

## **ROMANIAN NEGOTIATION STYLE BASED ON ITS CULTURAL DIMENSIONS**

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**ABSTRACT:** *As a result of intensified international business relations and a unified European space the cultural background of economic agents in the field of international business is getting an increasing importance and leaves to a certain extent its marks on business behaviour of these individuals. Thus from the sixties of the past century onwards the problem of cultural differences and their influence upon professional relations lie in the centre of attention of researchers like E.T. Hall, Geert Hofstede, his disciple, Fons Trompenaars, and last but not least Richard Gesteland. In business negotiations one can witness to a double conditioning of people's negotiation style, at one hand it is the result of individual characteristics like personality, education, experience, personal charisma, but on the other hand there is a strong impact of collective factors, too, such as the mental programming of each nation called culture. In the following study we try to outline the portrait of Romanian business people through their culturally conditioned negotiation style avoiding at the same time to fall in the trap of stereotypy.*

**KEY WORDS:** *cultural differences; cultural dimensions; mental programming; negotiation style; avoiding stereotypy*

**JEL CLASSIFICATION:** *F50, F51, M16*

As a result of intensified international business relations, frontier opening and a unified European space the cultural background of economic agents in the field of international business is getting an increasing importance and leaves to a certain extent its marks on business behaviour and commercial usage among these individuals. Thus from the sixties of the past century onwards the problem of cultural differences and their influence upon professional relations between the representatives of various nations lie in the centre of attention of many researchers. In this sense there are to be mentioned the American anthropologist E.T. Hall, the Dutch researchers Geert Hofstede and his disciple, Fons Trompenaars, and the American Richard Gesteland, all of them interested in the problem of cultural dimensions in human interaction in

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general and in that one of professional relations in particular. Tables 1-3 present a synthesis of research results in this field.

**Table 1. Cultural Differences According to E.T. Hall**

Edward T. Hall	Way of communication		Time perception		Proxemics (the role of space/distance)	
	High-context cultures	Low-context cultures	Monochronic cultures (sequence)	Polychronic cultures (synchronisation)	Contact cultures	Noncontact cultures
2 cultural dimensions * way of communication * time perception - proxemics (the role of space/distance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- direct, explicit communication</li> <li>- message carried by words</li> <li>- negotiation by items of object tackled directly according to agenda</li> <li>- result oriented</li> <li>- logical presentation</li> <li>- concise language, quantity concern</li> <li>- individual prestige → personal shame if disobeying the rules</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>Western/Northern Europe &amp; North America</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implicit message, speaking in metaphors</li> <li>- message depends on context</li> <li>- communication by items of politeness, euphemistic way of saying no</li> <li>- relationship oriented, importance of trust</li> <li>- complex language, quality concern</li> <li>- prestige based on group respect → collective shame of the entire group</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>Japan, China, the Middle East, Latin America</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- tackling problems one by one</li> <li>- time:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- objective entity flowing inexorably from past towards future</li> <li>- linear</li> <li>- rare resource → saving</li> </ul> </li> <li>↓ consequences:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- strict planning, holding to fixed programme</li> <li>- operativity, punctuality</li> </ul> </li> <li>Features of negotiators:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- preference for operative beginning/finishing of meetings</li> </ul> </li> <li>- fixed breaks</li> <li>- items on the agenda handled one by one</li> <li>- not tolerating unpunctuality</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>Germanic and Anglo-Saxon countries</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- simultaneous problem solving, more items at once</li> <li>- time:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- perceived subjectively according to events</li> <li>- flows on more planes in diff. rhythms</li> </ul> </li> <li>- abundant, resource, subject to fostering relationship</li> <li>↓ consequences:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- more activities running in parallel according to urgency and the requirements of developing interpersonal relationship</li> </ul> </li> <li>Features of negotiators:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- preference for a flexible schedule</li> </ul> </li> <li>- importance of intimate conviction</li> <li>- spontaneous breaks</li> <li>- simultaneous handling of a whole set of information</li> <li>- neglecting unpunctuality</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>Asian cultures, the Arabic World Latin Europe/America</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- small distance in interpersonal relationship</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>Arabian countries, Latin Europe/America</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- considerably greater distance in interpersonal relationship</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>North America/Northern Europe</b></p>

And now the conclusions of Dutch researchers regarding cultural conditioning of people.

**Table 2. Cultural Dimensions According to Geert Hofstede and Fons Trompenaars**

Geert Hofstede	Power distance	
	Large power distance	Small power distance
5 cultural dimensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- accepting social inequality, importance of belonging to a certain group</li> <li>- respecting authority, above all state institutions</li> <li>- paternalistic, even autocratic leading style</li> <li>- employees' preference for an authoritarian boss</li> <li>- power, status and wealth go together</li> </ul> <p>highest PDI (power distance index) - e. g.: <b>Malaysia</b> (score of 104), <b>Latin American countries (Guatemala, Panama, Venezuela, Mexico)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not accepting social inequality, gain of status and prestige through individual merits and not thanks to being part of a group</li> <li>- collaboration, consulting leading style</li> <li>- employees' preference for a democratic, consulting boss</li> <li>- separation between power, status and wealth (minister going to work by bus)</li> </ul> <p>lowest PDI: <b>Austria</b> (score of 11)</p>
	Individual's place in society	
	Individualism	Collectivism
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- individual independence, actioning as an independent entity</li> <li>- individual's early leaving the group (family), weakening or even breaking relationship to group</li> <li>- individual thinking as "me", having personal opinion</li> <li>- employee's independence from organisation</li> <li>- employee's priorities: personal time, liberty in choosing his/her work (the one you can do ↔ the one giving you personal satisfaction)</li> <li>- "losing face" - personal shame meaning loss of self-esteem irrespective of others having observed the act or not</li> <li>- highest IDV (individualism index): <b>Anglo-Saxon countries: USA</b> (score of 91), <b>Canada</b> (score of 80)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- practical and psychological dependence between individual and the group he/she is belonging to</li> <li>- individual being lifelong supported by the group, in exchange the former one owing loyalty to the group</li> <li>- individual thinking as "we", reflecting group-opinion</li> <li>- organisation is another subgroup individual is belonging to, the importance of what the organisation does for its employees: possibility for perfecting, gaining new qualifications, better work conditions, chance to use qualifications</li> <li>- collective shame for the acts of a member of the subgroup only if offence to prestige was observed by others</li> <li>- lowest IDV: <b>Guatemala</b> (score of 6), <b>Columbia</b> (score of 13)</li> </ul>
	Middle score: <b>Arabic countries, Japan, India</b> Relation between PDI and IDV: countries with great power distance tending towards collectivism	
Individual's role by sexes		
	Masculinity	Feminity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- male features: imposing, harshness, competence, competitiveness (outdoor actions)</li> <li>- importance of: high earnings, social recognition, promotion, challenge to competition</li> <li>- in masculine societies well defined roles by sexes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- female features: tenderness, orientation towards relationship (care for household, people)</li> <li>- importance of: collaboration, good vertical and horizontal relationship, life-quality, stability of workplace</li> <li>- in feminine societies roles overlap</li> <li>- society based on modesty, solidarity</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- society based on ambition and competition</li> <li>→ results at work rewarded according to equity and merit</li> <li>- “one lives to work”</li> <li>- masculine type manager: decided, harsh, “aggressive”, taking decision alone → conflicts solved in right struggle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ rewards given on equality base, for each member according to needs</li> <li>- “one works to live”</li> <li>- a feminine type manager leads more intuitively, on consensus base → conflicts solved through negotiation, compromise</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- highest MAS (masculinity index) - e. g.: <b>Japan</b> (score of 95), <b>Austria</b> (score of 79)</li> <li>- index calculated for country and sexes too (values tending towards harshness, masculinity with both sexes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lowest MAS - e.g.: <b>Sweden</b> (score of 5), <b>Norway</b> (score of 8), <b>Holland</b> (score of 14)</li> <li>- equal sensitivity values with both men and women</li> </ul>
	Relation between religion and masculinity index: Roman Catholic religion predominates in masculine type countries and the feminine ones adopted mostly the Protestant religion	
	<b>Tolerance for the unknown, unforeseen</b>	
	<b>High uncertainty avoiding level</b>	<b>Low uncertainty avoiding level</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- little tolerance for the unknown, uncertainty</li> <li>→ many written rules (formal/informal ones)</li> <li>e. g.: in Germany there is a law for situations in which normal laws don't fit - Notstandsgesetze)</li> <li>- in these societies people seem to be troubled, preoccupied, stressed, active, aggressive</li> <li>- tendency towards an increased expressivity, showing emotions, finding an outlet for stress</li> <li>→ smaller death-rates of cardiac and circulatory diseases</li> <li>- a need for fast traffic to avoid uncertainty prior to lifesaving → high speed limit and the paradoxical situation of exposing oneself to risk because of trying to avoid uncertainty</li> <li>- intolerance for changing workplace, concern for workplace stability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- high tolerance for the unknown, uncertainty</li> <li>→ few formal rules (e. g.: Great Britain has no written constitution), many attitudes based on social consensus (e. g.: queuing in the bus station in Great Britain)</li> <li>- people seem to be calm, quiet, indolent, lazy, controlled</li> <li>- tendency towards interiorisation, hiding, stifling emotions → much higher death-rates of cardiac and circulatory diseases</li> <li>- there is no need for urgency, traffic is slow → low speed limit</li> <li>- tolerance for frequent workplace changing</li> </ul>
	- circular correlation between UAI (uncertainty avoiding index) and age: where employees are older the idea of changing workplace is less accepted → employees will be older	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- higher level of intolerance, existence of fanaticism, of the conception that what's unknown is dangerous and that there is only one Truth possessed just by them</li> <li>- these cultures are good at innovation implementation needing punctuality and sense of detail (e. g.: Japan has introduced to the market more new products)</li> <li>- high UAI - e. g.: <b>Latin American, Mediterranean countries: Greece</b> (score of 112), <b>Japan</b> (score of 92)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- belief in the existence of a single Truth but accepting other people seeking it as well in their own way</li> <li>- these countries stimulate innovation (Great Britain had more Nobel prize winners)</li> <li>- low UAI - e. g.: <b>Great Britain</b> (score of 35)</li> </ul>
	<b>Time horizon</b>	
	<b>Long term orientation</b>	<b>Short term orientation</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- features: perseverance, moderation, organising relationship according to status</li> <li>- e. g.: <b>oriental cultures</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- importance of: personal safety and stability, saving “face”, preserving tradition</li> <li>- e. g.: <b>occidental cultures</b></li> </ul>

	- Christian and Muslim concern for Truth (absolute and only possessed by them) could be a competitive disadvantage in competition with oriental countries where people are looking for Virtue in more acceptable ways → synergy of more possible solutions (economic development of the 5 dragons in East and South-East Asia)	
<b>Fons Trompenaars</b> 7 cultural dimensions - applying to Hofstede's approach but in his own manner and including 10 postcommunist countries in Eastern Europe in the study, too	<b>Universalism</b> - possibility of applying ideas, practices under every circumstances without adapting - emphasis falls on formal rules to be respected in each situation e. g.: <b>USA, Great Britain, Germany, Sweden, Australia</b>	<b>Particularism</b> - need for adapting to the circumstances - importance of interpersonal relationship e. g.: <b>Venezuela, former USSR countries, Indonesia, China</b>
	<b>Individualism</b>	<b>Communitarianism</b>
	- although in his own approach comes to similar results as Hofstede e. g.: <b>former Czechoslovakia</b>	
	<b>Equality</b> - culture of „achieved status“, position gained according to performance, merit e. g.: <b>Austria, USA, Switzerland, Great Britain</b>	<b>Hierarchy</b> - culture of „ascribed status“, status based on belonging to a social group, sex, age category and on personal relationship e. g.: <b>Venezuela, Indonesia, China</b>
	<b>Sequential</b> - one activity at a time, strict plan e. g.: <b>USA</b>	<b>Synchronic</b> - more activities taking place simultaneously, plans subordinate to human relationship, changes made even in the last minute e. g.: <b>Mexico</b>
	<b>Outer-directed</b> - managers controlling environment e. g.: <b>USA</b>	<b>Inner-directed</b> - managers subordinate to environment e. g.: <b>Asian countries</b>
	<b>Specific</b> - analytical approach, studying phenomena by parts - clear separation between public area - open to everybody - and the private one with access only for intimates e. g.: <b>Austria, Great Britain, Switzerland</b>	<b>Diffuse</b> - integrating approach to phenomena - the 2 areas have similar measures, access to the public area means access to the private one as well e.g.: <b>Venezuela, China, Spain</b>
	<b>Neutral</b> - feelings not shown, stoicism e. g.: <b>Japan, Great Britain</b>	<b>Emotional</b> - showing feelings, face expressivity e. g.: <b>Holland, Mexico, Switzerland</b>

Establishing two golden rules of international business relations i. e. seller should adapt to the buyer and visitor respect local customs that implies knowledge about them, the American Richard Gesteland studied world's cultures based on business behaviour. Thus he set up four behaviour models presented in Table 3.

After this synthesis of the research results in the domain of cultural differences one may put the question how and to what extent the presented differences influence human interaction in general and the course of business negotiations in particular. As beside this set of collective factors belonging to the culture of descent one's negotiation style is also defined to a great extent by a set of individual factors, like: temperament, personality as the individual's socio-psychological determinant externalised through personal style, education, professionalism and experience gained

during the years, one can neither exaggerate the effect of cultural determination without falling into the trap of stereotypy, nor neglect the above presented points.

**Table 3. Business Behaviour Models According to Richard Gesteland**

<b>Richard Gesteland</b>	<b>Deal-focus (DF)</b>	<b>Relationship-focus (RF)</b>
4 behaviour models in business relations based on cultural differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- concern for task solving, transaction</li> <li>- considered aggressive, too direct, invading</li> <li>- minority cultures</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>North America, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Northern and Germanic countries</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- concern for relationship making and developing</li> <li>- considered vague, too slow, misterious</li> <li>- preference for dealing with family, friends, acquaintances, perplexed in relationship with strangers, especially when foreigners</li> <li>- most cultures focus on relationship</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>the Arab World, Latin America, most Asian and African countries</b></p>
	<p>moderate deal-focus: <b>Latin countries in Europe, Eastern Europe, Mediterranean countries, Hong Kong, Singapore</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Consequences upon transactions:</b></p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- seller can contact buyer directly even if unknown to him/her; operativity, result achieving</li> <li>- directly to the details, the deal, relatively short negociation process</li> <li>- background information obtainable in relatively short time - deal made with a company</li> <li>- direct, clear communication even through modern communication tools</li> <li>- losing temper by DF negociator means in the eyes of RF partner losing face and making even the latter one lose face in front of the group</li> <li>- written contract: letter of law, consulted each time necessary</li> <li>- there exists a draft of contract discussed at the negociation table, lawyer's presence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- contact making is possible only through an intermediary with prestige, importance of acquaintance making and developing trust → long negociation process</li> <li>- deal made rather with the contact person than with the company he/she represents (in completing the deal this person should be present even if working by then in another department)</li> <li>- subtle, vague communication, importance of face-to-face meetings, preserving harmony and cultivating relationship → feelings not shown, refuse not expressed directly</li> <li>- claim to renegotiate a recent contract when conditions change</li> <li>- lawyer's presence rejected at the negociation table</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Informal cultures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- egalitarian structure, flat hierarchy</li> <li>- through overfamiliar behaviour injuring sentiments of respect to hierarchy of the representatives of formal cultures</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: very informal cultures: <b>USA, Australia,</b> moderately informal cultures: <b>New Zealand, Canada, Norway, Denmark</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Formal cultures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hierarchy, authority, status</li> <li>- could be felt rigid, distant, arrogant</li> <li>- importance of age, sex, titles, of social status, state authorities, respect towards the buyer</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>most of Europe, the Mediterranean area, Latin America, most of Asia, Arabian countries</b></p>
See also Hall's approach: monochronic ↔ polychronic cultures	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rigid-time cultures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- importance of punctuality, of working agenda respected point by point, of deadlines</li> </ul> <p>e. g.: <b>Northern and Germanic countries, North America, Japan</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fluid-time cultures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- deadlines, data taken not so strictly, at meetings more problems discussed simultaneously</li> <li>- frequent lack of a working agenda, its items handled in an accidental sequence, despite of this problems are solved →</li> </ul>

		creative solutions - dealing with such cultures deadlines should be fixed with a comfortable margin of 1-2 months and in the meantime kept close relationship e. g.: <b>Arabian countries, Latin America, South and South-East Asia</b>
	moderately monochronic cultures - e. g.: <b>Australia, New Zealand, Eastern and Southern Europe, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, South Coreea</b> ! orientation to time may vary even within one culture according to geographical areas going from North to South ! during the 30 years past from Hall's classifications Japan and Singapore have changed into cultures putting great or moderate emphasis on punctuality and agendas	
Nonverbal behaviour	<b>Expressive cultures</b> - use communication tools of great impact (para- and nonverbal communication) - individuals speak loudly, often interrupting their partners → overlaps in communication - small distance between people - contact culture intense facial expression, hand and arm movements - direct, intense ocular contact, importance of it e. g.: <b>Latin countries in Europe and America, Mediterranean countries</b>	<b>Reserved cultures</b> - sober talking without exaggerated gestures - individuals speak one by one, often breaks in the conversation - large distance between people, respecting private area - noncontact culture - moderate kinetics  - direct ocular contact avoided - sign of provoking e. g.: <b>South and South-East Asia, Germanic and Northern countries</b>
	<b>Communication</b>	
	verbal (by words) breaks)	nonverbal (body language)
	paraverbal (voice intensity, meaning of silence)	
	Sources for possible conflicts in nonverbal communication: Proxemics (interpersonal distance) Haptics (touching) Oculesics (ocular contact) Kinetics (gestures, movements) ! different meanings of gestures, movements: e. g.: lifting eyebrows - for Americans: interest - for Germans: they consider you clever - for Arabians: negative answer	
		- for Britons: scepticism - for Chinese: disapproval

Thus business negotiations arise the problem whether such different people both as individuals and as representatives of a collective can ever get to a consens and what consequences this will have. On whose side will be the balance? At this point we can assert with great certitude that the better, more professional and skilful negociator has to win more from negotiating rounds and these features imply beside other aspects the profound knowledge of cultural features, too differences between societies are based on. The person knowing his/her partner even from his/her cultural background will not only be able to foresee the latter's reactions understanding their ground, but thus will also avoid capital mistakes responsible for the failure of promising deals. Even more, extending Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's reflections upon lingvistic competences – "who doesn't know foreign languages, doesn't know anything about his/her mother tongue either" – unto the cultural and intercultural field, we could say, persons not knowing other cultures, don't know their own one either.

In the following passages we'll try to define Romanian negotiation style finding out its characteristics based on its cultural dimensions. Of course taking mental programming through the culture of descent as an absolute truth is no practicable plan in the case of Romanian business sphere either, the more so since we can detect a quite clear separation between public and private domain, the latter one coming more abreast of European and occidental norms. What should this mean? Cultural predisposition, the stereotype features we feel tempted to characterise Romanian people through leave their marks more upon state institutions, authorities and public field in general than upon economic agents whose activity is guided by the rules of market economy. In a private company there is less probable for nepotism and clan spirit to dominate over competences and economic, financial interests. Of course this phenomenon isn't completely unknown there as well but as in the long run it affects negatively the company's evolution putting to risk even its survival, in the 20 years past from the fall of communism people keep trying to tighten up on it.

Thus according to Hofstede's cultural dimensions a Romanian negotiator will be characterised through moderate individualism, he/she will be tempted to value business partners according to competences and not on the base of social belonging. But because of the importance ascribed to relations this business area will show aspects of collectivism as well as there exist some religious, ethnic subgroups where deals are made preferably intragroup putting barriers to non-members. One should mind also that a "Romanian" negotiator could possibly be only Romanian citizen but belonging to another ethnic group resulting thus probably a double cultural conditioning, by the country's culture at one hand and the culture of the ethnic group of descent at the other. In this way one may find different levels of individualism among Romanian business people not only through a personal, but also a cultural determination, this phenomenon being valid for all dimensions and features handled in the following passages.

Concerning power distance Romania shows an evolving tendency from the acceptance of social inequality, of differentiating between „some“ and „others“ „more equal“ than the former ones, of power concentration in the hands of the attendants of the Communist Party and of oppression of masses during the communist regime - a perverted form of collectivism - unto the somehow failed attempt of rejecting it in the period after 1989. What underlines this assertion is the present state of political class, entrusting leadership in some sectors and institutions to persons not on the base of competence and performance but according to party affiliation, respectively the acceptance of paying these individuals in hard times bringing restraints for average people considerable sums of public money. Under such circumstances it is a must that position be completed by status and wealth obtained in different ways, honest or less honest ones. Financial state will be shown with predilection people giving up external signs of it neither in the political nor in the economic sector. Thus cars, trade mark of clothes, watch and cell phone type belong to one's definition. Making a fetish of wealth results with Romanian people the wish of fast enrichment, so Romanian negotiators when making a price offer will tend to exaggerate at the expense of a fair price and when buying will try to negotiate even a favourable price.

In a country where power distance has remained unaltered in the eyes of authorities, state institutions, where the representatives of these domains keep on



considering themselves citizens' chiefs and not their servants, business people have formed their own set of solutions keeping on resorting to the old system of "little presents". Being used to corruption and bribing they will be tempted to seek for the back door and less "catholic" solutions, a behaviour almost unknown among German business people for instance in whose mental programming honesty and respecting the rules play a basic role. In comparison with the German strictness a Romanian negociator won't shrink back from greasing somebody's palm when necessary and won't lay such an emphasis on honesty and principles. As bribery isn't strange to Romanian business world business presents don't represent a delicate topic either. They are often offered without any hidden intention as part of traditional Romanian hospitality or led by the wish of making our country and its characteristics known among foreigners. Although in Romania women are occupying even more and more high position jobs claiming a high level of education and society seems to accept their emancipation, taking into consideration the values both men and women adopt Romanian culture is still a masculine one. These values are: realisation, earnings, competition, promotion. A relatively high number of young mothers with high level of education and the corresponding wages choose to go back to job before time - despite of the legal paid leave of 2 years - motivated exactly by these masculine values.

Concerning female emancipation and equality of sexes in all domains there is following to be said: Romanian business people generally don't bother negotiating and making a deal with a woman, but the latter one should prove her competence and skills much more than the representative of the other sex would be expected to do, that means a female entrepreneur will have to work hard in order to be accepted as equal partner. But the professionalism she should show doesn't mean she should give up her female features but concerning clothes she is expected to adopt a conservative style, as well. Because of Romanian women and especially business women adopting masculine values one can point out a masculine feature even of presents in professional relations. One can offer a Romanian business women flowers, but instead of chocolate a little present related to professional life such as an agenda, organizer and so on fits better.

During negotiations Romanians will prefer an established programme, an agenda as guideline for the discussions even if they don't stick to them very strictly. Topics will be handled rather item by item than globally but respecting the time frame of discussions won't be absolutely important. As data collection, cultivating relationship, talks need long time, - especially when realisation of the plan depends on state authorities, too which through their bureaucratic process can considerably slow down the progress of things - negotiations in our country will be slow and decision taking process while passing many hierarchic levels quite the same. Romanians are usually miser giving information supplementary to the presented ones, when they still drop this reticence, they do it for developing mutual trust. Before the economic crisis both the business and civil sphere showed a quite high disposition of taking credits even on a rather irrational base, - the Romanian state keeps being open to the idea of credit for consume even in present days. I rely on these aspects when I say Romanian society shows a medium level of uncertainty avoidance.

However it lays a quite great emphasis on interpersonal relationship giving thus proof of a medium term orientation, a Romanian negociator will be essentially

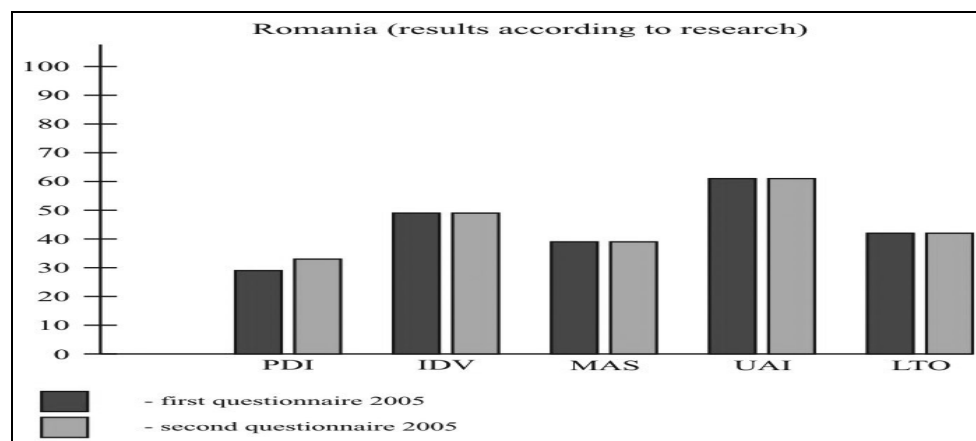
interested in task realisation, i. e. the deal (deal-focus - see Gesteland's models of business behaviour). Contracts in turn will be very long with detailed conditions and terms and according to Romanians' predilection to assume obligations rather at a declarative level they could suffer major changes until the final signature. Although, as already mentioned, in some business circles externals have rather restricted access, in Romanian business world usually is no need of an intermediary for initiating business contacts to another economic agent but a good word, a recommendation can always serve right. Even if sellers can have direct contact to the buyer, telemarketing, although trying to gain ground, has no great success in our country because of population's repulse of such an aggressive marketing penetrating their private lives.

Romanian society shows moderate formalism conveying importance to age, social belonging and titles, however concerning the latter one we can't make any certain affirmation. It is in fact a vicious circle: titles and diplomas being considered important, most people long for them resulting a real chase of diplomas. On the other hand as there are already existing many possessors of such titles, they've lost some of their value and power to confer prestige. Good manners and politeness are also welcome among business people in our country however playing no absolute role in their relations. Considering bribery and the system of looking for back doors in problem solving, communication is not very direct in Romanian business world, despite of it messages still preserve to a great extent their communicative value. Expressing disapproval happens without resorting to euphemism but asking for a favour usually assumes veiled forms. A Romanian negociator will make a moderate use of para- and nonverbal communication tools, his gestures, body and facial movements, voice variations being more intense than for instance in reserved cultures. Visual contact will be sought to the partner, if contrary, his/her intentions are not honest, he/she has something to hide. At the same time Romanian business people will keep moderate distance in their professional relations without invading the counterpart's private space. Men used to shake hands but huggings, taking somebody by the arm are no practice in our country - as well as there is no handshaking among women or between women and men - thus we can assert Romanian culture is a "noncontact" one.

Although being a monochronic culture (see Hall) or sequential one according to Trompenaars, i. e. tasks are solved one by one and time is considered rather a rare resource than an abundant one, Romanians will still have a quite flexible time perception. As a moderately rigid-time culture Romanian business sphere will accept being maximum 10-15 minutes late - motivation and apology required - however punctuality will be preferred. Meetings will have certain time frames concerning beginning, duration and end but possible little delays won't be considered a tragedy. Fixed breaks can give ground to spontaneous interruptions if necessary, for instance before making final decision in order to summarise data and consult colleagues or when reaching deadlock. Considering Trompenaars' cultural dimensions Romanians' predilection for particular solutions based on interpersonal relationship or social belonging could be the result of particularism characterising Romanian culture. As in Romanian society persons are not always strictly ranked according to performances and merits, it can be classified rather an „ascribed position“ culture however economic

and business sphere try to counterbalance this aspect. Analysing phenomena by parts, separating public space designated for instance for negotiations from the private one reserved only to intimates, classify Romanian culture in the Dutch researcher's typology as specific culture. According to their adopting masculine values Romanian managers tend to believe that environment is subordinate to their activities and plans, they give too little importance to nature's protection in the sense of sustainable development, showing thus an outer-directed behaviour.

In Romanian business sphere there's no taboo to show sentiments within the confines of rationality and decency. For the expression of joy, interest, approval or disapproval, indignation and so on business people have at their disposal beside the usual verbal tools also the para- and nonverbal ones, like voice intensity, silence, facial expression, arm and head movements, body language in one word. Of course nervous outbreaks, losing temper are not accepted in moderately affective cultures as the Romanian one either. Concerning verbal communication and foreign language usage Romanians present both good quantitative and qualitative values derived from necessity and interest. The rules of international transactions postulated by Gesteland and already presented in this paper are often subordinate to these two constraining factors. Completing these descriptive passages now should follow some quantitative values, however in some places slightly contradictory to them, to underline the above presented facts. Following figure should function as a visual and quantitative representation of Romanian people's cultural dimensions after Hofstede's method. The questionnaire was applied in Romania in 2005 by Interact company in partnership with Gallup Institute to a sample of 1076 persons. The results of this research - at some points very different from Hofstede's estimations made for our country<sup>1</sup> - are presented in Figure 1.



I. questionnaire: PDI (29); IDV (49); MAS (39); UAI (61); LTO (42)

II. questionnaire: PDI (33); IDV (49); MAS (39); UAI (61); LTO (42)

**Figure 1. Results for Romania in the Research Made by Interact Company and Gallup Institute**

<sup>1</sup> PDI (power distance index) 90, IDV (individualism) 30, MAS (masculinity) 42 and UAI (uncertainty avoiding index) 90.

As shown in the following figure the values obtained for the dimensions power distance and uncertainty avoiding are very different from that ones foreseen by the Dutch researcher and partially from reality as well. The explanation given by the authors of the study in Romania lies in the contradiction existing between real state of things and the projection of an ideal situation many people are longing for. According to the opinion of Interact/Gallup staff real values would correspond to a great extent to those estimated by Hofstede.

Despite of the results obtained in the study and of Hofstede's presumptions I still maintain my statement based on the Roman descent (virility, the image of a macho) and traditional structure of Romanian society, especially in the rural areas, on one hand and on people trying to come abreast of new performance challenges and their orientation towards competition on the other that Romanian people adopt rather masculine than feminine values. As a result of research work undertaken in present paper we can conclude that in the era of globalisation and of even harsher competition on the international market intercultural competence becomes an essential ingredient of succes in international economic transactions, thus studying cultural differences in the world should complete every business people's professional training.

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