

Essay

Not peer-reviewed version

---

# Linguistic Cultures in Tandem to International Business Expansion

---

[Eugene Seo](#)\*

Posted Date: 25 September 2024

doi: 10.20944/preprints202409.1933.v1

Keywords: Economics; business; culture; linguistics



Preprints.org is a free multidiscipline platform providing preprint service that is dedicated to making early versions of research outputs permanently available and citable. Preprints posted at Preprints.org appear in Web of Science, Crossref, Google Scholar, Scilit, Europe PMC.

Copyright: This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions, and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions, or products referred to in the content.

Essay

# Linguistic Cultures in Tandem to International Business Expansion

Eugene Seo

Independent Researcher, USA; eubeanseo@gmail.com

**Abstract:** Cultural differences between nations lessens the degree of commerce and interactions that are performed. This could cause degradation in economic shifts, which could alter and devastate the lives of many people.

**Keywords:** economics; business; culture; linguistics

---

## Introduction

Globally, it can be seen across the world where Americanization has an increased degree of expansion, allowing for furthered connectivity alongside a higher level of interconnectedness. With this increased connectivity, cultural exchanges occur which in turn leads to increased business activity. That said, behind these business interactions comes with numerous challenges and implications. Past studies have been conducted in an attempt to understand the general connection between how businesses that pursue brand name expansion internationally interact with different cultures (Adamczyk 2017). This would allow for the systemization of the classifications of cultures to showcase particular countries in business areas. This is partly due to the fact that there are invaluable insights when identifying the cultural differences amongst the global economy. These differences can significantly alter business practices through an international context. Thus, it is pivotal for entrepreneurs that plan to internationally expand to understand the culture of the target market areas to which they will enter into to. While it is clear that there should be precautions for entrepreneurs when deciding to delve deeper into expanding their brand name into new markets, there are far more details and factors than just the "culture in itself".

The concept of cultures brings up the question; what factors of cultures impact entrepreneurs that seek to expand internationally (Kirubi 2014)? Findings from this study suggests that numerous factors such as history, customs, religion, relationships, and other "elements" of peoples' lives are forged from the cultures they are born within, and this displays the effect of culture onto international business due to the fact that it includes all aspects of cultural traits from all sides of society. All of these factors cumulatively could negatively impact business, demonstrating that culture in itself (i.e religion) can lead to differentiating cultural connections, ultimately hindering the degree of success for businesses.

It is a common belief held by many experienced entrepreneurs that culture plays a significant role when it comes to international expansion. While true, entrepreneurs underestimate the degree of depth that comes alongside the different factors that all add up to create the relationship between cultural traits and business expansion altogether (Morales, Aguilar 2022). Results demonstrate that culture is absolutely the main obstacle when it comes to properly developing entrepreneurial projects, with such absence of disagreement in culture leading to the diminishment of business initiatives. Studies such as this suits our best interests into analyzing and investigating how exactly we can analyze what factors specifically play the largest role in disrupting business initiatives and what can be done to apprehend them.

## Literature Review

### *(Defining Cultural Traits)*

In order to identify the relationship between factors of cultural traits and the degree of success that is seen within international business expansion, it proves to be crucial to identify and into existing bodies of research on such a topic. There were sources that identified a variety of specific cultural traits, or cultures altogether, some of which suggested that there is a harmonious relationship between both cultural traits/culture, as business expansion cannot be separated from one another as they are mutually linked to one another (Goldman, 2021; Raj 2023). Both studies devoted their attention into deducing the impact of cultural traits, which are ultimately defined as attributes of a niche culture that were created and shared through means of communication, such as commerce. Additionally, they claimed that “international business negotiation and culture are inseparable: international business negotiation is a process of communication; culture is catalyst for the process of communication”. This study implies that both international business in the forms of commerce and negotiation are ultimately related with one another with culture, where it ultimately prompts for the development of differentiating negotiation/bargaining styles in order to overcome cultural differences that hinder the degree of commerce available between two cultures. Similar to that of the sources previously mentioned, others state that “the impact of cultural differences in international marketing is an important factor that cannot be ignored”. Akin to that of the conclusions that were drawn from Qu, the results ultimately convey the message in which that culture regardless of its form plays a vital role when it comes to consumer behavior and the overall wellbeing of the international market. Unfortunately, both of these studies are limited in the fact that neither of them definitively define what their interpretation of some terminology means, leading to the issue of interpretation to plague the overall argument. Regardless of such faults, they are still sufficient examples of sources that help display the overall correlation that both cultural traits/differences and the international markets, which can be tied into the success of business expansion. While these sources demonstrate the harmonious relationship between cultural traits and international business, it failed to bring up what exactly cultural traits were. Thus, a couple of sources were thoroughly checked to properly establish the definition of cultural traits throughout this study. One of these sources sought to utilize cultural traits as a unit of analysis, interpreting it as units of transmission that ostensibly reflect behavioral characteristics of the individuals or groups exhibiting the traits (O'Brien 2010). This interpretation of cultural traits, while relatively specific, seemed to be overly niche to the point where it could even be considered irrelevant to what this study was seeking to answer. Thus, another source was also taken into consideration regarding the definition of cultural traits, defining it as “a cultural trait is an attribute of a specific culture that has been socially created and transmitted to others by various means of communication” (Hunter, 2023). Further sources that sought to identify the simplistic connection between the broad identity of culture in relation to business expansion deduced that “cultural traits play major roles amongst businesses and should ultimately utilize culture as a way to benefit from corporate policies and internal decisions” (Johnson, 2021). These sources, while differing slightly, all aim towards identifying the broad connection between culture and business expansion, signifying the copious quantity of sources related to this matter. This means that this specific topic is relatively too broad and must be shortened.

The first two sources ultimately begged the question of what defines the “cultural traits” that were of importance in their studies. While there are numerous different interpretations as to what exactly defines “cultural traits”, the cumulative definitions of the particular sources collectively defines cultural traits as differentiating forms of unique/niche characteristics between groups of people. Examples of these characteristics include broad categories of culture, such as their language, traditions, and religious beliefs. It is this definition that has bridged the gap as this study gradually narrows down sources throughout the literature review to properly establish its gap. It's apparent that differing linguistic cultures could potentially cause issues when it comes to business expansion, but could also quite possibly benefit the goal of internationally expanding their businesses when properly taking into account of such differences.

*(Defining Business Models)*

The amount of studies that focus on identifying the relationship between cultural differences and the degree of international business expansion indeed is far more copious compared to that of the number of studies that help depict the issues of intercultural communication in tandem with the globalization of business. The lack of these studies helps demonstrate the gradual progression towards finding the gap. Nevertheless, the aim towards establishing a model/approach that would allow for the application of intercultural communication regardless of the scenario, country, or culture. They aim in creating a model in order to further the understanding regarding the elements of culture/intercultural communication while enhancing the development of skills in the dimensions of intercultural competence. This can be seen in some studies, one particularly where it concludes that “there have been a number of models developed to facilitate the analysis, characterization, and understanding of cultures... while there is a significant amount of research available, none of the experts exactly agree, and some of them dispute each other’s conclusions” (Dzenowagis, 2008). This similar study deduced that “these findings provide a solid foundation and interesting insights for future research in this area... First, our review showed an interesting gap in the literature on cultural distance- there Dzenowagis, appears to be very little work examining its effects on managerial and organizational aspects of internationalization”. The conclusions of this study helps elaborate and open a new path when it comes to identifying a gap in cultural distancing, where little work resides its particular aspects of internationalization. In short, when attempting to evaluate business models, the lack of sources deems it relatively inconsistent when it comes to applying it into the study as a capable factor in understanding the key relations between cultural distances.

This study’s interpretation of the term “business models”, is the plentiful amount of strategies in which businesses study revenue sources, consumer bases, and other factors that will influence the degree of success to which these businesses receive. Unfortunately, due to the lack of other sources that fail to define and establish their own interpretation of what “business models” are within their studies, this particular study will use this definition throughout the whole process.

*(Understanding Linguistic Cultures and Business Expansion)*

Initially, this study wanted to attempt to analyze the relationship between culture and business expansion altogether. With culture being such a broad topic, numerous studies analyzing multiple aspects of culture in tandem with business expansion were relatively common.

Effectively evaluating the reasons as to why this study attempts to identify the exact effect that linguistic cultures have upon the degree of success in entrepreneurs expanding outside of U.S. international borders requires sources that help identify if such a relationship exists. Fortunately, there are few studies that identify that there is a distinct correlation between the idea in which linguistic cultures affect the degree of success a business has and vice versa, starting from its employees (Seeger, 2021; Gustafsson, 2021). This study particularly aimed to investigate a single case company (IKEA) in order to explore barriers to intercultural communication, in which it concluded that the main barrier to intercultural communication, according to the respondents of the study was due to language. With English being the primary language for IKEA businesses globally, languages such as Japanese were shunned but are still heavily utilized in stores located in Japan. Communication proves to be an important factor to the respondents who participated in the study. Additionally, such results demonstrated that there are numerous factors on top of language that determines the efficiency of these workers have when working in their usual environment. This can be seen through the fact that employees whose fluency in Japanese were not exceptionally good were often portrayed as a negative trait by customers, which heavily affects their overall value to said companies. It should be taken into consideration that this specific type of scenario regarding Ikea locations within Japan can be applicable to other countries. Unfortunately, there isn’t as much information to show such a trend between employees, language fluency, and overall efficiency.

The latter source provided a narrowed scope of which it determined that there were already very few sources relating to information that goes into the intricate details regarding success in businesses when it comes to employees respecting linguistic traditions. While the source provided

the fact that there seems to be a deficit in sources that analyze certain aspects of businesses in tandem with linguistics, there seemed to be an absurd amount of linguistic factors that have yet to be analyzed. The study sought to identify the connection between employee value and how much they respect Japanese linguistic traditions, which opens up the gateway to numerous aspects of businesses and how they might generally be affected by linguistics as a whole as well. To further establish the gap of this study, further studies were researched regarding the relationship between linguistic cultures and the employees of businesses of which were seeking to expand internationally. Research that sought to identify the degree of value that is applied to employees/people that are bilingual has ultimately deduced that the new economy calls for a multilingual approach to educating America's children, and the evidence now suggests that these young multilingual individuals will be well rewarded in the future for this human capital that they bring to school and to the labor market (Gandara 2012).

*(Gap and Formation of Method)*

The gap in which there is a lack of information that justifyingly identifies the direct correlation between linguistic cultures and the degree of success that entrepreneurs/business owners/higher-ups have regarding international expansion was identified, which ultimately leads to the creation of a relevant research question. The research will be heavily based around evaluating and identifying business owners that seek to expand their business internationally, rather than utilizing world-wide businesses that have already given themselves prestigious names. Such a lack in research regarding the evaluation of how owners expand their business rather than the company in itself showcases the gap that the research question seeks to answer. Thus, this study's research question ponders to what extent has addressing the differentiating linguistic cultures in target market locations affected the degree of success for adult entrepreneurs/executives of businesses who had sought to expand their brand name/influence outside of the U.S.. With this creation of this study's research question, this study's hypothesis infers that the success of adult entrepreneurs and business leaders (ages 18 and above) in expanding businesses into locations outside of the U.S. internationally is significantly influenced by the ability to navigate and adapt to varying linguistic cultures, which suggests that a high degree of proficiency in cross-cultural communication correlates with the extent of success in global business expansion efforts. Thus, this study's contributions to the topic will be invaluable because of the fact that it will prioritize how the owners themselves take into consideration of factors (linguistic cultural differences/similarities) and will hopefully encourage more business owners and professionals to step forth and conduct international business with the goal of being less intimidated by differences in linguistic cultures. Thus, the reading question of this particular study will be as followed: "To what extent do differentiating linguistic cultures affect the degree of success for entrepreneurs/higher-ups of businesses (ages 18 or above) that have (preferably) multiple locations across the U.S. who seek to expand their businesses outside of the U.S.? The question is niche in its own way, as it attempts to evaluate business owners who are already aware of the idea of expansion through the fact that they had already locally expanded within the U.S. This plays into the development of the methodology, where it will be an interviewing process that seeks to interrogate business owners and draw out the information or procedures that they take in order to tackle the issues of differentiating linguistic cultures. Additionally, interviewing the employees of these businesses could further allow for a better understanding of the perspectives that the employees face with regards to linguistic cultures that they are faced with, and how exactly they combat such differences. It is a rather straight-forward approach that explores the multifaceted relationship between linguistic cultures/the degree of success amongst businesses that aim to internationally expand.

The results of this study can heavily contribute to the increasing percentage of success for international business in addition to the increased examples of young adults. It will deeply analyze and investigate not only examples that help serve as indications of actions that should/shouldn't be taken into consideration for the sake of these adults' businesses, thereby allowing for future business leaders to be granted pre-existing knowledge when it comes to international business expansion. This

will be crucial for the overall success of the upcoming generations that plan on supporting the economy while also becoming part of the workforce.

## Method

In order to test the hypothesis, a case study method was utilized that contained an interviewing process that questioned the corresponding actions that two businesses have committed in pursuing the international expansion of their business. Case studies are defined as close examinations of a particular group of people, organizations, or any phenomena (Zucker, 2009). This research initially followed through an interview-based process with the accumulated information of roughly around 10 businesses that fit the proper criteria to be interviewed. However, this study would later divert its focus on a case study of two particular businesses due to the lack of businesses as a whole that fit the criteria within this study. Executives of said businesses were interviewed and asked numerous questions that sought to identify what and how they faced differing linguistic cultures in order to internationally expand their brand name in addition to how these differing cultures affected their overall attempt in expanding. The point of this type of method was to help evaluate how these businesses were influenced and affected by the respective linguistic cultures to which these businesses attempted to expand into. Out of all the possible methods, utilizing a case study would allow for an efficient way to help analyze the data retrieved after the interviews. With the case study method, it was to be carried out through the coding process in which participants who had fitting criteria were to be interviewed. The criteria needed for such businesses to be involved/investigated in this study is that the person interviewed must be an executive or an owner of their designated business and was responsible in expanding their business at least in one location outside of the U.S. Of course it should be expected that these executives/owners should be above the age of 18, thus, it won't be accounted for as a piece of criteria when it comes to the recruitment process. Nonetheless, all of this criteria is vital for the sake of the study, as it will prioritize businesses that can provide insight and potentially lead to the answer of the research question alongside the hypothesis of this study. In doing so, this will provide future significance in which this study can grant insights to future entrepreneurs regarding how they should account for the risks associated with cultural differentiations across international business.

### *(Structured Interviews)*

With the goal of collecting information regarding the steps and actions these executives have committed on behalf of their business in addition to testing the hypothesis, I found it optimal to conduct structured interviews as the proper method in order to draw out as much information as possible that could then be processed and used as evidence that could help determine the accuracy behind the hypothesis. For reference, structured interviews are interviews that assess the efficiency/success of candidates by "inquiring about their behavior in past experiences and/or their proposed behavior in hypothetical situations" (OPM). Since structured reviews are relatively straightforward is retrieving information from firsthand experiences from said candidates, there aren't many flaws or issues that are to be anticipated by using this type of method. That said, it is to be taken into consideration that the interview must ask questions that cannot be simply answered with a yes or no and their usefulness is entirely dependent on how much the candidates elaborate upon their experiences on top of the fact that there might be issues regarding lying and such. Nonetheless, structured interviews were selected to be the method of retrieving data relevant to the study because of how effective they are at bringing in information that is entirely based off of the experiences of the people that are interviewed which is ultimately valuable information that can be used in this study. Thus, structured interviews were employed due to their aligned design and purpose with the interests of what this study sought to accomplish.

Elaborating on what exact candidates would be fitting for this particular study, the criteria for these candidates was relatively simple. In order for the hypothesis to be answered/justified, the participants that would be interviewed would have to go through numerous areas of criteria in order to follow through with being interviewed. Such criteria included the characteristic in which the

business they own/are a part of have already experienced some form of international expansion regardless of where their brand name was expanded into. Additionally, these executives/candidates also must generally have the same business model and because of the fact that there were only two businesses that were selected as a total, there wasn't any need to delegate or select these businesses as the sample size was too discrete to separate or remove any one of the businesses. The expectation of both of the structured interviews was the idea that to some extent, both of these businesses faced some issue when it came to expanding their business/brand name internationally, whether it be due to lack of experience or not acknowledging the differentiating cultural traits present with the area in which they attempted to expand within. Both interviews featured the exact same array of 10 questions that asked about the executive's decision and past actions for their business when it came to the idea of expanding their business/brand name internationally, and both were conducted through an online call. The questions were purposefully left to be open-ended to allow the executives to elaborate on their end as much as they wanted to. All executives/owners that are interviewed will have their responses recorded and the discussions will be uploaded onto a computer. No information will be shared and once results are established and a fitting conclusion is reached, all recordings will be permanently erased and deleted from said computer. This is to ensure the safety that none of the interviewees are prone to exposure or harm in any way shape or form.

## Findings

The rationale as to why the information is implemented in the form of tables is primarily because of the fact that it allows the categorization of information that was retrieved by both executives that were interviewed. From both of the executives interviewed, there were four recurring themes that appeared consistently throughout the interview. Information from interviewing both executives were compressed and inserted into Appendix B. Both of executives were asked ten questions each, and the recurring themes are entirely dependent on the responses from these executives.

Appendix B summarizes the responses that both executives have given when asked the ten questions listed to the very left of said table. The second column represents the narrative's responses that were simplified, and the third column establishes the corresponding theme that each executive's response invoked. For example, both executives' responses correlated with the theme of education because of the fact that they responded with insights regarding their background for the first question.

## Results

The implementation of these structured interviews allowed for the identification of two distinct scenarios where executives struggled with expanding internationally due to some form of culture. These struggles were identified through the categorization of themes that were drawn entirely from what the respondents answered with for all of the ten questions. Through identifying these recurring themes, it allows for numerous insights to be recognized regarding the experiences of which these executives faced as a result of not acknowledging the linguistic traditions or culture from the area in which their target market was situated nearby.

### *(Theme of Education)*

Regarding the recurrence of the educational theme from both executives, it's clear that it proves to be the second rarest recurring theme of the four themes presented. The first table defines the theme of education as as the experiences that the executives had faced in the education industry as well as any advice they have given as a result of these experiences. From both of the responses of the two executives interviewed, it's clear that a limitation that hindered the study is the idea that there can be numerous backgrounds that could lead up to the formation of a business, which is something that was simply not possible to identify due to the lack of participants that managed to fit the criteria. Regardless, both executives shared similar backgrounds but had differentiating driven passions behind what initiated their reaction to start a business. Both executives were students attending

university, however, one was originally aiming to start a business based off of their pursuit in economics, whereas executive 1 had been part of the restaurant industry and had grown tired of the load of stress implemented onto them, thus driving them to find another way to achieve their own definition of success. As such, executive 1 stated, "Initially, I was a part-time worker at [REDACTED] while also attending [REDACTED] University. I couldn't bear the workload that was given to me and I wanted to achieve success through other means and I created my business as a means of hopefully dropping my education. As for my reasoning for wanting to expand internationally, you could say that I wanted to increase my sources of income aside from just working at a mere restaurant." As such, this evidence demonstrates that both executives stemmed from similar backgrounds and it clearly seems that many business owners were of educational origins from universities or colleges. This suggests that based on this particular sample size, it should be taken into consideration that this study's conclusions could be relevant and provide insight to younger entrepreneurs/executives who are facing upcoming dilemmas regarding international expansion.

#### *(Theme of Economic Crisis and Prosperity)*

By analyzing the resulting themes that occurred from both of the executives' response, it is clear that both the recurring theme of economic crisis and prosperity ultimately shared the exact same numerical value in terms of repetition. This is as a result of both of the executives clearly not properly adjusting or making preparations when it came to exposing their business/brand name to an entirely different audience, field with differentiating linguistic cultures and traditions. While executives 1 and 2 didn't face the exact same issues, it's clear that there are numerous fields and variables that could alter the degree of success businesses have when entering a new area where their target market resides, seen as in how executive #1 faced issues due to the faculty as a whole being inexperienced when it came to respecting the linguistic culture of the area around their newly created establishment. Executive 2 differed in which by having themselves visit the area of where their target market resides, they were able to fully take in a higher degree of respect. However, executive 2 faced issues regarding culture as a whole because of their newly established location initially resulted in a lack of consumers because of how different the products that were sold there. Executive 2's response to question 8 states, "My temporary stay in [REDACTED] fully allowed me to embrace the cultural disparities between there and our initial establishment's location. In doing so, I made sure all of my employees were respectful and acknowledged the cultural integrity of the newly installed establishment of our brand. Not only did this allow for us to receive far less complaints than initially thought, but I was seeing increased levels of consumer loyalty which was unfortunately dulled out by the fact that our products simply weren't relevant to that of the consumer base in this economy." Such a response indicates that executive #2 was able to preemptively reduce the challenges/risks accompanied by naivety when it comes to international expansion through being able to mediate the information about the linguistic differences to his employees. Ultimately, the differences in responses between executives 1 and 2 differ in which they both are granted with success through different means.

#### **Implications/Limitations**

This study's viability and applicability are somewhat limited due to numerous limitations. It should be taken into consideration that there were only two executives interviewed due to how specific the criteria was in recruiting businesses in addition to the fact that recruiting applicable businesses was a challenge in itself. The responses from both executives could also be falsified due to both executives potentially wanting to hide their experiences in order to remain competitive within their designated branch within the economy. These limitations stem from the fact that this study was incapable of including a relatively large number of respondents, making it difficult for the applicability of this information to be utilized for newer entrepreneurs/executives.

Through the results of this study, a new understanding has been achieved regarding the relationship between linguistic cultures and international business expansion. The initial hypothesis of this study has been proven as accurate. This is because the data in appendix B identifies that executive 2's decision in preemptively analyzing the cultural background of his target market area

indefinitely led a higher degree of success regarding international expansion in comparison to that of executive 1. While both executives had similar backgrounds, the decisions in which they took led to a significant difference when it comes to internationally expanding. While executive 1's products were of high relevance to his target market area, it was overshadowed by the fact that miscommunication heavily detracted from sales, executive 2's precautionary strategy would be far more effective overall.

## Conclusions

Thus, this data/results of this study infer that the hypothesis of this study was relatively accurate, as it was seen between the disparities of executives 1 and 2. Executive 1 was relatively ignorant and overconfident in the fact that their expansion into their new target market outside of the U.S. would be simple due to the relevance of their products in their target market. That said, executive 1 would face the consequences of not recruiting employees that were capable of respecting and understanding the linguistic traditions of the people in their specific target market, leading to a less loyal consumer base in addition to creating conflict between faculty and customers. This would contrast with executive 2, who faced relatively opposite circumstances in which he had entered the designated target market's area to embrace and understand the surroundings in which his brand name would expand into. In doing so, he later mediated his experiences to his faculty team which would lead to a far smoother transition/opening in the new target market at the cost of the relevancy of their products being relatively insignificant.

Based on the results of the study, a new understanding has been formed regarding the relationship between the specifics of linguistics in tandem with international business expansion. Seen in the results of the two executives' responses to the ten questions presented in the structured interview process, it can be determined that the advice and insights that were given by the two executives could be utilized for entrepreneurs that have relatively similar backgrounds regarding their education. Additionally, the data/results that were retrieved mean that there seems to be interdependent correlation between the degree of success achieved by international business expansion in relation to the specifics of linguistics through literary traditions and customs. Such results could be incorporated and spread to entrepreneurs that seek guidance as to how they can approach cultural differences within their target markets to smoothly expand their brand name without further difficulties.

With the results and responses from these executives, it opens up numerous possibilities and provides insights for future entrepreneurs and business professionals to properly expand internationally across the U.S. Due to the fact that it is genuinely prevalent in which proper preparation for engaging target markets leads to a higher degree of success in integrating brand names to these designated target markets, it infers that the results provided can be provided as advice/insights for future entrepreneurs to use. That said, further research on delving even deeper into the specifics of linguistics altogether in relation to international business expansion could allow for greater understanding of how to properly address and handle issues regarding linguistic traditions and issues. This would facilitate further success and properly allow for future entrepreneurs to engage with the economy with a decreased rate of failure.

## Appendices

(Appendix A)

Theme	Definition
Education	Defined as the experiences that the executives had faced in the education industry as well as any advice they have given as a result of these experiences. (i.e. jobs that these executives have taken during their time as a student in college/university)

Expansion/Travel	Defined as the experiences in which the executives had dealt with when it came to traveling outside of their home country.
Economic Crisis	Defined as the issues and critical decisions that these executives had to employ regarding the future prosperity of their businesses, before and after their business began to expand beyond U.S. borders.
Prosperity	Defined as the resulting beneficial effects that were caused by the decision of said executive when it came to a critical point for the business.

*(Appendix B)*

Question	Key Information from Executive's Response	Recurring Theme
1. What was your background for creating your business and what is your rationale to expanding internationally?	Executive #1 "Initially, I was a part-time worker at [REDACTED] while also attending [REDACTED] University. I couldn't bear the workload that was given to me and I wanted to achieve success through other means and I created my business as a means of hopefully dropping my education. As for my reasoning for wanting to expand internationally, you could say that I wanted to increase my sources of income aside from just working at a mere restaurant."	Education
	Executive #2 "My background stemmed from my major in economics. My knowledge regarding businesses was relatively vast and thus I created one. My intention in expanding internationally was to quickly have my brand name expand as soon as possible."	Education
2. When taking into consideration of international expansion, what target markets did you prioritize?	Executive #1 "The tea products my business sold were of Asian origins. Out of common sense, expanding into Asian countries would be more appealing to the consumers there."	Economic Crisis

	<p>Executive #2          “In all honesty, I didn’t really know where I wanted to expand into, really. Rather, I traveled a lot to find somewhere fitting for a second subsidiary of my business.”</p>	Expansion/Travel
<p>3. How did you plan on taking into account the cultural differences, specifically through linguistic traits, when initially planning for international expansion?</p>	<p>Executive #1          “I didn’t take as many precautions as I would’ve liked. I was fully confident that my brand name could fit well with the new target market’s area due to sheer cultural similarities.”</p>	Economic Crisis
	<p>Executive #2          “I thought that [REDACTED] would seem like a suitable location for the second establishment of the business. While I was there, I really integrated myself into the cultures alongside the people there and because of this, I was able to nullify the need to take into account of such differences.”</p>	Economic Crisis
<p>4. What initial challenges did you see relating to differentiating linguistic traits in which you faced when attempting to expand your business internationally?</p>	<p>Executive #1          “While I wasn’t struggling with the linguistic traits within the area of the new target markets, my employees weren’t so aware and failed to acclimate immediately.”</p>	Economic Crisis
	<p>Executive #2          “I was relatively comfortable with the new area, and I made sure that my colleagues and employees were absolutely assured of what they should expect from the linguistic differences and traditions there.”</p>	Prosperity
<p>5. How did you approach your distinct target markets in regards to their differentiating linguistic cultures to that of your own? In doing so, what strategies can you implement in order to overcome the barriers that you were presented with?</p>	<p>Executive #1          “The products sold generally appealed and brought in a large consumer base. That said, customer satisfaction was at an all-time low because of how naive my employees were. I tried to resolve this issue through having basically all faculty to take into consideration of the linguistic interactions the customers had with them.”</p>	Economic Crisis

	Executive #2 "By instructing my employees and peers with what was so different about the linguistic culture amongst the consumers of our newly established location through weekly meetings, etiquette between interactions of employees and consumers was generally peaceful."	Prosperity
6. Were there any changes made to your business practices in order to align with the local cultures of the target markets of your choice?	Executive #1 "The business itself was relatively okay because of how successful our initial establishment was. That said, I changed employment criteria based on how literate and respectful they were in relation to the linguistic culture of the target market's area."	Prosperity
	Executive #2 "Our brand name and business were literally unheard of before. It became a prominent issue in which consumers weren't comfortable nor aware of the products that we sold. The only way we had to solve this was to give an extremely pleasant first impression to consumers, hoping that it would lead to a loyal consumer base."	Economic Crisis
7. Did any unexpected issues or outcomes that were as a result of navigating and facing against differentiating linguistic cultures?	Executive #1 "Unfortunately, yes. The fact that the majority of the faculty had little to no experience regarding linguistic traditions, we struggled severely with communication with consumers."	Economic Crisis
	Executive #2 "Aside from struggling to retrieve consumers who were willing and interested to buy our products, there were no issues whatsoever."	Prosperity
8. Can you share a specific example of a successful interaction or encounter that resulted from your cultural learning and adaptation efforts? Conversely, can you provide an example in which not acknowledging cultural differences	Executive #1 "I recall on our opening day, an insane influx of customers entered our establishment and there was an overwhelming amount of money raised from selling products. While there was so much success,	Prosperity

<p>created a sense of miscommunication which demonstrated itself as a significant challenge?</p>	<p>customers weren't really satisfied with their experience due to the lack of communication, spurring tensions."</p>	
<p>9. What advice would you offer when it comes to when taking into consideration of the massively distinct cultural market to entrepreneurs and other individuals that seek to expand internationally?</p>	<p>Executive #2 "Reports suggested that consumer interactions with employees was overwhelmingly positive over the first few weeks. That said, those few weeks were struggling with attracting consumers, as our products were simply too unusual to the people within that area."</p>	Prosperity
<p>9. What advice would you offer when it comes to when taking into consideration of the massively distinct cultural market to entrepreneurs and other individuals that seek to expand internationally?</p>	<p>Executive #1 "It's important to take in the surroundings and the cultural integrity that the areas of your new target markets wield. That way, you can fully acknowledge the differences between your new and initial location, which provides future insights."</p>	Education
<p>9. What advice would you offer when it comes to when taking into consideration of the massively distinct cultural market to entrepreneurs and other individuals that seek to expand internationally?</p>	<p>Executive #2 "Naivety is unforgiving in the economy. It's vital for future entrepreneurs to understand what is normalized in their new target markets, such as language and traditions."</p>	Education
<p>10. Up until now, are there any ongoing linguistic and cultural challenges that are currently hindering your business? If so, how did these challenges alter your international operations and what have you done to counteract them?</p>	<p>Executive #1 "As of now, there haven't been any significant issues relating to linguistic issues, though it took quite literally forever for the faculty there to adjust to their new surroundings. Things such as social norms and gestures when communicating to elders were challenges that were gradually diminishing, but nonetheless these issues created a high amount of negative feedback."</p>	Prosperity

	<p>Executive #2</p> <p>“Actually, I’m currently making plans to expand our brand name into a third location, specifically into [REDACTED]. I wouldn’t consider the nicheness of our products as an issue, and from what it seems right now, the exact same problem is occurring. People should really take into consideration of the cultural details of the areas to which they wish to expand into to avoid pushing consumers away.”</p>	Economic Crisis
--	--	-----------------

(Appendix C)

#### Human Informed Consent Form

Title of Project: (Syncretism of Linguistic Cultures & International Business Expansion)

Principal Investigator: Eugene Seo

Participants Printed Name:

I invite you to participate in a research study, which seeks to investigate how differentiating linguistic cultures affect the success of adult entrepreneurs and business leaders who seek to expand their businesses internationally. This research seeks to explore participants' experiences, cultural competencies, and strategies employed in facing linguistic and cultural challenges.

**Purpose:**

The aim of this study is to investigate how differentiating linguistic cultures affect the success of adult entrepreneurs and business leaders who seek to expand their businesses internationally.

**Procedure:**

If you agree to participate, you will be invited to a confidential interview lasting approximately 30 minutes. During the interview, we will discuss topics such as your experiences with international business expansion, cultural competencies, and strategies used to address linguistic and cultural challenges.

**Confidentiality:** Your privacy is of utmost importance and it will be kept private no matter the context. All information collected during this study will be kept confidential. Personal identifiers will be removed from any data shared in research reports or publications. Your name or any other identifying information will not be disclosed without your explicit permission, unless it is required by the law.

**Voluntary Participation:** Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Participants have the right to withdraw at any time, without consequence. The decision to participate or not will not impact the relationship with I, the principal investigator, or your organization.

**Risks and Benefits:** There are minimal risks associated with participating in this study. Potential benefits include contributing valuable insights to the research community, gaining a deeper understanding of your own experiences, and accessing research findings that may inform business strategies.

**Contact Information:**

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please feel free to contact the principal investigator, Eugene Su Seo, at [eugene.360893@nv.ccsd.net](mailto:eugene.360893@nv.ccsd.net). Otherwise if there are any issues that are identified during your time as a participant, please contact Dr. Tracy Lloyd at [lloyd@nv.ccsd.net](mailto:lloyd@nv.ccsd.net) with any of your concerns.

**Statement of Consent:** I have read and understood the information provided in this consent form. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal Investigator's Confirmation:**

I confirm that I have explained the nature, purpose, and potential risks and benefits of this study to the participant. I also confirm that I have provided the participant with a copy of this informed consent form.

Principal Investigator's Name: Eugene Su Seo

Principal Investigator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## References

1. Adamczyk, M. (2017, June). *The importance of cultural differences in international ...* Econstor. <https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/229732/1/cerem-v1-i2-335.pdf>
2. Dzenowagis, A. (2008, March). *Intercultural Communication in global business.* <https://www.pmi.org/learning/library/intercultural-communication-global-business-7044>
3. Gandara, P. (n.d.). *Is there really a labor market advantage to being bilingual ...* <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1109319.pdf>
4. Goldman, B., & D'Amato, V. A. (2021, December). *Scirp*. Scientific Research Publishing. [https://www.scirp.org/pdf/blr\\_2021092914424408.pdf](https://www.scirp.org/pdf/blr_2021092914424408.pdf)
5. Hunter, A. (2023, September 18). *Cultural traits: Definition and 18 examples.* Helpful Professor. <https://helpfulprofessor.com/cultural-traits-examples/>
6. Johnson, T. (2021, May). TCU. [https://repository.tcu.edu/bitstream/handle/116099117/49034/Johnson\\_\\_Taylor-Honors\\_Project.pdf](https://repository.tcu.edu/bitstream/handle/116099117/49034/Johnson__Taylor-Honors_Project.pdf)
7. Kirubi, M. (1970, January 1). *The effect of culture on international business.* USIU. <https://erepo.usiu.ac.ke/handle/11732/337;jsessionid=683E70F40A0430A7ED0865315325AE7B>
8. Morales, G. L. O., Aguilar, J. C. R., & Morales, K. Y. L. (2022, July 18). *Culture as an obstacle for Entrepreneurship - Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship.* SpringerOpen. <https://innovation-entrepreneurship.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s13731-022-00230-7>
9. O'Brien, M. J., Lyman, R. L., Mesoudi, A., & VanPool, T. L. (2010, December 12). *Cultural traits as units of analysis.* Philosophical transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B, Biological sciences. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2981907/#:~:text=Abstract,or%20groups%20exhibiting%20the%20traits.>
10. Raj, A., & Gupta, D. (2023, July). *Impact of cultural differences on international marketing ...* <https://www.ijres.org/papers/Volume-11/Issue-4/1104144148.pdf>
11. Seeger, I., & Gustafsson, S. (2021, June). *Barriers to intercultural communication .* <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1583487/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
12. *Structured interviews.* U.S. Office of Personnel Management. (n.d.). <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/assessment-and-selection/structured-interviews/#:~:text=A%20structured%20interview%20is%20an,proposed%20behavior%20in%20hypothetical%20situations.>

**Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:** The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.