	- The cultures are the same, the stages of development are different in the companies.
6.	Korishov	30	- Yes, but no awareness of the differences could be an issue
7.	Simonov	31	- Yes, because language and formulation posed struggles
Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"			
	Name	Age	Yes/No
1.	Neznamov	42	- Yes, as there is a result in the form of finished and paid projects.
2.	Abdulin	40	- Yes, but misunderstandings can arise
3.	Astashenkov	46	- Yes, cultural values and life priorities are generally similar, but issues could appear on individual levels
4.	Ivashenko	45	- Yes, as effectiveness is influenced more by personal and business qualities than cultural ones
5.	Borovskiy	66	- There are no differences in cultures
6.	Sokolenko	38	- Yes, but there are differences in values, not sure how much of it is affected by the cultural level

Table 8: Efficiency of the intercultural teamwork

From the respondents' answers, it becomes clear that all of them see their teamwork as efficient, explaining it by a significant number of successful joint projects. There is a division between employees who believe that there are cultural differences and who think that cultures are similar. This division is age-based. On the one hand, respondents from both companies who are younger than 40 y.o. state that there are cultural differences such as language, formulations, misunderstandings, and values differences. Therefore, in their opinion, there are some difficulties in intercultural

interactions, and researched literature suggests that teams' norms and standards should be discussed in advance to overcome such challenges. For instance, the intercultural conflict interaction style model includes one part, which is "discussion," which implies direct communication. As previously demonstrated, it is scarce in the case of the researched companies.

On the other hand, there are respondents older than 40 (up to 66 y.o.) who believe that the two countries' cultures do not have noticeable differences, because of similar backgrounds. Such age-based differences in the perception of both cultures could be due to the fact that people older than 40 y.o. experienced "unity" of analyzed countries during the Soviet era and unconsciously cannot see the differences between nationalities. Since the younger generation has not experienced this kind of "unity," these employees perceive their countries' cultures as distinct.

The analysis of this question clearly shows the existence of two perspectives heavily influenced by age and life experience. The younger generation is more aware of cultural differences, while the older employees deny the possibility of cultural differences affecting the working process. In general, it is possible to state that the younger generation presents more modern attitudes of the countries because younger people are more open to changes and innovation within the country. Like Trompenaars (1993) suggested age presents the perception of the world and age difference could be a reason for the conflicts appearance. Therefore, some issues are triggered by cultural difficulties in the collaboration between companies, and the sooner the majority of employees and employers realize this, the sooner it will be possible to take action and implement intercultural management techniques.

After concluding that employees perceive intercultural teamwork as efficient, the next step is to find out what strategies were used to build positive teamwork. Therefore, this question was asked:

"Which strategies were attempted in order to facilitate positive teamwork?"

SSE Engineering		
	Name	Strategies
1.	Zagorodny	- Improving the regularity of face-to-face and long-distance communication
2.	Joltikov	- Explanatory work with key personnel
3.	Andreev	- Division of labor
4.	Kihaeva	- Meeting frequently
5.	Zinger	- Discussion of roles and their pursuit
6.	Korishov	- Preliminary coordination of the agenda of the meeting
7.	Simonov	- Regular monitoring
Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"		
	Name	Strategies
1.	Neznamov	- The framework of the Project Working Groups
2.	Abdulin	- The strategy on the separation of the stages between SSE and KD.
3.	Astashenkov	- Frequent personal meetings (still working on it) + meetings of heads of projects
4.	Ivashenko	- Clear understanding of the boundaries of their responsibility
5.	Borovskiy	- Technology for better monitoring
6.	Sokolenko	- Ways to communicate more frequently

Table 9: Positive Teamwork Strategies

The table above demonstrates that two employees from KD and three employees from SSE mentioned ways that improved communication, specifically its frequency. However, one of them mentioned that this was not working well. This revelation leads

to the conclusion that the companies are aware of the low periodicity of meeting, and they understand the importance of increasing it. Besides, SSE employee Korishov mentioned the strategy of "preliminary coordination of the agenda of the meeting," making meetings more productive, as employees can prepare for them and not waste time during.

A different strategy – the division of labor -- was brought up by one employee from each company. Both of them stated that the division of responsibilities and clear goals increase productivity. Another employee, Jolticov, discussed this strategy in more detail: "Explanatory work with key personnel is needed for joint work of companies to increase competitiveness. This means that division is crucial for effective collaboration, but understanding how and why this division was implemented is important, too. As literature suggested everything have to be stated clearly in order to support efficiency of the working process, with help of managerial guidance, formation of the rules and division in the beginning could affect positively collaboration process (Brett et al. 2006).

Additionally, KD's CEO stated that one of the strategies they are using is the division of labor in "project working groups," meaning that employees are divided into groups depending on the project. This technique was discussed in the literature analysis, which explained that it is used to take advantage of a rapid response rate in the teams, as the fewer employees in the same group, the more efficient their results.

Monitoring the working process was one more strategy discussed by employees in both companies. Monitoring involves checking task progress and implementation. The Chief Engineer from KD mentioned a "progressive design system" as a tool for monitoring, which means that companies are willing to implement innovative techniques for better performance.

To conclude, it is clear that employees from both companies hold similar views on effective strategies. All the ideas were present in the responses of respondents from both companies. This is a good result, which shows the similarity of perception in the organizations. However, none of the participants, especially those in managerial positions, mentioned any techniques that could help prevent cultural misunderstanding and boost productivity. This indicates that ignorance of the basics

of collaboration will continue to be the principal problem and keep affecting speed and quality of work, and communication.

The fourth question of the management topic focuses on rating difficulties in collaboration. Participants were provided with eight significant issues that could arise in teamwork, and every participant had to rate them from 1 to 5, with 5 being the most challenging. Answers to this question will be analyzed with the help of histograms one by one. First, answers obtained from SSE participants will be discussed, followed by those from KD. After, similarities or differences will be indicated. Additionally, the table with employees' positions, names, and numbers (data that was used in the making of the histograms) will be provided to facilitate perception.

SSE Engineering			Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"		
	Name	Position in the company		Name	Position in the company
1.	Zagorodny Yevgeny	CEO	1.	Neznamov Dmitriy	CEO
2.	Joltikov Roman	Deputy CEO	2.	Abdulin Aleksey	Deputy CEO
3.	Andreev Oleg	Deputy Technical Director	3.	Astashenkov Alexander	Technical Director
4.	Kihaeva Zemfira	Chief Engineer	4.	Ivashenko Yuriy	Chief Engineer
5.	Zinger Mikhail	Chief Engineer	5.	Borovskiy Alexander	Chief Engineer
6.	Korishov Segei	Project Manager	6.	Sokolenko Andrey	Chief Engineer
7.	Simonov Aleksey	Project Manager			

Table 10: Basic information about SSE's employees

The graph below indicates how different problems were rated by SSE employees.
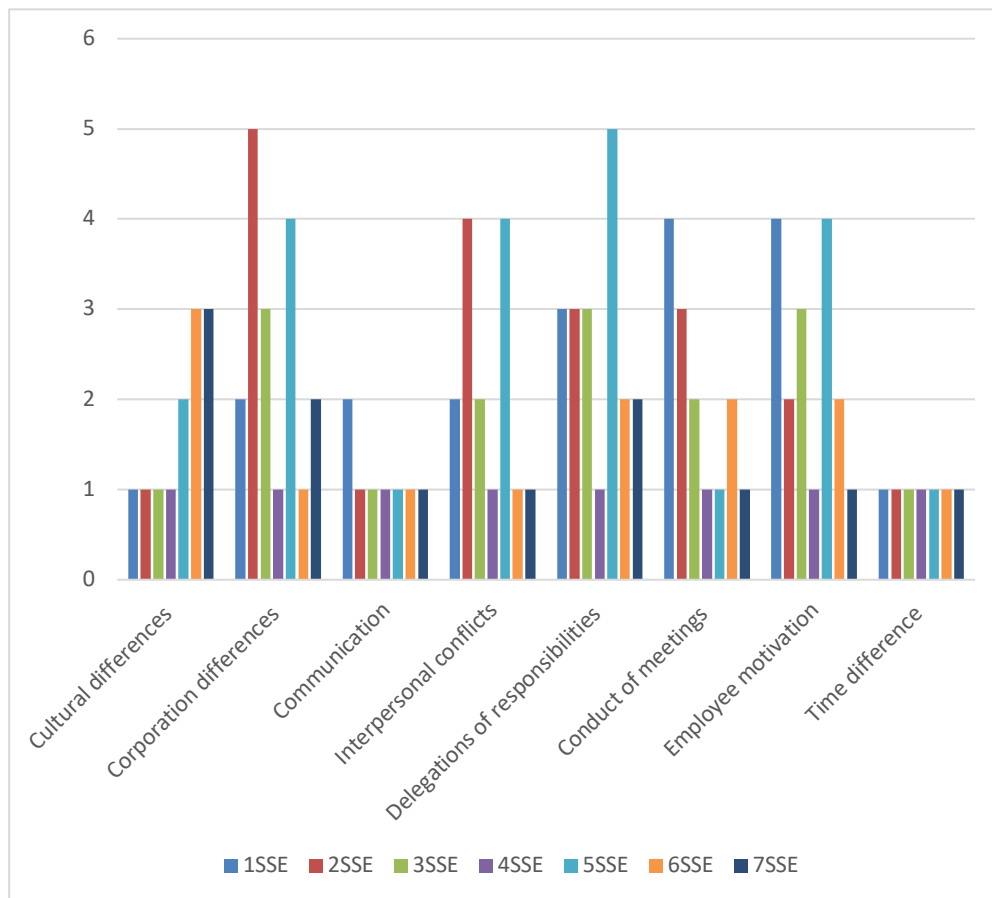
Figure 15: SSE's Rating of Challenges

Cultural differences: graded by four employees as least challenging. The other three employees graded it as more challenging. Two of them are Korishkov and Simonov, young employees who were the only ones who replied to the question about intercultural teamwork efficiency that cultural differences exist. For this reason, they ranked this issue at 3. Another employee who graded this issue as more than 1 is SSE's

Chief Engineer. Such a response was not expected from this employee, as he previously stated that there are no cultural differences between companies.

Corporate differences: graded by two employees out of seven as the least significant. The other five employees have more serious misgivings about this issue. The CEO ranked it as 2, while the Deputy CEO gave it the maximum score of 5. Such a significant disparity in the ranking of senior company personnel is ambiguous. However, in this question, the difference in perception of employees of the same rank appeared more than once. The other high score - 4 - was given by Zinger, one of the Chief Engineers, whose colleague rated the same issue at 1. The difference in ranking is smaller for Project Managers: one ranked corporate difference as 2, and the other as 1. The Deputy Technical Director, who graded the same issue at 3, cannot be compared to the corresponding position.

Communication: surprisingly, graded by six employees as the least challenging, and only the CEO graded it at 2, which contradicts previous findings. However, other stated problems are communication-related, e.g., interpersonal conflicts, delegation of responsibilities, and conduct of meetings.

Interpersonal conflicts: graded by two respondents at 4, by two others at 2, and at 1 by three other respondents. Mainly employees who graded conflicts as more than 1 occupy higher positions in the organization, except one Chief Engineer who ranked the problem at 1.

Delegation of responsibilities: ranked by first three employees, who hold senior positions such as CEO, Deputy of CEO and Deputy technical director, at 3. This factor shows the importance of the struggle with delegation. Both Project Managers graded it as 2. Only one other employee – a Chief Engineer - graded it higher – 4. The other Chief Engineer ranked is at 1. However, it is important to consider that this employee, Kihaeva, graded all the issues as 1. Moreover, in the previous questions, Kihaeva gave (mainly optimistic) answers contradictory to other participants, which can be explained by her lack of experience with collaborative projects. This shows the employee's unfamiliarity with the process of cooperation.

Conduct of meetings: ranked with the highest grade – 4 -- by the company CEO and given a 3 by the Deputy CEO. This grading by higher-level employees emphasizes and confirms the previous findings about the low frequency of meetings and the problem of communication. The other two employees graded it as 2, and the last three participants graded it as 1, including Kihaeva. In general, the majority find the conduct of meetings a relevant issue.

Employee motivation: graded as 1 only by two employees (including Kihaeva), others graded it as challenging. Both the CEO and the Chief Engineer ranked it with the highest possible grade – 5, which shows the problematic aspect of motivation. There is one employee, Deputy Technical Director, who graded is as 3, and the last two participants gave it a 2.

Time difference – considered irrelevant in this collaboration.

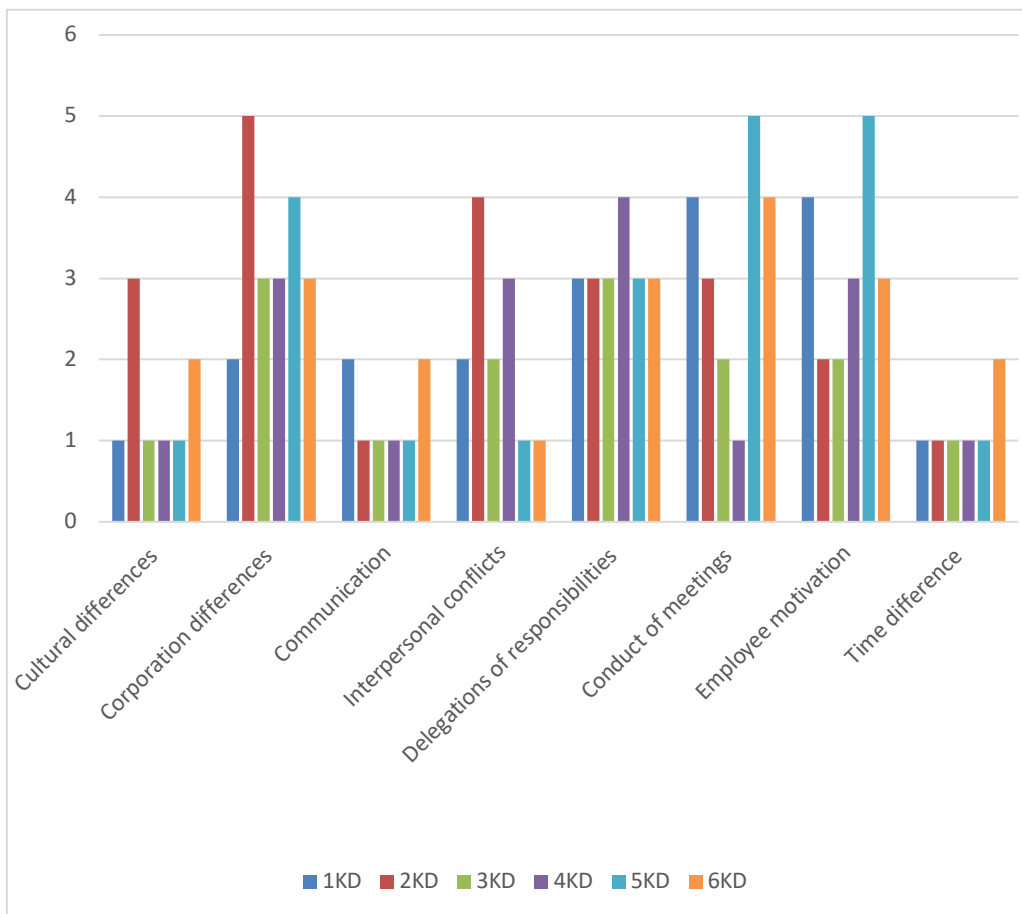The graph below represents the ranking of problems by KD employees.

Figure 16: KD's Rating of Challenges

Cultural differences: graded by two employees at 3 and 2, respectively, which contrasts with their colleagues. These employees in the previous question about the cultural differences were the only ones who acknowledged cultural differences. All other employees graded this issue as 1 and previously stated that there are no cultural differences.

Corporation differences: not graded by any employee as the least problematic. The minimum grade is 2, which was given by the CEO of the company. All other participants placed it at least at 3, excluding one Chief Engineer who gave a 4 and Deputy CEO who gave it the highest possible grade – 5. The fact that the rankings are high shows the importance of this issue in the collaboration from the KD's view.

Communication: surprisingly graded by only two employees out of six at the level higher than 1 – 2. However, same as we mentioned in the analysis of answers of SSE respondents, the topic of collaboration includes other issues that are graded further on: interpersonal conflicts, the delegation of responsibilities, the conduct of meetings.

Interpersonal conflicts: graded by two employees at level 1, another two employees at level 2, and the last two graded it at 3 and 4, respectively. Interestingly, the Deputy CEO graded it higher than the CEO by 2 points. Additionally, one of the Chief Engineers (out of 3), graded it 2 points higher than the others – 3 in total.

Delegation of responsibilities: graded by the majority of employees at level 4, and one of the Chief Engineers graded it at 5. This is the first issue that was graded so high on average. In general, these statistics reflect the previously discussed feelings on the part of KD employees of being used and not taken into account during important decisions (in this case, the delegation of responsibilities).

Conduct of meetings: graded at all the levels, repeatedly at level 4 by the CEO and one Chief Engineer. Interestingly, the other Chief Engineer graded it higher at level 5, while the last one graded it only at level 1. The Deputy CEO graded it one point lower than the CEO, and the Technical Director gave it a 2. In general, employees at higher positions perceive this issue as relevant.

Employee motivation: not graded lower than 2, which shows the importance of this issue. The Deputy CEO and the Deputy Technical Director graded it as 2. Two out of

three Chief Engineers ranked motivation as a level 3 issue, and the third Chief Engineer, Borovskiy, ranked it with the highest possible grade – 5. The CEO put this problem at level 4, which was the highest grade from an employee occupying this position (the CEO did not rank any other issue higher than 4, only the conduct of meetings that was given the same rating).

Time difference – graded as irrelevant by five out of six employees. One employee put it at 2, which does not change the general opinion of this issue as irrelevant during collaboration.

To conclude the rankings of collaboration challenges, the results of the two companies will now be compared:

- Cultural differences: in both organizations, two employees who previously mentioned the existence of such differences rated this issue as relevant. Also, one more employee unexpectedly graded it higher than 1. Thus, the views of employees from both sides somewhat coincide. Therefore, this issue is challenging for companies **at the same medium level.**

- - Corporate difference: in general, employees from KD ranked this issue higher than employees from SSE, as there are no 1's and only one 2, while in SSE, it is graded at 1-2 twice. Both companies' Deputy CEO's gave it the highest rating of 5 points. Therefore, this issue is **more challenging for KD.**

- - Communication: received a low rating by both organizations, because participants were provided with other options for issues that happen during the collaboration further in the questionnaire (interpersonal conflicts, the delegation of responsibilities, the conduct of meetings). Therefore, this issue is **mildly challenging for both organizations** due to a shared lack of understanding of the issue.

- - Interpersonal conflicts: graded approximately the same, where once more, deputies from both of the organizations had identical opinions and rated this issue at 4, which is higher by 2 points than the CEO's rating. Therefore, this issue is challenging for the organizations at **a similarly high level**.

- - <u>Delegation of responsibilities:</u> in general, employees from KD graded it higher, but in contrast to other problems, SSE also rated delegation issues as critical. Therefore, this issue is **highly challenging for both** organizations but **more relevant for KD**.

- - <u>Conduct of meetings:</u> overall, this issue is more relevant for KD employees. However, employees at the high positions (e.g., CEO, Deputy CEO) in SSE have similar opinions to their KD counterparts. This could mean that employees at lower positions are less aware of the issues in SSE. Therefore, this issue is **highly challenging for both** organizations.

- - <u>Employee motivation:</u> this issue has more challenges from the KD's side; none of its employees rated it lower than a 1, while in SSE, two employees graded it as such (1). However, once more CEO's visions coincided (all gave it a 4). Therefore, this issue is **challenging** for both companies, but **more** so **for KD**.

- - <u>Time difference:</u> this issue does not need to be discussed and considered within the context of this collaboration, as most employees from both organizations consider it irrelevant. Therefore, this issue **is not challenging for either company**.

An interesting fact is that all the challenges related to communication, such as interpersonal conflict, the conduct of meetings, and employee motivation, are considered by all participants as an issue. As previously discussed in the theoretical part of this research, communication in intercultural teams is the base for illuminating all the problems on employee or organizational levels. Like Evans suggested, managers have to employ correct techniques to prevent a drop in motivation in employees (2017).

From the combination and analysis of the results, it is apparent that, generally, KD's employees grade challenges higher or at the same level as their SSE counterparts. This could be because employees are reacting more to troublesome issues that have persisted over a prolonged period.

The next questioner focused on the participants' perception of management techniques in intercultural collaboration. The participants had to answer "yes" or "no" and to explain their choice.

> *"Are managers successful in leading intercultural collaboration?"*

	Name	Yes or No
	SSE Engineering	
	Name	Yes or No
1.	Zagorodny	- Yes, common language, a similar culture and a generally generalized corporate culture.
2.	Joltikov	- Yes, a constant personal example.
3.	Andreev	- Yes. Russian language.
4.	Kihaeva	- Yes, the proximity of the Russian and Ukrainian cultures makes it successful, as well as the general historical similarity of the principles of the organization of work processes.
5.	Zinger	- Yes, in terms of intercultural cooperation, there are no problems.
6.	Korishov	- Yes, but communication has to be adapted and difference in values has to be discussed.
7.	Simonov	- Yes and No, as collaboration is generally successful, but some issues can arise due to differences in cultures.
	Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"	
	Name	
1.	Neznamov	- Probably yes, but the question shouldn't be addressed to me.
2.	Abdulin	- Yes, but misunderstandings due to cultural differences occur
3.	Astashenkov	- Yes, this is ensured by experience, personal qualities and professional attitude.
4.	Ivashenko	- Difficult to answer
5.	Borovskiy	- Yes, in general due to professionalism
6.	Sokolenko	- Yes, but can be made more successful through more frequent personal meetings.

Table 11: Success of management of intercultural team

All of the employees answered positively to the question (so, with a "yes"). Same as in previous questions, some employees are younger than others stated that intercultural differences exist and management could be done better in ways like:

- Frequency of communication

- Discussion of values

- Establishment of more personal attitudes

- Elimination of misunderstandings

Interestingly, many employees from SSE cited similarities due to shared history, culture, and language. However, this was not brought up by anyone from KD. The latter company's participants explained their positive answers by the professionalism of the working team, but only two employees gave this explanation. Two other employees decided to skip this question due to reasons like "difficult to answer" and "question should not be addressed to me." This sort of reaction indicates the inability of participants to register the level of managers competence due to carelessness or hesitation to share an honest opinion.

There is a possibility that participants did not pay full attention to the wording of the question, as it was based on the analysis of the management of "intercultural collaboration." At the same time, the majority stated previously that there is no need for intercultural management due to a lack of cultural differences. Nevertheless, none of the participants gave a negative answer to the question. That is why this question will not be considered while grading managers' performance in analyzed cases to prevent contradictions. Additionally, employees who affirmed cultural differences gave examples of how management could be improved; these are important for the research.

The fact that participants from different companies gave various explanations about the success of managers' techniques gives an impression of a lack of cooperation from both organizations on the management level. Managers are not discussing ways of efficient management jointly, while collective decisions could be more effective. The improvement of communication will help companies to promote joint decision

making. As discussed in the literature, collecting feedback is the way of overcoming difficulties in the cooperation. There is no feedback methods that works for every company, culture and etc., therefore managers have to decide on the method individually (Gibson, 2015).

The next question focused on the collaboration and its changes in the previous years. If participants stated that there were changes, they were asked to explain how exactly collaboration had changed.

"Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years?"

	SSE Engineering	
	Name	Yes or No
1.	Zagorodny	- No, has not changed
2.	Joltikov	- Yes, it has improved, higher number of projects
3.	Andreev	- Yes, higher level of the collaboration
4.	Kihaeva	- No, level of cooperation has not changed
5.	Zinger	- Yes, more projects together
6.	Korishov	- Difficult to evaluate the dynamics of development of cooperation
7.	Simonov	- No, I did not notice any changes during the period that I worked in the company.
	Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"	
	Name	Yes or No
1.	Neznamov	- Yes, there is a closer interaction between companies, and additional joint projects lead to better interaction between teams.
2.	Abdulin	- Yes, the number of cooperative projects increased
3.	Astashenkov	- Yes, an increase in the number of diverse joint projects, focus on the development of cooperation.
4.	Ivashenko	- Yes, but the level of cooperation has not significantly changed
5.	Borovskiy	- No

6.	Sokolenko	- No, it has not changed.

Table 12: Changes in the collaboration

There are two respondents from KD who stated that there were no changes in the collaboration and tree employees from SSE who shared that view. One more participant from SSE refrained from answering, stating that "it is difficult to evaluate," meaning his lack of knowledge in this question.

The rest of the respondents from SSE explained their definite answer to the question with the increase of joint projects. Andreev justified an increase in joint projects by moving all the design work from SSE to KD. Four out of six participants from KD gave the same reasoning as employees from SSE for theirs: an increase in numbers of joint projects. However, Ivashenko, by mentioning the change in the collaboration, emphasized that the level of collaboration did not become better. The level means the quality of cooperation, specifically element communication: "The communication has been reduced, which reduces the efficiency and correctness of decision making."

To conclude, there is an equal number of employees who think that there were positive changes in the collaboration, such as an increase of mutual work and employees who believe that there were no changes. This could be due to the fact of enduring inefficient communication between corporations. Different answers to the simple question give an impression of employees' unfamiliarity with the basics of collaboration. The primary and only reason for this could be lack of communication between companies and/or within the companies.

The next question concerned the political situation between countries and how it influences the collaboration and company teamwork. In case of an affirmative answer, participants had to explain their reasoning.

> *"Has the political situation of countries affected the collaboration?"*

SSE Engineering		
	Name	Political situation
1.	Zagorodny	- Yes, some customers are skeptical of the Ukrainian subcontractor.

2.	Joltikov	- Yes, there are difficulties with access.
3.	Andreev	- Yes, KD employees' access to facilities in the Russian Federation; - SSE staff business trips to Ukraine;
4.	Kihaeva	- Yes, the number of potential projects has decreased.
5.	Zinger	- Yes, business trips are significantly more complicated
6.	Korishov	- Yes, it affected the organization of business trips and border crossing.
7.	Simonov	- I cannot say, because I have not been working for the company for so long.

Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"		
	Name	Political situation
1.	Neznamov	- Yes, contractors might be against work with enterprises ran by non-residents of the Russian Federation (and especially Ukraine), therefore KD loses contracts
2.	Abdulin	- No
3.	Astashenkov	- Yes, the processes associated with the presence of specialists of the Institute at the facilities of the Russian Federation have become more complicated.
4.	Ivashenko	- Yes, the joint participation of specialists of our organizations in meetings at facilities and site visits decreased.
5.	Borovskiy	- Yes, lack of communication worsened
6.	Sokolenko	- Yes, the number of personal meetings decreased, which reduced the level of personal and friendly relations.

Table 13: Effects of the political situation on collaboration

From the table, it is evident that the majority of employees stated that the political situation affected the working process between companies, except one employee from each company. From the SSE's employees' perception, the main challenge that arises from politics is the mobility: business trips, access to facilities, and border crossing.

Also, the CEO mentioned skepticism of potential customers about the subcontractor being from Ukraine. The same reason – contractors being against working with Ukrainian citizens – was given by the CEO of KD. This factor brought many complications, and the number of joint projects decreased.

The participants from KD also stated restricted movements as a problem, as the proximity to sites is crucial but impossible. This challenge led to a decrease in joint meetings and site visits. Furthermore, as one employee, Astashenkov, mentioned: "The issues of licensing and certification of the institute in the Russian Federation are becoming practically unsolvable." This automatically leads to the loss of the work that could previously be completed successfully.

Another issue that emerged due to the changes in the political situation is the lack of communication. KD's employee, Sokolenko, explained thus the consequences of the decreasing number of personal meetings: "the relationship is more business - finding a solution to some issues is becoming more complicated." Therefore, it is clear that politics affected personal attitudes between parties that brought complications to the working process at a personal level.

These new challenges due to the political situation affected both organizations in similar ways and led to more collaboration complications. To conclude, the main problems because of the worsening relationship between countries where companies are located lead to:

- Challenges in mobility

- Prejudice against Ukrainian contractor

- Decrease in joint projects

- Complications in communication

The last question of the interview focused on the participants' forecasting of the future collaboration of companies. The employees had to choose between positive and negative and define their choice.

"What is your forecast for the companies' collaboration in the future?"

SSE Engineering		
	Name	Positive or Negative
1.	Zagorodny	- Positive, it is possible to build competitive cooperation that meets the dynamic requirements of the customer

	Name	Positive or negative
2.	Joltikov	- Positive, joint cooperation is a way to keep both companies in the market in the current competitive situation.
3.	Andreev	- Positive, due to the availability of competent employees
4.	Kihaeva	- Positive, this is a mutually beneficial cooperation.
5.	Zinger	- Cautiously positive (in case of successful modernization of KD) and market stability in the Russian Federation.
6.	Korishov	- Positive. KD has significant resources, combined with its willingness to invest in developing competences according to customer requirements.
7.	Simonov	- Positive. Collaboration brings obvious benefits to both companies.
Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ"		
	Name	Positive or negative
8.	Neznamov	- Positive, due to the ability to compete in quality, availability of competences, value.
9.	Abdulin	- Positive, as the number of joint projects is increasing including successfully completed projects
10.	Astashenkov	- Positive, the concept of joint cooperation has been developed.
11.	Ivashenko	- Positive, organizations could successfully complement each other.
12.	Borovskiy	- More positive than negative, as there is mutual interest
13.	Sokolenko	- Positive, because companies are partners and mutually benefit each other

Table 14: Forecast of companies' collaboration

The majority of respondents gave a positive forecast for collaborations. Only one employee from SSE stated that a positive forecast can only be given in the case of a "successful modernization of KD" and if the situation on the Russian market is stable. The main reason why the majority was optimistic is the shared understanding of the mutual benefit of collaboration for the organizations. For instance, the CEO of KD stated that collaboration makes it possible to handle competitors and to be more efficient. Another ground for future cooperation was the availability of competent employees. In general, the willingness to cooperate successfully is entirely dependent on employees' attitudes from both sides. Moreover, it could be useful to acknowledge

this shared optimism during joint meetings to eliminate mutual assumptions of indifference.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The primary purpose of this research was to realize its principal and secondary aims and draw conclusions based on the research hypothesis. All the findings are based on 13 interviews conducted during this research, which were essential for formulating the conclusions hereof. The principal aim was to analyze the difficulties of intercultural team management and ways of overcoming these issues. This task will be accomplished through the explanation of findings corresponding to the secondary aims. In total, this research had three secondary aims, and the findings of each one will be presented in bullet points.

Expand knowledge in intercultural management, specifically in Russia and Ukraine.
- In the analyzed countries, age affects people's perceptions of culture.
- The younger employees believe that cultural differences exist, while the older personnel (e.g., 40 and older) believe that shared history makes the existence of such differences impossible.
- The majority of the employees belong to the older generation; this is the leading cause of ignorance of intercultural differences that led to collaboration problems.
- These are as follows:
  - Language;
  - Underlying differences;
  - Values;
  - Misunderstandings.
- The inability of managers to effectively organize work and communicate efficiently in the context of growing cultural differences was the deciding factor in the emergence of problems.

Research the main current issues in the business world that arise in collaborations between analyzed engineering companies, located in Russia and Ukraine.
- In the case of these countries solely, the political situation is an issue.
- Political disagreements led to difficulties in the mobility and crossing borders during the collaboration.

- The surfacing of prejudice against each other and unwillingness to cooperate due to countries' relations led to a decrease in the number of joint projects and led to an increase of desire to gain an advantage on the individual level instead of cohesion.

<u>Benefit companies analyzed in this research by pointing out problem areas in management.</u>
- The participating organizations showed an interest in the future results of this research from the start.
- A detailed analysis of employees performing different roles provides an opportunity for the companies to increase their awareness of the culture-based difficulties in collaboration and the ability to eliminate them.
- The research led to the acknowledgment of other relevant problems that exist in the collaboration between the two given companies:
    - Interpersonal conflicts;
    - Misunderstandings;
    - Lack of communication;
    - Lack of informal relations;
    - Conduct of meetings;
    - Motivation;
    - Feeling of being used (exclusive to KD).

The analysis and focus on the aims based on intercultural team management and ways of improving it led to a more in-depth analysis of the management of this collaboration. The main issue appeared to be linked to cultural differences, even though some employees denied their existence. This central problem is communication, which incorporates differences in language, values, attitudes. This problem became prominent due to managers' lack of knowledge of the existence of cultural differences. This research registered many challenges in intercultural team management that could arise in an intercultural working environment, and offers the following ways of overcoming them:
- Being aware of the changes that take place throughout the collaboration, including the emergence of culture-based conflicts.

- Eliminating the influence of political disagreements on the working process.
- Paying attention to the opinions of the minority to make accurate conclusions.
- Timely responding to newly-emerging problems.
- The most efficient way of overcoming this problem, as explained in the literature review, is to provide employees with a clear understanding of a given situation and what is expected of them. The clarity of "discussion," which is one of the ways of overcoming conflicts, will eliminate all possible misunderstandings and inexact expectations. This technique is vital, as it will introduce stability and efficiency to communication, which is the main element of successful teamwork regardless of where it takes place: in real life or online.

Once the research has been conducted, it is possible to, briefly, answer the research question that will point to the discussion of the hypothesis:

1. What elements play a significant role in intercultural teams, focusing on cultures that are stereotypically similar to each other? – Communication is essential: communication of differences and all issues that could arise due to misunderstandings.

2. What are the successful management techniques used in teams with two cultural backgrounds? – These techniques are mainly focused on bringing clarity to the working process, e.g., analytical work with employees, division of labor, meetings, use of technologies for better monitoring.

3. What are the main challenges which can occur in intercultural teams, and how does one overcome them? – Misunderstandings, inability, or unwillingness to take into consideration each other's wants and needs.

4. What are the issues of managing intercultural teams with stereotypically similar cultural backgrounds, and how does one eliminate them? – Inability to recognize the cultural differences, as it makes it impossible to eliminate them.

The conducted research proves the hypothesis that efficient collaboration is directly related to proper management. Otherwise, it can produce additional expenses. In the case of the analyzed companies, inefficient management techniques were revealed. The management process ignored cultural differences, which led to a communication

break-down (the fundamental problem). Communication issues did not arise only from the ignorance of cultural differences but also from the failure of the managers to implement suitable communication techniques to build productive personal and professional relationships with employees. These inadequate management techniques, as stated in the hypothesis, led to additional spending due to performance delays, poor work quality, arguments over profit division, and lack of a personal approach.

All the findings have their limitations for different reasons. For instance, this research could be improved through the analysis of all the employees participating in the inter-company collaboration. The sample size included only half while interviewing the other half could produce new findings and add to the soundness of this research. Time was also a major limitation. Unfortunately, the interview participants did not have enough time to answer some questions thoroughly, as these interviews were conducted during the workdays and in the context of a pandemic. If fuller answers were given, they could have led this researcher to more profound or even novel conclusions related to collaboration. Therefore, findings could be more useful and beneficial to the companies.

This research could be developed further in the understanding of analyzed cultures within the collaboration of companies. With the help of the current research, it was emphasized that many participants believe in the similarity of cultures, which could be investigated in future research. This analysis could lead to a more solid opinion of the essence of the collaboration process and help develop the most suitable management techniques that would balance the working process and boost efficiency.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Appendix 1
Section 1
1.   What is your name?
Zagorodny Yevgeny
2.   What is your gender:
Male
3.   How old are you?
59
4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)
 SSE Engineering Moscow
5.   What is your position in the company?
CEO
6.   How long have you been working in this field?
37 years
7.   How long have you been working for the company?
2 years
Section 2
Topic collaboration:
8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?
Cooperation is carried out every day as part of ongoing project implementation activities.
9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?
SSE Engineering acts as the head of organization in the Russian and foreign markets and performs the function of project management both at the level of the Project Manager / ISU, and at the level of heads of individual disciplines. KD is the engineering center of the company, carrying out work on the development of design and working documentation.
10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)
8
11.   In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?
The combination of SSI Engineering and KD allows you to ensure a competitive level of prices for services.
12.   What were the main challenges during the collaboration?
Failure to issue documentation on time. Rigidity and lack of understanding of the system of interaction with the customer.
For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.
Topic communication:
13.   How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

Phone calls, emails, official letters, live conversations.

14.   What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Live negotiations.

15.   What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

Delays occur. Besides, sometimes there is language barrier from our side, usually Ukrainian people know Russian, but Russian people don not really know Ukrainian, especially written words.

Topic management of collaboration:

16.   Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

Yes. During to the project "Suda" and "Nizhnekamsk", the experience of SSE specialists that was gained through the collaboration with Sveza LLC, Linde and Citite allowed us to begin cooperation in new areas in which our company had not previously worked.

17.   In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

Yes, similar history and language backgrounds were beneficial.

18.   Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

Improving the regularity of face-to-face and distance communications.

19.   Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

-       Cultural differences 2
-       Corporation differences 3
-       Communication 1
-       Interpersonal conflicts 1
-       Delegations of responsibilities 3
-       Conduct of meetings 2
-       Employee motivation 2
-       Time difference 1

20.   Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

Yes, intercultural cooperation is generally positive. The basis lies in a common language, a close culture and a generally generalized corporate culture.

21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

It has not changed.

22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

Some customers are skeptical of the Ukrainian subcontractor.

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Positive, while maintaining the current price level, continuing the reorganization and improving the means of production, it is possible to build competitive cooperation that meets the dynamic requirements of the customer, in conditions of general market tension.

Appendix 2

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Neznamov Dmitriy

2.   What is your gender:

Male

3.   How old are you?

42 years

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ

5.   What is your position in the company?

CEO

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

20 years

7.   How long have you been working for the company?

13 years

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

Over the past three years, we have been cooperating all the time; earlier we had no more than one joint project per year.

9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

SSE is the holder of the contract, and carries out the functions of general designer on joint projects, and is also actively seeking for new projects on the Russian market. KD actually carries out the issuance of project documentation, as the project resource is concentrated in Kharkov.

10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

7

11.   In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

KD has a reliable partner on the Russian market which brings stability to the working process, due to the difficult political situation between the countries.

12.   What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

In financial issues, companies' interests often vary. Usually during projects at the first stages of development, there is no open and trustee communication. In more than half the cases, KD is considered as an ordinary subcontractor. In addition, very often KD is compared to companies representing a team of freelancers, i.e. companies conducting non-systemic business, the duration of existence, which 1-3 years or companies created for a specific project.

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

Topic communication:

13.   How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

All of the ways mentioned above. There is a lack of informal communication in informal

settings.

14.   What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?
Personal meetings.
15.   What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?
There are no critical problems. Often the vision of costs (in person / hours) differs for one or another job. Misinterpretations also occur.
Topic management of collaboration:
16.   Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example
I have not
17.   In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.
Yes, as there is result in the form of finished and paid projects.
18.   Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)
We introduce the practice of working within the framework of the Project Working Groups.
19.   Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:
Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)
-    Cultural differences 1
-    Corporation differences 2
-    Communication 2
-    Interpersonal conflicts 2
-    Delegations of responsibilities 3
-    Conduct of meetings 4
-    Employee motivation 4
-    Time difference 1
20.   Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?
Probably yes, but the question should not be addressed to me.
21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?
Yes, it has changed, a large number of joint projects have appeared and many issues are
resolved jointly, each side listens to the opinion of the other side. There is a closer interaction between companies, and the more joint projects lead to better interaction between teams.
22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?
It has influenced, but not critically. As I understand it, this mainly affects when the SSE needs to show the TEC as a subcontractor or a member of the consortium, and the general customer for work with enterprises by non-residents of the Russian Federation (and especially Ukraine) has a categorical objection and the SSE is forced to turn to third-party organizations, respectively TEP is losing work. The number of meetings "live" has decreased, but the situation is changing for the better.
23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.
Positive. Due to the ability to compete in quality, availability of competencies, value.

Appendix 3

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Joltikov Roman

2.   What is your gender:

Male

3.   How old are you?

44 years

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

SSE Engineering Moscow

5.   What is your position in the company?

Deputy CEO

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

22 years

7.   How long have you been working for the company?

2 years

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

Everyday

9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

SSE - the owner of the contract with the Customer as the General Designer / sub-designer, KD - the sub-designer under the agreement with the SSE

10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

8

11.   In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

Increasing competitiveness on the Russian market

12.   What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

Deadlines are not met. Besides, KD does not hear us or just don not listen to our requirements.

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

Topic communication:

13.   How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

All types of communications are used: phone calls, emails, video conferences, face-to-face meetings, joint business trips

14.   What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

In-person meetings / meetings in the same location

15.   What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

Division of responsibility for untimely performance of work

Topic management of collaboration:

16. Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example
No
17. In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.
Yes, number of projects, implemented together, is constantly growing.
18. Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)
Explanatory work with key personnel is needed for joint work of companies to increase competitiveness and, as a result, the company's survival in current market conditions
19. Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:
Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)
- Cultural differences 1
- Corporation differences 1
- Communication 1
- Interpersonal conflicts 1
- Delegations of responsibilities 1
- Conduct of meetings 1
- Employee motivation 2
- Time difference 1
20. Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?
Yes, a constant personal example.
21. Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?
Yes, it has improved, better communication
22. Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?
Yes, there are difficulties with access to sensitive facilities for survey work and initial data, part of the work cannot be performed outside the Russian Federation, etc., currency control of transactions, etc.
23. What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.
Positive. Competition in the market is growing due to a decrease in business activity; joint cooperation is a way to keep both companies in the market in the current situation.

Appendix 4
Section 1
1. What is your name?
Andreev Oleg
2. What is your gender:
Male
3. How old are you?
53 years
4. In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)
SSE Engineering Moscow
5. What is your position in the company?
Deputy Technical Director

6. How long have you been working in this field?

28 years

7. How long have you been working for the company?

10 years

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8. How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

All the time (every week, sometimes daily)

9. What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

KD - developer of design and working documentation

SSE Engineering - holding the contract

10. In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

8

11. In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

The ability to make agreements;

Engineering resources.

12. What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

Timing / Quality

Timing is often longer than other contractors have;

There are problems with quality, especially when the deadlines for several projects coincide at the same time (planning of work, resources and their accounting in KPKI require improvement).

However, all problems are completely manageable and solvable.

For the next questions definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

Topic communication:

13. How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

Emails / video conferencing / phone calls / meetings (in descending order)

14. What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Video conferencing

15. What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

KD employees access to facilities in the Russian Federation;

SSE staff business trips to Ukraine;

Topic management of collaboration:

16. Have you experienced any challenges in management process. If yes, give an example

Common problems for relations. Customer - Contractor

SSE, as a customer, requires carrying out work with a minimum cost, subject to deadlines and quality.

KD, as a contractor, is constantly trying to increase the time and cost of work. Inability to make an agreement

17.   In your opinion has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

cultures are identical

18.   Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

Separation of work.

SSE:

- seeks projects, participates in competitions and concludes agreements on them;

- manages projects;

- performs engineering surveys and surveys;

- develops special sections;

- develops basic technical solutions, approves them with the Customer;

- Carries out Supervision.

KD:

- develops design and working documentation

19.   Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

-       Cultural differences 1

-       Corporation differences 3

-       Communication 1

-       Interpersonal conflicts 2

-       Delegations of responsibilities 3

-       Conduct of meetings 2

-       Employee motivation 3

-       Time difference 1

20.   Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

Yes. Traditional economic relations of KD with the Russian Federation, Russian language.

21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

Yes, in recent years, almost all of the design work of the SSE has been placed in KD, previously most of the design work was carried out on their own or by subcontractors of the Russian Federation.

22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

It has influenced

Problems:

KD employees access to facilities in the Russian Federation;

SSE staff business trips to Ukraine;

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Positive,

The presence of competencies, the availability of personnel

Appendix 5

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Abdulin Aleksey

2.   What is your gender:

Male

3.   How old are you?

40 year

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ

5.   What is your position in the company?

Deputy CEO

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

20 years

7.   How long have you been working for the company?

11 years

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

All the time

9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

SSE:

- Search and receipt of orders regards to the correct "pseudo-European" approaches;

- Communication with foreign customers and partners;

- An unreasonable desire to act as a technical ideologist of projects (with the aim of increasing its share in the separation of funds under the contract).

KD:

- the project team with a large inexpensive integrated resource of technically competent and experienced specialists, a structure that allows you to carry out large and small projects.

10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

7

11.   In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

The presence of the result is the joint performance of work, including complex ones.

12.   What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

There is not enough partnership between Project Managers and organization leaders (each of the participants is worried about his organization, putting the solution or creating problems for the partner as a minimum priority).

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

Topic communication:

13.   How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

Mainly emails

14.   What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Personal meetings as it was possible to construct Clear division of work and roles.

15.   What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

a) Coordination of cost sharing between organizations without a partnership approach

b) explicit or implicit consumer attitude to the Institute on the part of some leaders of the SSE. Especially this is harmful, as an example for other leaders.

Topic management of collaboration:

16.   Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

Yes, non-performance or low performance of agreements and obligations.

17.   In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

Yes, but misunderstandings can appear

18.   Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

a) Strategy on the connection of a Russian company with the name of the famous engineering firm SVECO is still beneficial

b) The strategy on the separation of the stages between the SSE and TEP-Union. Unfortunately, this strategy is not fully implemented by SSE.

19.   Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

-       Cultural differences 3
-       Corporation differences 5
-       Communication 1
-       Interpersonal conflicts 4
-       Delegations of responsibilities 3
-       Conduct of meetings 3
-       Employee motivation 2
-       Time difference 1

20.   Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

Yes, but misunderstandings due to cultural difference occur

21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

It has changed, the amount of cooperative projects increased.

22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

No

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Positive, as the number of mutual projects is increasing including finished successfully projects, this anyway must perforce better and more structured partnership during collaboration within the managers' level of the projects.

Appendix 6

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Astashenkov Alexander

2.   What is your gender:

Male

3.   How old are you?

46

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ

5.   What is your position in the company?

Technical director

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

24 years

7.   How long have you been working for the company?

12 years

Section 2

<u>Topic collaboration:</u>

8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

SSE Engineering is one of the main partners. Collaboration is happening on an ongoing basis.

9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

The main role of SSE Engineering in our cooperation is contracting on the territory of the Russian Federation, which allow to maximize the design capacity of the institute.

The role of KD "TEP-SOYUZ is the provision of high-quality engineering services that meet the modern requirements of the market, both in the traditional energy sector and in areas new to the institute.

10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

6 with an upward trend. Success, in my opinion, is directly proportional to the number of jointly implemented projects.

11.   In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

The work experience as a single project team during the development of complex projects, complementing competencies, achieving goals and getting (really want) tangible profits.

12.   What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

Most likely, main issues arise in almost every joint project concerning "fair" distribution of money (profits), which takes into account the actual amount of work performed, separation of responsibilities, direct interaction with the end customer. Misinterpretations can occur as sometimes not enough attention is paid during the collaboration.

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

<u>Topic communication:</u>

13.   How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

All modern ways of remote communication. Physical meetings, generally , only within the framework of meetings with the Customer, or in case of escalation of certain production issues that requires the personal participation of employees and managers of different levels (said - in relation to the draft of the Court's CP)

14.   What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

In my opinion - teleconferences as a tool which contributes efficient decisions making process

15. What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

In certain situations, I would like more solid support from the SSE during the communication with end customers, especially regarding additional work and compensation of labor costs to the institute.

Topic management of collaboration:

16. Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

No, I have not experienced any challenges. If the issue exceeded to the leadership level, the parties always found a solution.

17. In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

In my opinion, the term "intercultural interaction" is somewhat redundant in relation to our companies, since the mechanisms of interaction, attitude to production issues, cultural values and life priorities are generally similar. At the same time, I do not exclude the presence of individuals in each of the companies that have fundamentally different views on these issues, but these are exceptions that do not affect the overall picture. To conclude, the interaction is effective.

18. Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

Organization of frequent communication on all levels during the "SUDA" project; the arrival of a technologist from the SSE in Kharkov; personal meetings of leaders in Kharkov and Moscow.

19. Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

- Cultural differences 1
- Corporation differences 3
- Communication 1
- Interpersonal conflicts 2
- Delegations of responsibilities 3
- Conduct of meetings 2
- Employee motivation 2
- Time difference 1

20. Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

Successfully. This is ensured by experience, personal qualities and professional attitude.

21. Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

The level has increased significantly. The reason - an increase in the number of diverse joint projects, the emergence of new people in the leadership of the SSE, contributing to the development of cooperation.

22. Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

Yes. The processes associated with the need for the presence of specialists of the Institute at the facilities of the Russian Federation have become more complicated. This affects the collection of data, the processes of coordination with the Customer, the implementation of field supervision. The issues of licensing and certification of the

institute in the Russian Federation are becoming practically unsolvable. Therefore, there was a loss of some of the work that was successfully performed previously.

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Positive, while maintaining the current price level, continuing the reorganization and improving the means of production, it is possible to build competitive cooperation that meets the dynamic requirements of the customer, in conditions of general market tension.

Appendix 7

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Zinger Mikhail

2.   What is your gender:

Male

3.   How old are you?

64

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

SSE Engineering Moscow

5.   What is your position in the company?

Chief Engineer

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

43 years

7.   How long have you been working for the company?

2 years

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

Daily

9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

Customer - Contractor

10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

5

11.   In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

Mutually complementary competencies, flexible pricing policy options

12.   What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

Disagreement of interests of the parties regarding pricing / profit sharing principles. Sometimes it is hard for people to hear each other.

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

Topic communication:

13.   How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

All mentioned above

14. What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Personal meetings

15. What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

People deny hearing each other

Topic management of collaboration:

16. Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

Attempts to act through the head of the main customer. Neglect of corporate principles. Example - Sveza, from the very beginning of the work - a joint visit to St. Petersburg

Inhibition of the decision to create joint working groups with profiting on the individual level.

17. In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

The cultures are the same; the stages of development are different.

18. Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

Discussion of roles and pursue them in order to force immersion in a real market environment by demonstrating competitors' positions.

19. Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

- Cultural differences 2
- Corporation differences 4
- Communication 1
- Interpersonal conflicts 4
- Delegations of responsibilities 5
- Conduct of meetings 1
- Employee motivation 4
- Time difference 1

20. Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

In terms of intercultural cooperation, there are no problems. Personal - there are problems.

21. Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

Yes. It became closer due to the decrease in (dramatic) own design capacity of the SSE.

22. Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

Yes. Significantly complicated business trips. It is difficult or impossible to allow employees of KD to objects in the Russian Federation.

23. What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Caution positive (in case of successful modernization of KD) and market preservation in the Russian Federation.

Appendix 8

Section 1

1. What is your name?

Ivashenko Yuriy

2. What is your gender:

Male

3. How old are you?

45

4. In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ

5. What is your position in the company?

Chief Engineer

6. How long have you been working in this field?

22 years

7. How long have you been working for the company?

12 years

Section 2

<u>Topic collaboration:</u>

8. How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

In recent years, cooperation with SSE Engineering has been ongoing on various projects.

9. What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

SSE Engineering – Contract holder. Communicator with the General Customer.

KD - developer of design documentation.

10. In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

7

1. In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

The availability of work for the KD. Using the reference of the SSE and their business contacts for easier process of getting job by the Institute. Successfully completed projects.

12. What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

Low value of the Institute's work.

Minimal communication of the designer with the Customer's technical specialists, the presence of several links in the chain of communication with them.

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

<u>Topic communication:</u>

13. How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

Phone calls and emails.

14. What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Video meetings have the greatest effect

15. What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

I cannot note any special problems in communication. Sometimes decisions on technical issues are made without taking into account the opinions of the Institute's

specialists and their additional labor costs. Moreover, the Institute does not participate in direct discussions with the Customer.

Topic management of collaboration:

16.   Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

I belong more to the executive level of the company. For my part, I consider the problem to be partial not understanding and not taking into account the interests of partners in common projects.

17.   In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

I do not see much difference between our cultures, so I think that there can be no significant effect of this difference on the interaction of technical specialists. The effectiveness of the interaction between company specialists is more influenced by personal and business qualities.

18.   Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

The strategy of working with SSE's specialists does not differ from the strategy of working with other companies. I believe that a positive interaction is achieved by the desire to hear the Customer's demand, by making maximum efforts to implement the right technical solutions, by a clear understanding by each of the project participants of the boundaries of their responsibility in achieving a positive result in their work.

19.   Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

-        Cultural differences 1
-        Corporation differences 3
-        Communication 1
-        Interpersonal conflicts 3
-        Delegations of responsibilities 4
-        Conduct of meetings 1
-        Employee motivation 3
-        Time difference 1

20.   Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

It is quite difficult to answer about leaders. (executives?)

21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

The number of joint projects has increased. The level of cooperation has not significantly changed. In my opinion, the communication process of the Institute's specialists with the technical specialists of the customers has been reduced, which reduces the efficiency and correctness of decision-making.

22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

Yes, The joint participation of specialists of our organizations in meetings at facilities and site visits decreased. This reduces the level of personal communication and reduces the access of the Institute's specialists to "first-hand" information.

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Positive. I believe that our organizations could successfully complement each other. SSE has developed connections in various industries, and the Institute has significant design experience. In order for this cooperation to be successful, clear understanding

is necessary for the SSE that the development of the Institute will bring them more dividends in the long run, as opposed to the immediate benefits of reducing the cost of designing local facilities.

Appendix 9

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Kihaeva Zemfira

2.   What is your gender:

Female

3.   How old are you?

61

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

 SSE Engineering Moscow

5.   What is your position in the company?

Chief Engineer

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

30 years

7.   How long have you been working for the company?

8 months

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

Daily

9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

SSE - Verification and approval of drawings and structural analysis. Technical consultation.

KD – documentation provider

10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

10

11.   In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

Efficiency of decisions, professionalism of employees

12.   What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

No challenges

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

Topic communication:

13.   How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

Phone calls, letters, online meetings

14.   What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Online meetings

15.   What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

None

Topic management of collaboration:

16.   Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

All working issues were resolved jointly, professionally.

17.   In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

Yes, the number of projects implemented jointly is constantly growing + don't think there are cultural differences

18.   Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

Meeting frequently

19.   Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

-       Cultural differences 1
-       Corporation differences 1
-       Communication 1
-       Interpersonal conflicts 1
-       Delegations of responsibilities 1
-       Conduct of meetings 1
-       Employee motivation 1
-       Time difference 1

20.   Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

Yes, the proximity of the Russian and Ukrainian cultures makes it successful, as well as the general historical similarity of the principles of the organization of work processes.

21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

The level of cooperation has not changed.

22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

I suppose the number of projects has decreased.

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Positive. This is a mutually beneficial cooperation.

Appendix 10

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Sokolenko Andrey

2.   What is your gender:

Male

3.   How old are you?

38

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ

5.   What is your position in the company?

Chief Engineer

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

16 years

7.	How long have you been working for the company?

12 years

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8.	How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

Communication with representatives of SSE Engineering Moscow on "Suda" and "Nizhnekamskneftekhim" facilities takes place daily.

9.	What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

Our companies should be equal partners aiming at mutually beneficial relations, but now SSE Engineering sometimes shows that its role in cooperation is higher than the role of TEP-UNION.

10.	In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

6

11.	In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

In the process of cooperation, technical and organizational problems of design are discussed and decisions are made on current issues and plans for further action.

12.	What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

There were no essential problems that we were not able to solve. There are small problems associated with different opinions of the parties, but these are always ways to solve them that suit both parties through communication.

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

Topic communication:

13.	How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings

Phone calls, emails and correspondence through the Whatsapp. Meetings are very rare.

14.	What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Meetings were successful, as during the discussions of current issues, the opinions of all parties are taken into consideration, and this factor allows finding a more suitable solution than without communication.

15.	What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

In my opinion, representatives of SSE Engineering, when resolving issues with the customer (for the sake of the wishes of the Customer), sometimes do not take into account the problems of the KD associated with additional labor costs that arise due to these wishes of the Customer. Representatives of SSE Engineering sometimes put their role above the role of representatives of the KD.

Topic management of collaboration:

16.	Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

There were no problems.

17.	In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

Yes, but there are differences in values, not sure how much it is affected by the cultural level differences.

18.   Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

Ways to communicate more frequent.

19.   Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

-        Cultural differences 2
-        Corporation differences 3
-        Communication 2
-        Interpersonal conflicts 1
-        Delegations of responsibilities 3
-        Conduct of meetings 4
-        Employee motivation 3
-        Time difference 2

20.   Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

It is difficult to answer to the account of the first heads of companies. Regarding the middle managers (at the level of Project Managers), their cooperation can be made more successful through more frequent personal meetings, including in an informal atmosphere, through the establishment of friendly relations, which will allow more open and productive work issues.

21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

Personally, I think that it has not changed.

22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

Yes. The number of personal meetings decreased, which reduced the level of personal and friendly relations. Given the fact that the relationship is more business - the solution of some issues is becoming more complicated.

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Positive, because companies are partners and mutually benefit each other, company leaders are focused on the technical and economic development of companies which takes into account the interests of ordinary employees.

Appendix 11

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Borovskiy Alexander

2.   What is your gender:

Male

3.   How old are you?

66

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ

5.   What is your position in the company?

Chief engineer

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

11 years

7.   How long have you been working for the company?

11 years

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

Often.

9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

Contractor developing design documentation. SSE provides new contracts regularly.

10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

7

11.   In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

Availability of orders for the development of documentation.

12.   What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

Failure to issue documentation on time. Rigidity and lack of understanding of the system of interaction with the customer.

Low cost and short deadlines for ordering design work.

A sufficiently high degree of exploitation of KD by SSE. SSE is using KD by exposing short deadlines that are impossible to meet

Some unwillingness to take into account the interests of KD on the part of SSE employees

Topic communication:

13.   How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

Emails, phone calls. Meetings are very rare.

14.   What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Communication at the level of Project Managers and technical directors of the project. At this level, I cannot indicate any particular effect.

15.   What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

Business relations with employees.

Topic management of collaboration:

16.   Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

No change in the deadlines and no compensation when customers' desires changed (SSE does not support the institution).

17.   In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

There are no differences in cultures

18.   Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

Implementation of a progressive design system (three-dimensional design) for better monitoring.

19.   Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

-       Cultural differences 1

-       Corporation differences 4

-       Communication 1

147

-     Interpersonal conflicts 1
-     Delegations of responsibilities 3
-     Conduct of meetings 5
-     Employee motivation 5
-     Time difference 1

20.   Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

Yes, in general due to the professionalism

21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

It has not changed.

22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

It was affected due to the difficult, and sometimes even completely excluded, communication between the employees of KHPKI TEP-SOYUZ LLC with end customers and suppliers, and the poor work of the SSE employees in obtaining the necessary information from them for design.

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

More positive than negative.

There is mutual interest:

- is a strategic customer;

- is a fairly cheap design organization.

Appendix 12

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Simonov Aleksey

2.   What is your gender:

Male

3.   How old are you?

31

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

SSE Engineering Moscow

5.   What is your position in the company?

Project Manager

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

9 years

7.   How long have you been working for the company?

2 years

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

Quite often

9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

SSE: project management, verification of documentation

TEPS: development of documentation

10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

8

11. In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

Optimization of design costs, exchange of experience.

12. What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

Different interests of companies, because of this, a lot of time is spent on agreeing on the conditions and costs of contracts and commercial offers.

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

Topic communication:

13. How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

Calls, email, weekly collaboration.

14. What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Video conferencing.

15. What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

Hard to listen and make sure that people are listening to you, Ukrainian documentation is being an issue .

Topic management of collaboration:

16. Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

Not related to management

17. In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

Overall, yes, all the problems that have arisen were resolved. However, language has to be taken into consideration, by language I mean formulations, because of the political situations

18. Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

Regular monitoring of the progress of critical tasks and monitoring their implementation.

19. Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

- Cultural differences 3
- Corporation differences 2
- Communication 1
- Interpersonal conflicts 1
- Delegations of responsibilities 2
- Conduct of meetings 1
- Employee motivation 1
- Time difference 1

20. Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

Yes and No, as collaboration is general successful, but some issues can arise due to difference in cultures.

21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

I did not notice any changes during the period that I worked in the company.

22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

I cannot say, because I have been working for the company not so long.

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Positive. Collaboration brings obvious benefits to both companies.

Appendix 13

Section 1

1.   What is your name?

Korshikov Sergei

2.   What is your gender:

Male

3.   How old are you?

30

4.   In what company are you working? (Underline the answer)

SSE Engineering Moscow

5.   What is your position in the company?

Project Manager

6.   How long have you been working in this field?

3 years

7.   How long have you been working for the company?

1.5 years

Section 2

Topic collaboration:

8.   How often do you collaborate with SSE Engineering Moscow or Kharkov designing – development institute "Teploelektroproekt-SOYUZ?

At present, KPKI TEP-Soyuz cooperated at the stage of the audit by Linde, as well as at the stage of implementation of the corresponding project, happens daily.

9.   What is the role of each company in the collaboration?

KD acts as a sub-designer in the implementation of the project for the construction of a plant for the production of Olefins in Nizhnekamsk.

SSE – provides contacts

10.   In your opinion, how successful is the collaboration? (from 1 to 10, 10 is very successful)

8

11.   In your opinion what were the positive aspects of the collaboration?

Efficiency of data provision, general involvement in the process both at the stage of formation, and at the implementation stage, the possibility of direct communication in case of questions.

12.   What were the main challenges during the collaboration?

At the stage of discussion of the project, heterogeneous awareness of the requirements of the project of the participants in the discussion.

At the implementation stage, non-compliance with the deadlines for issuing documentation.

For the next questions, definition of intercultural teamwork is essential for the understanding: the term "intercultural" often refers to interactions between cultures or, more specifically, between persons of different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural

teams appear through exchange of knowledge and experience between different cultures.

Topic communication:

13.   How communication process was established? (phone calls/ emails/ meetings)

The communication process is established through telephone communications, emails, video conferencing, as well as live meetings both at the office of KD and SSE Engineering

14.   What particularly worked well during the communication between two companies?

Personal communication.

15.   What challenges arose in the communication process between two companies?

No problems

Topic management of collaboration:

16.   Have you experienced any challenges in management process? If yes, give an example.

In the process of management, the most difficult assessment of the congestion of current resources for subsequent accounting when passing through both project audits and in the preparation of TCO.

17.   In your opinion, has the intercultural teamwork been efficient? (Yes/No) Explain your answer.

Yes, but no awareness of the differences and this could be an issue

18.   Which strategies were attempt in order to facilitate positive teamwork? (Give an example)

Within the framework of negotiations, the most effective is the strategy of preliminary coordination of the agenda of the meeting with subsequent moderation of the process in the "manual" mode.

19.   Challenges in the intercultural collaborations:

Please, rate it from 1-5 (1 is the least challenging, 5 is the most challenging)

-       Cultural differences 3
-       Corporation differences 1
-       Communication 1
-       Interpersonal conflicts 1
-       Delegations of responsibilities 2
-       Conduct of meetings 2
-       Employee motivation 2
-       Time difference 1

20.   Are managers successfully leading the intercultural collaboration? If yes, what makes it successful? If no, what should have been done to make the collaboration successful?

Yes, but communication has to be adapted and difference in values has to be discussed

21.   Has the collaboration between the companies changed in the past years? If yes, how?

It is difficult to evaluate the dynamics of development of cooperation.

22.   Has the political situation of countries effected the collaboration? If yes, how?

It affected only the organization of business trips and border crossing.

23.   What is your forecast for the companies' to collaborate in the future? (Positive or negative) Explain your answer.

Positive. KD has significant resources, combined with its willingness to invest in developing competencies according to customer requirements.