

Negotiation strategies and cultural dimensions:
a simulated study
of an international business negotiation

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1.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Relevance of the topic: managing the complexities of cross-cultural negotiations in a globalized world

In an era where geographical barriers are dissolving and economies are increasingly interconnected, multinational companies find themselves facing a complex and dynamic reality. Success in this global scenario largely depends on the ability to effectively manage cross-cultural negotiations.

Every business operation, from sourcing raw materials to creating strategic joint ventures, is the result of an intricate negotiation process. These negotiations, aimed at reaching mutually beneficial agreements, form the core of international business interactions. However, when the parties involved come from different cultural backgrounds, significant challenges arise. Differences in values, norms, expectations, and communication styles can generate misunderstandings, conflicts, and even the failure of negotiations. Cultural dimensions shape negotiation strategies, influence the tactics used, and determine the outcome of the process. For example, in high-context cultures such as Japan, negotiation is a gradual process that emphasizes building long-term relationships and indirect communication. Conversely, in low-context cultures such as the United States, a direct, results-oriented, and contract-based approach is preferred. (Hofstede, 2001)

Recognizing and understanding cultural dimensions allows negotiators to adapt their behavior, anticipate the reactions of their counterparts, and build a climate of trust.

Cultural awareness not only facilitates the conclusion of agreements but also strengthens long-term relationships, prevents conflicts, and creates a sustainable competitive advantage.

To resolve the complexity of cross-cultural negotiations, scholars and professionals have developed several theoretical models. Among these, the Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory and the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) model stand out. This work will focus on the GLOBE model, which offers a more dynamic and contextual view of cultural dimensions. Unlike Hofstede's model, which focuses primarily on values, the GLOBE model examines both values and practices, providing a more comprehensive understanding of organizational and negotiation behavior. In particular, the GLOBE model analyzes dimensions such as performance orientation, future orientation, assertiveness, power distance, and individualism/collectivism. These dimensions are particularly relevant in the context of cross-cultural negotiations, as they influence communication styles, decision-making processes, and the expectations of the parties involved.

Through the analysis of the GLOBE model, this study aims to provide practical tools and valuable insights. The goal is trying to demonstrate how cultural awareness can transform international negotiations from potential obstacles into opportunities for success, enabling companies to build strong relationships and reach advantageous agreements. Despite the vast amount of literature on culture and negotiation, there is a lack of empirical studies that directly test the relationship between cultural dimensions and negotiation strategies in controlled simulation settings.

1.2 Purpose of the study: an analysis of the interconnection between cultural dimensions and negotiation strategies

The idea is to explain the complex dynamics that emerge from the interaction between cultural dimensions and negotiation strategies thanks to a simulated environment, with the objective of revealing how cultural specificities significantly influence the outcomes of negotiation processes. Specifically, this study is structured around two fundamental inquiries:

- **The impact of cultural dimensions on the initial selection of negotiation strategy:**

This study seeks to explore how various cultural dimensions, such as power distance, uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, and assertiveness, guide negotiators towards the adoption of either a distributive strategy (resource-oriented) or an integrative strategy (shared value creation). It will analyze whether, for instance, individuals from high power distance cultures tend to prefer distributive strategies, while individuals from collectivist cultures are more inclined towards integrative strategies.

- **The combined influence of one's initial strategy and the counterpart's strategy on flexibility and adaptability during the negotiation process:**

this investigation will examine how negotiators react and adapt their strategies based on the strategy adopted by their counterparts, assessing whether cultural awareness promotes greater flexibility. It will assess if, for example, a culturally aware negotiator is capable of transitioning from a distributive to an integrative strategy if the counterpart exhibit signs of openness to collaboration.

The research aims to quantify the influence of specific cultural dimensions on the negotiation approach, through the analysis of data collected during simulations.

Furthermore, it intends to evaluate whether cultural awareness acts as an enabling factor, allowing negotiators to effectively modulate their strategies in response to unforeseen events and changing scenarios. In a global context, cultural barriers represent a significant impediment to communication and conflict resolution; so, the development of specific intercultural competencies is essential to enable negotiators to overcome these barriers and build mutually satisfactory agreements.

To achieve these objectives, simulated negotiations are conducted with students enrolled in the Cross-Cultural Management course at LUISS Guido Carli University, under the supervision of Professor Silvia Dello Russo and Doc. Tullia Troisi. These role plays, designed to replicate realistic negotiation scenarios, provide a controlled environment in which it is possible to observe and analyze negotiation dynamics and strategy adaptation as a function of cultural dimensions.

The idea behind the study, is to deliver practical, evidence-driven insights into the enhancement of intercultural negotiation skills for organizations and professionals. Moving beyond theoretical analysis, this study focuses on providing tools directly applicable to real-world international business interactions. The emphasis on "practical" underlines the intent to offer tangible strategies, while "evidence-driven" highlights the reliance on rigorous empirical data, derived from negotiation simulations and critical literature reviews, to understand how to optimize international business outcomes. In an increasingly interconnected economy, managing intercultural negotiation complexities is vital for global organizational success. This thesis addresses this gap by examining whether theoretically expected links between cultural dimensions and strategy adoption emerge in simulated intercultural negotiations.

1.3 Research questions: cultural dynamics in negotiation

This research is structured around a central research question that synthesizes two fundamental inquiries, aimed at revealing the complex interactions between culture and negotiation:

- Is there an association between the chosen negotiation strategy (distributive or integrative) and specific cultural dimensions?
- How does the initial negotiation strategy (one's own and the counterpart's) influence the tendency of adapting or modifying strategies during the negotiation process?

To merge the two questions above, a single general question oversees the entire work:

How do cultural dimensions influence the initial choice of negotiation strategy (distributive or integrative) and the ability to adapt it during the negotiation process?

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The work is divided into two main sections.

- The first section provides a theoretical foundation for the research, offering a comprehensive review of relevant academic literature and conceptual frameworks. This section wants to contextualize the study, detailing key theoretical perspectives on cultural dimensions and negotiation strategies. Additionally, it presents the central research questions and hypothesis that drive the study.

- The second section focuses on the empirical research conducted. It details the methodology employed in the negotiation simulations, explaining the rationale behind the experimental design and data collection process. The results of the study are presented using carefully constructed tables that highlight the crucial aspects relevant to the research questions. These findings are then discussed in relation to existing theories, with an analysis of the challenges encountered during the research process, the study's limitations, and potential directions for future research.

The thesis concludes with a summary of the key insights derived from the study, articulated in non-technical language to ensure accessibility to a broader audience. This summary aims to provide a clear and concise overview of the research findings and their implications for cross-cultural negotiation practices. Additionally, at the end of the whole work, the appendix provides all the supplementary materials used in the analysis of the negotiation simulations and the RStudio script. These materials serve as a valuable resource for further exploration of the topic and provide transparency regarding the research methodology and findings.

2.

NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES AND CROSS-CULTURAL MODELS

*“International negotiations are not just commercial transactions;
they are interpersonal interactions that take place in a specific cultural context”*

(Lewicki et al., 2016).

2.1. Literature review & Theoretical framework

LITERATURE REVIEW

The growing complexity of intercultural business negotiations has attracted increasing scholarly attention across disciplines such as management, linguistics, psychology, and organizational studies. This literature review explores key contributions that inform the central themes of the present thesis, particularly regarding how culture shapes negotiation strategies, how individuals adapt within multicultural contexts, and how communicative dimensions – including language, accent, and power relations – can influence negotiation outcomes. Each of the following works offers a unique lens on these issues, contributing both theoretical and empirical insight relevant to the study’s focus on strategy, cultural dimensions, and behavioral flexibility in international negotiation.

In the article *“Do you hear my accent? How nonnative English speakers experience conflictual conversations in the workplace”* (Kim, Ramirez-Marin & Tasa, 2022), the authors investigate how accent-based stereotype threat affects non-native English speakers during workplace conflicts, a context that mirrors high-stakes negotiations in multicultural environments. Through three studies – two based on retrospective recall and

one experimental simulation – the research demonstrates that non-native speakers who feel self-conscious about their accent tend to adopt less confrontational strategies, such as avoidance or yielding, and report significantly lower levels of satisfaction and goal attainment. The findings are critical in showing how linguistic identity – often overlooked in traditional models of negotiation – is in fact a strong determinant of strategic behavior. This complements the present research by emphasizing the role of perceived communicative competence in cross-cultural settings. Just as cultural dimensions influence strategic choices so too does a speaker’s perceived ability to express themselves clearly in the lingua franca of business. The study reinforces the importance of creating psychologically safe negotiation spaces and points to the need for training that addresses not only cultural knowledge but also communicative confidence, particularly in multilingual teams.

Peleckis (2014), in his work “*International Business Negotiations: Innovation, Negotiation Team, Preparation*”, offers a broad conceptual framework for understanding the preparation phase of international negotiation, arguing that success in cross-border dealmaking is increasingly contingent upon interdisciplinary team composition and the use of innovation-driven tools. The paper focuses on the necessity of equipping negotiation teams with expertise that spans legal knowledge, market analysis, cultural sensitivity, and linguistic proficiency. Furthermore, it discusses how technological support systems – such as negotiation decision-making platforms – can simulate potential outcomes and uncover cultural mismatches before they escalate. The value of this article lies in its emphasis on structure: cultural adaptability, the author suggests, is not a trait solely developed on the spot but can be systematically prepared through team strategy and data analysis. In direct connection with this thesis, Peleckis’s framework supports the

notion that cultural intelligence and strategic flexibility can be cultivated before the negotiation begins, reinforcing the importance of preparation in shaping the negotiation trajectory. The empirical section of this thesis, involving role-play simulations with culturally mixed student pairs, echoes this insight, as it shows how participants' awareness of cultural frameworks (e.g., GLOBE model) influenced their initial approach and their capacity to adapt mid-negotiation.

The article "*On Cultural Differences in Business Negotiation*" (Huang, 2023) delves into how national culture affects negotiation styles, particularly through the lens of high-context and low-context communication frameworks. Drawing from Hall's (1976) foundational theories and more recent empirical studies, Huang explains that negotiators from high-context cultures (such as China, Japan, or the Arab world) tend to prioritize relational harmony, indirect communication, and non-verbal cues, whereas those from low-context cultures (such as the United States, Germany, or the Netherlands) adopt more direct, explicit, and outcome-driven approaches. The article further explores how misunderstanding these culturally embedded communication styles often leads to failed negotiations or suboptimal compromises. This directly enriches the discussion in the present research concerning how certain cultural dimensions – such as assertiveness, uncertainty avoidance, and in-group collectivism – translate into different expectations regarding communication and conflict resolution. Huang's contribution provides empirical and theoretical grounding for the idea that effective negotiators must not only recognize cultural patterns but also modulate their own behaviors to align with their counterpart's norms, a theme clearly evidenced in the behavioral flexibility observed in the role-play simulations analyzed in this study.

Michael Watkins's professional article "*Preparing for and Conducting Cross-Cultural Negotiations*" (2023), offers a practitioner-oriented perspective that aligns closely with academic models of cultural intelligence (CQ). Drawing from decades of experience in executive education and cross-cultural consulting, Watkins introduces a practical framework based on eight cultural dimensions: communication style, decision-making authority, time orientation, trust-building, power distance, risk tolerance, emotional expressiveness, and conflict resolution. Unlike purely theoretical treatments, Watkins provides a set of diagnostic tools and reflective checklists aimed at helping negotiators assess cultural gaps and adapt accordingly. These tools include cultural audits, negotiation rehearsal protocols, and debriefing guides. What makes this contribution relevant to the current thesis is its actionable orientation: Watkins's model translates abstract cultural theory into usable strategy, providing a bridge between academic understanding and real-world execution. Furthermore, his emphasis on structured preparation and reflective practice reinforces this study's finding that the most effective negotiators in multicultural contexts are those who combine cultural knowledge with situational adaptability – hallmarks of high cultural intelligence.

A similar content is found in "*The Art of International Business Negotiations: Navigating Cultural Differences*" (Richardson, 2023), where the negotiation process is framed not merely as a skill but as a dynamic form of cross-cultural artistry. Richardson underscores the importance of emotional intelligence, trust-building rituals, and storytelling as culturally contingent negotiation tools. Drawing from real-life business anecdotes and case studies, the article illustrates how successful negotiators read cultural signals, adjust their tempo, and choose their language with cultural tact and relational empathy. This perspective adds nuance to the present research by foregrounding the relational dimension

of negotiation – particularly relevant in integrative approaches. Where distributive strategies often emphasize tactical advantage, Richardson’s view supports the thesis that cultural awareness and adaptability are especially crucial in integrative contexts, where value creation depends on building rapport and uncovering shared interests. His emphasis on trust and relational pacing also resonates with the empirical observation that participants from collectivist and low power distance cultures were more likely to adopt collaborative and flexible behaviors, especially when their counterparts reciprocated.

Lastly, the study “*Accent Discrimination in Global Business: Implicit Bias and Professional Judgment*” (Abbott & Smith, 2024) expands on the theme of linguistic bias introduced by Kim et al. but adopts a more macro-level approach. Through field observations and large-scale survey data, the authors demonstrate that accent-based discrimination is not merely a personal or interpersonal issue but an institutional one, embedded in hiring practices, promotion criteria, and credibility assessments within international firms. The article presents compelling evidence that accent continues to act as a proxy for assumptions about intelligence, competence, and leadership – biases that influence both internal team dynamics and external negotiations. This aligns closely with the findings in this thesis, where linguistic comfort and confidence emerged as subtle but powerful factors shaping strategic choices and adaptability. Abbott & Smith’s contribution thus validates the broader claim that successful intercultural negotiation requires not only cultural and strategic knowledge but also systemic awareness and organizational support for linguistic equity.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A solid foundation for this work is set by the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) research program, which serves as the primary cultural framework for the analysis of negotiation processes (House et al., 2004). It is then linked to the core principles of negotiation theory, most notably the integrative-distributive bargaining continuum (Pruitt, 1983; Walton & McKersie, 1965), and the contingency model of negotiation strategies (Lewicki et al., 2016).

The GLOBE model, distinguished by its empirically rigorous methodology and validation across 62 societies, offers a sophisticated and nuanced instrument for dissecting cultural variations in values and practices directly relevant to negotiation behaviors, surpassing the limitations of earlier, more unidimensional cultural models (Javidan et al., 2006; Leung et al., 2005). Its nine cultural dimensions – Performance Orientation, Power Distance, Institutional Collectivism, In-Group Collectivism, Uncertainty Avoidance, Assertiveness, Future Orientation, Humane Orientation, and Gender Egalitarianism – provide a lens through which it is possible to analyze how cultural dimensions influence the negotiation strategy. Complementing this cultural framework, the research integrates the integrative-distributive bargaining continuum, acknowledging that negotiation strategies are not binary choices but rather exist on a spectrum, influenced by situational factors and cultural predispositions (Pruitt, 1983; Walton & McKersie, 1965). Furthermore, the contingency model of negotiation strategies posits that effective negotiation necessitates adapting strategic approaches based on a nuanced understanding of the negotiation context, including cultural variables (Lewicki et al., 2016). Crucially, this work incorporates the concept of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) (Earley & Ang, 2003;

Ang et al., 2007) not merely as a moderating variable, but as a fundamental capability that mediates the relationship between cultural dimensions and negotiation strategy effectiveness. It is possible, in fact, that negotiators with elevated CQ could possess an enhanced capacity to discern and interpret cultural cues, adapt their strategic communication styles – from distributive to integrative tactics – in culturally heterogeneous settings, achieving beneficial outcomes (Ang et al., 2007; Earley & Ang, 2003).

By synthesizing these multifaceted theoretical perspectives – the GLOBE model for cultural analysis (House et al., 2004), the integrative-distributive model for strategic negotiation (Lewicki et al., 2016), and Cultural Intelligence as a key competency (Ang et al., 2007; Earley & Ang, 2003) – a holistic and empirically grounded picture is designed.

2.2 The GLOBE Model – a detailed analysis of cultural dimensions

The GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) project (House et al., 2004) represents a significant step forward in the study of culture, offering a multidimensional and empirically validated framework across more than 60 societies. Unlike Hofstede's model, which focused primarily on values, GLOBE examines both values (what societies believe should be) and practices (what actually occurs), providing a richer basis for understanding how cultural patterns shape behavior in organizational and negotiation contexts (Leung et al., 2005).

The model identifies nine cultural dimensions, each of which influences how individuals communicate, make decisions, and approach conflict resolution:

- **Power Distance:** acceptance of unequal power distribution. High Power Distance cultures emphasize hierarchy and formal authority, requiring negotiators to respect senior roles and procedures. Low Power Distance contexts instead encourage more participatory and egalitarian exchanges.
- **Performance Orientation:** the extent to which societies reward achievement and results. High scores reflect competitiveness and a focus on efficiency, while lower scores highlight relationship-building and process over outcomes.
- **Institutional Collectivism:** the degree to which institutions encourage collective action. Where strong, it fosters cooperative agreements that prioritize group welfare.
- **In-group Collectivism:** loyalty and pride toward close groups such as family or teams. High scores make trust and personal relationships central to successful negotiations.
- **Uncertainty Avoidance:** preference for structure and predictability. High-scoring societies rely on detailed contracts and planning, while low-scoring ones display greater tolerance for ambiguity and flexible agreements.
- **Assertiveness:** the directness and forcefulness of communication. High Assertiveness often corresponds to competitive, result-driven bargaining, while low Assertiveness favors harmony and indirect interaction.
- **Future Orientation:** emphasis on long-term planning and sustainability. Negotiators from such contexts may privilege enduring partnerships over short-term gain.
- **Humane Orientation:** the value placed on fairness, altruism, and care for others. High scores encourage empathy and attention to counterpart needs.

- **Gender Egalitarianism:** the extent to which gender equality is promoted. Cultures with higher scores allow more balanced participation and leadership in negotiation settings.

A strong awareness of these dimensions is essential in international negotiations, as it helps reduce cultural misunderstandings and misattributions (Thompson, 2005). By anticipating how counterparts may behave, negotiators can avoid hasty judgments and adapt their communication more effectively (Lewicki et al., 2016). For instance, the directness typical of high Assertiveness cultures may be perceived as rudeness in low Assertiveness contexts, unless recognized as culturally appropriate. The model also clarifies relational priorities: in high In-group Collectivism cultures, trust-building and personal ties are prerequisites for successful agreements, while Humane Orientation emphasizes empathy and fairness as negotiation assets. More broadly, there is no “one-size-fits-all” strategy (Fisher & Ury, 1981). What proves effective in one cultural setting may be counterproductive in another.

The GLOBE provides a practical tool to strategically adapt negotiation tactics: detailed, formalized agreements for high Uncertainty Avoidance cultures; participatory dialogue in low Power Distance ones; or respect for hierarchy in high Power Distance contexts. Understanding these cultural signals enables negotiators to overcome barriers, foster trust, and reach agreements that are both effective and sustainable – an essential requirement for professional and organizational success.

2.3 Negotiation strategies: integrative and distributive

Within the concept of negotiation strategies, the literature identifies two primary approaches, distinguished by their objectives, tactics, and typical outcomes: the integrative strategy (oriented towards "win-win") and the distributive strategy (oriented towards "zero-sum"). The choice and effectiveness of each strategy are not universal but influenced by the cultural background of the negotiators (Brett, 2001; Thompson, 2005). Understanding these strategies, coupled with awareness of cultural variables, represents an indispensable skill for anyone operating in negotiation contexts, especially at the international level.

2.3.1 Integrative strategy: value creation and mutual benefits

The integrative strategy, also termed "problem-solving negotiation" (Thompson, 2005) or "collaborative negotiation" (Lewicki et al., 2016), is based on the idea that it is possible to create value during negotiation by identifying solutions that satisfy the needs and interests of all parties involved ("win-win"). This approach emphasizes collaboration, trust, open communication, and flexibility (Fisher & Ury, 1981). The primary goal is not merely the division of a given "pie" (as in distributive negotiation), but the expansion of the "pie" itself, through the identification of common interest areas and the creation of new options that generate value for everyone (Lax & Sebenius, 1986).

This strategy requires a maieutic approach, aimed at deeply understanding the interests, priorities, and constraints of each party, often beyond the stated positions (Fisher & Ury, 1981). As effectively summarized by the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School

(Mnookin et al., 2000), integrative negotiation is comparable to "riding two horses at the same time," highlighting the challenge of balancing diverse interests into a cohesive and mutually beneficial agreement.

However, the potential benefits of an integrative approach are significant, including more stable and lasting agreements, stronger long-term relationships, and a higher level of satisfaction for all parties (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993).

Academic research has demonstrated the crucial role of cultural intelligence (CQ) in fostering the effectiveness of integrative strategies, especially in intercultural contexts (Earley & Ang, 2003). In such contexts, multicultural identity has been recognized as the most significant factor in bridging cross-cultural exposure with effective functioning across cultural boundaries. Individuals who integrate multiple cultural influences into their self-concept develop greater insight into varied social contexts and are better prepared to adapt and respond in intercultural contexts. (Pidduck et al., 2022)

Empirical studies (Ang et al., 2007; Groves & Feyerherm, 2011) have shown that individuals with high CQ are more skilled at adopting cooperative behaviors, understanding cultural nuances, and identifying common interests – essential elements for the success of integrative negotiation in cross-cultural settings. The ability to adapt one's communication style, demonstrate intercultural empathy, and manage the complexity of intercultural interactions (Brislin et al., 2006) are key competencies for integrative negotiators in global contexts. Furthermore, studies like Stoshikj's (2014) "Integrative and Distributive Negotiations and Negotiation Behavior" confirm that negotiators oriented towards integration tend to exhibit cooperative behaviors, increasing the likelihood of reaching sustainable and mutually satisfactory agreements.

2.3.2 Distributive strategy: competition and maximization of individual advantage

In contrast to the integrative approach, the distributive strategy, also known as "competitive negotiation" (Lewicki et al., 2016) or "zero-sum negotiation" (Lax & Sebenius, 1986), is grounded on the fact that negotiable resources are limited and fixed. In this scenario, the primary goal of each party is to maximize their own gain, often at the expense of the counterpart ("win-lose"). Distributive negotiation is inherently competitive and positional, focused on claiming value and minimal concession (Raiffa, 1982). This approach is frequently adopted in "one-shot" negotiations or in contexts where long-term relationships are secondary to obtaining maximum immediate advantage (Thompson, 2005).

Harvard Professor Howard Raiffa (1982) coined the effective metaphor of the "negotiation dance" to describe the typical dynamics of distributive negotiation, characterized by calculated moves, tactics and attempts to influence the counterpart's perception regarding one's own limits and alternatives (Bazerman & Neale, 1992). Careful preparation is fundamental in distributive negotiation, with negotiators meticulously analyzing their "*Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement*" (BATNA) (Fisher & Ury, 1981) and attempting to estimate those of the counterpart, to define their own reservation points and "*Zones of Possible Agreement*" (ZOPA) (Lewicki et al., 2016).

2.4 Connections between cultural dimensions and negotiation strategies

A negotiator's cultural background significantly shapes their strategic inclinations and interaction patterns. Theoretical models such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions (2001) and the GLOBE project (House et al., 2004) provide systematic ways to explain how

national culture can predispose negotiators toward either distributive or integrative approaches.

Specifically, Power Distance has been linked to hierarchical and authority-driven interactions, suggesting that negotiators from high Power Distance contexts may be less inclined to openly adapt when faced with cooperative counterparts. Conversely, In-group Collectivism is expected to encourage collaboration and harmony, thus favoring integrative behaviors. Uncertainty Avoidance may foster a preference for structured, predictable outcomes, leading negotiators to adopt strategies that reduce ambiguity—potentially reinforcing integrative approaches. On the other hand, Performance Orientation reflects competitiveness and a focus on results, which could translate into greater reliance on distributive tactics when confronted with a rival counterpart.

These connections, already highlighted in comparative studies (e.g., Adair & Brett, 2005; Salam, 2017), underline how cultural dimensions can shape both the initial choice of strategy and the likelihood of strategy change during negotiation. The present research builds directly on these theoretical expectations, formulating hypotheses (H1–H5) that test whether cultural practices as measured by the GLOBE framework predict the adoption of integrative or distributive strategies, as well as the probability of adapting them throughout the interaction.

2.4.1 Communication and culture in international business

Another element that plays a significant role is communication. Communicating in international businesses is complex. To improve the effectiveness, it is essential to adopt different perspectives and methodological approaches that go beyond traditional cross-cultural comparisons.

What is essential, is a cross-cultural approach, examining the dynamic process that occurs when people from different cultures interact and co-create meaning. This implies considering the situational context, specific circumstances, and non-verbal communicative elements such as body language and the use of space. Research should focus on interactive, evolving, and complex communication processes, rather than a static view of variables, considering how past experiences, individual predispositions, and situational contingencies influence the communication process.

Then, there is the adoption of perspectives, derived from within a specific culture, which allow for a richer and more detailed analysis of the communication process. This helps to overcome the limitations of ethnic approaches, which can lead to superficial or incorrect impressions. Understanding emic dynamics is essential to understanding how information is exchanged and to interpreting the barriers created by culture-specific assumptions about human interactions.

It is equally important to examine communicative interactions in their unique context, considering the cultural, historical, and contextual dynamics. Social, political, economic, and power factors can influence the meaning and interpretation of intercultural communication. Intercultural communication competence is relational, as communication is dynamic and built in interaction, where individuals' behaviors mutually influence each other, and the situational context has a significant impact. It is necessary to overcome individualistic approaches and adopt a holistic view of the communication process.

Studies should consider both interpersonal communication and interaction, analyzing both communicative behavior and the assumptions on which it is based, with a multi-level approach that can improve interpersonal interactions and organizational outcomes. Research should explore the impact of communicative interactions on employees' well-being and emotions, studying the role of daily interactions on workplace culture and organizational functioning. It is essential to recognize that communication is not only a result of culture but also a mean through which culture is constructed and negotiated, recognizing the interrelationship between culture, context, and communication. (Szkudlarek et al 2020)

It is understandable, then, how communication styles vary depending on the cultural context. For example, French negotiators tend to favor a rational and analytical approach, avoiding rushed decisions and preferring a slower and more formal pace in discussions. Additionally, negotiations are often conducted in French to maintain control over the communication process. In Japan, communication is strongly influenced by respect for hierarchy and the importance attributed to collective consensus. Decisions are not made individually but through a consultation process involving multiple levels of the organization. Furthermore, non-verbal communication plays a crucial role, making message interpretation particularly complex for those unfamiliar with the Japanese cultural context. U.S. negotiators adopt a more direct and efficiency-oriented style, interpreting hesitations or delays in responses as signs of indecision or weakness. This difference in approach can lead to misunderstandings when a communication model based on speed and persuasion encounters a more reflective and collective style. To reduce the risks of misunderstanding and enhance communication effectiveness in intercultural negotiations, several strategies can be adopted. Essential is the selection of

negotiators, prioritizing those with a strong understanding of the counterpart's culture. Then, the use of interpreters and cultural mediators can facilitate dialogue, not only translate words but also contextualize expressions and cultural references. Another effective strategy is the use of open-ended questions, which help clarify positions and prevent misinterpretations. (Reardon et al.,1994)

THE RESEARCH:

A SIMULATED BUSINESS NEGOTIATION IN A CROSS-CULTURAL CONTEXT

3.

RESEARCH QUESTION & HYPOTHESIS

3.1 Cultural dimensions and negotiation strategies

What was seen in the previous chapter suggests that cultural background plays a significant role in shaping individuals' negotiation behavior. Cultural predispositions, in fact, can influence both the initial strategic orientation (integrative vs. distributive) and the adaptive capacity negotiators display as the interaction evolves (Adair & Brett, 2005).

Two distinct negotiation strategies are discussed in the literature:

- Distributive negotiation, aimed at maximizing one's own gain often at the expense of the counterpart (zero-sum logic)
- Integrative negotiation, which focuses on creating joint value through cooperation and mutual benefit (win-win logic).

3.2 Formal hypotheses

The aim of this research is to explore if specific cultural dimensions can predict the adoption of negotiation strategies and the likelihood of strategic adjustments during the interaction. Cultural norms, as reflected in behavioral practices, influence both the predisposition to adopt either integrative or distributive strategies and the negotiator's responsiveness to the counterpart's behavior.

H1: Negotiators from cultures with higher scores in In-group Collectivism (practices) are expected to adopt a greater frequency of integrative strategies (DV), since collectivist orientations emphasize cooperation, group harmony, and relational interdependence. (Adair & Brett, 2005)

H2: Negotiators from cultures with higher levels of Uncertainty Avoidance (practices) are expected to adopt more integrative strategies (DV), as collaborative approaches reduce ambiguity, minimize risks, and provide structured outcomes. (Ibidem)

H3: Negotiators from cultures with higher Power Distance (practices) are expected to be less likely to respond using a distributive approach (DV) when facing a cooperative counterpart, because hierarchical orientations foster deference and discourage opportunistic disruption of collaboration. (Ibidem)

H4: Negotiators from cultures with higher Performance Orientation (practices) are expected to be more likely to adopt distributive strategies (DV) when confronted with a distributive counterpart, reflecting a competitive drive for achievement and results. (Ibidem)

H5: Power Distance and Performance Orientation (practices) are expected to moderate the likelihood and direction of strategy change (DV) during the negotiation. (Ibidem)
Specifically:

- High Power Distance is predicted to reduce the probability of progressive shifts from distributive to integrative strategies (D→I).
- High Performance Orientation is predicted to increase the probability of regressive shifts from integrative to distributive strategies (I→D).

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Sample

The first challenge in designing this study was how to recreate an international negotiation environment without access to big companies' everyday operations or to a highly multicultural sample. To address this, we decided to select participants from different cultural backgrounds who shared a common understanding of cultural dimensions and international operations.

The participants were recruited from the first-year master's program in Global Management and Politics at LUISS Guido Carli University. With the support of Professor Silvia Dello Russo, professor of the Cross-Cultural Management course and supervisor of this research – together with the assistance of the Doc. Tullia Troisi – my colleague Pia Du Bourg De Bozas Chaix D'est-Ange and I have contacted the students enrolled in the course and we invited them to take part in the study. Out of 82 students (considering all the enrolled students in the Master and the exchange students enrolled in this specific course), 54 volunteered to participate and actively engaged in the simulations.

Some specific criteria were common to the participants that create the sample. First, participants had to be enrolled and attendant in the Cross-Cultural Management course, which provided the theoretical foundation for understanding intercultural dynamics. Although the module on negotiation had not yet been taught at the time of the study (but immediately after in order not to influence their behavior during the role-play), all participants had already been introduced to key cultural frameworks, including

Hofstede's model and the Globe Study in particular. This prior exposure gave the students the knowledge necessary to simulate realistic international negotiation scenarios.

Another essential requirement was the willingness and availability to participate in the role-play activities and to approach them with seriousness and commitment, which required active involvement and a collaborative attitude. Importantly, no extra credit for the exam was offered in exchange for participation. Students were informed that the activity would be discussed in class as part of the learning process and that their involvement would contribute to the development of two master's thesis. The high participation rate and the overall engagement observed during the simulations reflected a strong level of motivation among the students. Moreover, as attendees of an international program, all participants had sufficient proficiency in English, which was the sole working language used in the simulations. Only in cases where both participants were Italian all the general explanations were provided in their mother tongue (which is also mine).

The group consisted entirely of students in their 20s, which contributed to a relaxed and open atmosphere both during the preparation phase and the simulations themselves. While most participants were Italian, the class included several international students – both exchange and full-degree – representing various regions, including Europe, Asia, and the Americas. In addition, we managed to reach a sample with a balance between both males and females.

To recreate cross-cultural negotiation dynamics, we deliberately formed mixed-nationality pairs whenever possible. Despite the majority being Italian, we succeeded in establishing a remarkably high percentage of mixed pairs (27 role plays were done and

almost half of them were made with international students), which helped maintain the intercultural nature of the study, helping us to have a more realistic possible scenario to simulate.

4.2 Procedure

The preparation to the role-play started at the beginning of the spring semester at LUISS University, when the professor S. Dello Russo wanted us with her in class to present it (*without disclosing key information*) and went on during almost the whole semester with the simulations and the discussions.

In February we presented the research project to the cross-cultural management class and some weeks after, *we began contacting students*, right after receiving the final list of the attending ones. To facilitate the scheduling process, we initially created a Google Form to collect students' availability, because they had classes most of the days and we did not want us to create them any problem. We contacted all the students via e-mail, and we sent them a web link to fill the form (Appendix 1). We also fixed an expiring date because otherwise it was not possible to us to schedule everything. The form stayed available 5 days. After that we started scheduling the role-plays trying to respect the availability of who filled the form. For those who did not complete the form, time slots were assigned directly by the research team.

All role plays were conducted in one week to avoid that people would then share information with other peers if the data collection was extending too much in time - and to make the common debriefing in class still meaningful to all participants

After scheduling all the role-plays, in agreement with the Professor and her TA, we sent all the students a Data collection consent form (available in the appendix 2), for any privacy issue in which we describe the research project and the set of rules to respect during the simulation. We kindly asked the students to sign it and send back it to us before the beginning of the role-plays to be sure everyone was aware of how the research would have been conducted.

Students, to be informed about the timing of their slots, were contacted separately to avoid that they could know which would have been their counterparts. In each e-mail we sent, there was the Microsoft Teams invitation to accept or decline so that we could know if the slot was confirmed or not.

The scripts used during the simulation were based on the well-known “Ugli Orange” (John Barkai, 1996) case study (available in the appendix 3), describing a scenario in which two parties appear to be in direct competition for a scarce resource, but whose underlying interests are potentially compatible (if the two parties well conduct the negotiation). It was extremely useful because it really helped the students to understand why it is important to choose an integrative or a distributive strategy, with the aim of pursuing mutually beneficial solutions.

Each role play was set on a time of 30 minutes, to be strictly respected. At the beginning of it the students found out their counterparts and the recording of the videocall started. Me, as the facilitator, informed them about the rules to follow during the exercise. After that, I sent via e-mail the two scripts, one per part and they had 5 minutes to read it and elaborate a possible strategy to negotiate. After 5 minutes, the negotiation started, and

they had 15 minutes to negotiate. After these 15 minutes, independently if the agreement was reached or not, the role-play was stopped.

During the whole role-play both the students had to have their cameras switched on because during a conversation, especially a negotiation, seeing the counterpart's face expressions is crucial. As facilitator, I remained off-camera and muted throughout the simulations to avoid influencing participants' behaviors or decisions.

At the end of the 15 minutes, always the same formula: *“Remember not to share any kind of information about the role-play with your colleagues. Next week you will discuss about it in class with Professor Dello Russo, and you will discover more about the negotiation and the possibly adoptable strategies. If you would like to have updates about this research project, you can freely contact us!”*

They were only aware that they would actively contribute to my master's thesis research by taking part in a business negotiation role-play. They had not been fully informed about how the data from the role-plays would be analyzed – they knew the data would be analyzed as part of quantitative/qualitative research on negotiation strategies – but they understood the importance of engaging seriously in the activity.

Just some days after the end of every role-play, on the 18th of March, the students had the class on negotiation where I also took part in. We debriefed about the simulated negotiation, which strategy they decided to adopt during it and why, trying to let them brainstorm on the type of thinking they developed during the process. They made lots of interventions about how they interpreted the script and their personal strategy, the kind

of questions they made during the simulation and the attitude they thought were the best to have.

At the end of the class, they were aware of the topic, and they understood better why sometimes adopting a strategy can lead to a different result, especially when the counterpart has a different cultural background due to different heritage, nationality, personal behavior and inclinations. It is not about stereotypes but about respecting the other to get a better result for everyone! (Adair & Brett, 2005) In fact, they found out the difference between a win-win solution and a zero-sum one, and why a win-win strategy does not mean compromise but excellence and talent in negotiation.

Once this practical part with the students have been done, the analysis of the recordings started. As said above, each role play was fully recorded and transcript directly through the Microsoft Teams functions and that really helped during the data analysis process because the main and most stated sentences were perfectly reported. The recordings were useful to look at some specific non-verbal actions that came together with the words and the ways they expressed their strategy and negotiation techniques.

4.3 Observation grid

To systematically analyze the behavioral dynamics emerging during the negotiation role-plays, a customized observation grid was developed, drawing inspiration from the NegotiAct model (Jackel et al. 2022) and adapted to suit the specific aims of this research. The grid was designed to classify communicative behaviors according to their strategic nature (distributive vs. integrative). This structure supports a dual-level approach: at the micro level, it captures the linguistic and strategic actions performed during the

negotiation process; at the macro level, it allows the linking of these behaviors to the broader cultural framework in which the participants are embedded.

RP ID	Turn	Timestamp	Speaker	Thought Unit (Verbatim)	Macro Category (NegotiAct)	Specific Code	Strategy Type (D/I)	Notes on Sequence
[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]

4.3.1 Structure of the grid and coding criteria

The observation grid is composed of the following columns, each serving a distinct analytical function (Jackel et al. 2022):

- Role Play ID: Identifies the negotiation session (RP01, RP02...), allowing for precise tracking and reference across files.
- Turn: The sequential number of each speaking turn, ensuring that the interactional flow can be reconstructed and analyzed chronologically.
- Timestamp: Indicates the time within the recording at which the behavior occurs, offering a temporal anchor for cross-checking audio and coding.
- Speaker: Names the participant's role (Dr. Jones, Dr. Roland), enabling the attribution of specific actions to their respective negotiation positions.
- Thought unit: Includes a transcription or synthesis of the utterance, capturing its core communicative intent. This unit represents the minimal segment of interaction to which behavioral meaning can be attributed.

- NegotiAct macro category: Classifies the turn into one of seven functional categories based on the NegotiAct framework that provides a structured foundation to identify negotiation moves across scenarios:
 - Offers
 - Questions
 - Information Sharing
 - Proposal
 - Agreement
 - Refusal
- Specific code: Provides a finer-grained behavioral label (“multi-issue offer”, “preference inquiry”, “active listening” ...), refining the macro category and supporting a more detailed interpretive analysis.
- Strategy type (D/I): Indicates whether the observed behavior corresponds to a distributive (D) or integrative (I) negotiation strategy. This attribution is based on the nature and intent of the behavior within the interactional context, and it constitutes the central dependent variable for the study.
- Notes: Offers interpretative insight into the placement of the behavior within the conversational flow and helps understand strategy evolution over time.

4.3.2 Function of the grid

The grid served as a fundamental tool both for organizing the observed data and for structuring the analytical process. It enabled the identification of consistent patterns in negotiators’ verbal behavior and strategic orientation across sessions. Most importantly,

by integrating each participant's national GLOBE profile, it allowed for a cross-case comparison between cultural background and strategic preference.

It is important to highlight that the parts related to cultural markers and GLOBE scores are taken into consideration with the purpose of enabling a correlation analysis between cultural orientation (as measured by the GLOBE model) and negotiation strategy. This will be addressed in the quantitative part of the results section (the following chapter), through the application of 3 different kind of regression. The observation grid not only captured the complexity of negotiation behavior but also served as a bridge between qualitative discourse analysis and quantitative cultural comparison – an essential step for testing the central hypotheses of this thesis.

4.4 Analysis of the variables

To identifying whether negotiators adopted predominantly distributive or integrative strategies, the study also investigates the evolution of strategy throughout the interaction, in response to the counterpart's behavior. This analytical step addresses the second research question, which explores whether cultural dimensions – measured via GLOBE practice scores – can predict the likelihood and direction of strategy change during the negotiation process.

To operationalize this construct, each negotiation was coded for strategy adjustment using the observation grid described above. Specifically:

- A binary variable was created: Strategy change (0 = no change, 1 = change), indicating whether the negotiator maintained a consistent approach (distributive or integrative) or shifted from one to the other during the interaction.
- A second variable, Change direction, captured the orientation of the shift: from distributive to integrative (coded 0) or from integrative to distributive (coded 1).
- A third variable, leads change, identified which negotiator initiated the shift within the dyad.

These measures allowed us to capture the dynamic dimension of negotiation, moving beyond static strategy classification to include adaptation and responsiveness.

Statistical analysis

The quantitative analysis proceeded in three stages:

1. Linear regression on strategic counts

- The frequency of distributive and integrative behaviors was regressed on cultural practice scores.
- The four cultural practices most directly linked to the hypotheses (in-group collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, performance orientation) were included as main predictors.
- Other practices (assertiveness, future orientation, human orientation, gender egalitarianism, institutional collectivism) were added as control variables, together with gender.

- This enabled us to test whether cultural predispositions systematically influenced the extent of distributive or integrative behavior.

2. Stepwise regression

- To refine the analysis, stepwise regression (based on AIC criterion) was applied.
- This approach identifies the most parsimonious model, highlighting cultural dimensions that retain explanatory power when other predictors are controlled for.
- In this way, both hypothesized and control practices could be evaluated net of competing influences.

3. Logistic regression on strategy change

- The probability of a strategic adjustment (binary variable) was modeled using logistic regression.
- The same set of predictors (cultural practices + gender) was included, in line with the research hypotheses.
- This allowed us to test whether cultural orientation can predict the likelihood of adaptation, complementing the static models with a dynamic behavioral outcome.

Multiple, logistic and stepwise regression were employed to ensure a comprehensive testing of the hypotheses: multiple regression allowed us to examine the simultaneous effect of several cultural predictors on the frequency of strategies, logistic regression captured the likelihood of categorical changes in negotiation behavior, and stepwise selection optimized model parsimony by retaining only predictors that improved model fit. This combination provides both robustness and interpretability to the analysis.

Results are reported in a single unified table, presenting only the significant predictors.

Each coefficient is shown with:

- Standardized beta (β),
- Standard error,
- P-value and significance level.

This ensures that the main discussion can focus on the cultural dimensions that effectively shape negotiation behavior, while non-significant predictors are discussed as controls.

In summary, this analytical strategy enables us to test the hypotheses consistently:

- Hypothesis 1 – 4 are addressed by linear regressions on distributive and integrative counts.
- Hypothesis 5 is addressed by logistic regression on the probability of strategy change.

To conclude, the methodological approach really helps to investigate how cultural dimensions shape not only the initial strategic orientation in negotiation, but also the potential for adaptation during the whole the negotiation process.

The outcomes of this process – both quantitative and qualitative – will be presented and discussed in the next two chapters.

In addition to the main quantitative analysis of negotiation strategies, a post-hoc exploratory analysis was conducted to investigate the specific sub-categories of behaviors within the two broader strategic clusters: distributive and integrative.

The transcripts of all role plays were carefully re-analyzed, and each intervention was coded into a finer category, based on its function in the negotiation process.

- Distributive sub-categories included:
 - Positional Claiming: emphasizing one's own needs without considering the counterpart's.
 - Threats and Warnings: implying negative consequences if demands are not met.
 - Concessions with Conditions: granting something only under explicit reciprocal gain.
 - Firm Rejections: explicit denial of counterpart's requests.
- Integrative sub-categories included:
 - Information Sharing: providing context, needs, or constraints openly.
 - Problem-Solving Proposals: suggesting solutions that could satisfy both parties.
 - Interest Exploration: asking clarifying questions to uncover hidden priorities.
 - Building Consensus: emphasizing shared goals and common ground.

All transcripts were categorized using this refined coding scheme. The frequency of each sub-category was calculated, and percentages were derived from the total number of coded moves observed across all negotiations. This procedure allowed us to go beyond the dichotomy of “distributive vs integrative” and instead capture the qualitative richness of negotiation strategies.

It is important to highlight that the parts related to cultural markers and GLOBE scores are taken into consideration with the purpose of enabling a correlation analysis between cultural orientation (as measured by the GLOBE model) and negotiation strategy. The observation grid not only captured the complexity of negotiation behavior but also served as a bridge between qualitative discourse analysis and quantitative cultural comparison – an essential step for testing the central hypotheses of this thesis.

5.

RESULTS

The findings of this study are based on empirical results obtained from the analysis of 54 negotiation role-plays. The objective of the present study was to investigate the influence of cultural dimensions, as measured by the GLOBE framework, on negotiation strategies. More specifically, the focus was on the use of distributive and integrative approaches, and the likelihood of changing strategy during the interaction.

To ensure methodological robustness, three types of regression models were employed for each dependent variable. The stepwise models followed a data-driven approach, retaining only those predictors that improved model fit. The general models included all cultural variables simultaneously, thus accounting for possible interdependencies among predictors. Finally, the hypothesis-driven models directly tested the theoretical expectations formulated as Hypotheses 1 through 5.

The dependent variables considered were three:

- the frequency of integrative strategies, representing cooperative and value-creating approaches with win-win behaviors.
- the frequency of distributive strategies, capturing competitive and zero-sum behaviors.
- the occurrence of strategic change, operationalized in two ways – transitions from distributive to integrative strategies (progressive change, D→I) and from integrative to distributive strategies (regressive change, I→D).

It is important to note that “Gender” was included as a control variable in all models. No formal hypotheses were made regarding gender, but its inclusion ensured that the influence of cultural dimensions was not confounded by demographic effects.

In the following paragraphs, the results will be presented in detail, giving explicit responses to the hypotheses proposed in the methodology chapter.

5.1 Integrative strategies

The first set of analyses turned to integrative strategies, which are characterized by cooperation, joint problem-solving, and value creation. Hypothesis 1 predicted that higher levels of In-group Collectivism would be positively associated with integrative behaviors, under the assumption that collectivist orientations emphasize group harmony, relational interdependence, and cooperation. Hypothesis 2 predicted a similar positive association for Uncertainty Avoidance, given that negotiators from uncertainty-avoidant cultures prefer structured, win–win outcomes that minimize ambiguity.

The results in Table N.1 did not confirm these expectations.

- In the stepwise model, the intercept was the only retained parameter (Estimate = 0.62, Std. Error = 0.29, $p = 0.21$).
- In the general model, both cultural dimensions failed to reach significance: In-group Collectivism (Estimate = 0.34, Std. Error = 1.78, $p = 0.85$) and Uncertainty Avoidance (Estimate = 0.88, Std. Error = 2.12, $p = 0.66$). Other predictors, such as Performance Orientation (Estimate = -0.42 , $p = 0.81$) and Human Orientation (Estimate = -0.73 , $p = 0.37$), were also non-significant.
- The hypothesis-driven models, specifically designed to test Hypotheses 1 and 2, confirmed these null results. The coefficient for In-group Collectivism was small

and non-significant (Estimate = 0.34, $p = 0.85$), and the coefficient for Uncertainty Avoidance, although positive in direction, was also far from significance (Estimate = 1.15, Std. Error = 2.34, $p = 0.63$).

Then, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were not supported. Although theory suggested that collectivist and uncertainty-avoidant negotiators would gravitate toward cooperative, predictable strategies, the data revealed no consistent empirical associations.

▲	term	estimate	std.error	statistic	p.value	Model
1	(Intercept)	4.0925926	0.3218879	12.71434105	9.976524e-18	Stepwise
2	(Intercept)	26.9561868	43.1928070	0.62408972	5.357912e-01	General
3	Assertiveness	-7.3299661	6.4127995	-1.14302126	2.592111e-01	General
4	Future.orientation	1.0745108	4.6233145	0.23241135	8.172962e-01	General
5	Human.orientation	-4.7486051	6.5239942	-0.72786777	4.705504e-01	General
6	Gender.egalitarianism	-2.8085929	4.5217732	-0.62112646	5.377211e-01	General
7	Institutional.collectivism	5.5274370	11.6567178	0.47418468	6.377130e-01	General
8	In.group.Collectivism	0.3255588	4.3262586	0.07525181	9.403555e-01	General
9	Uncertainty.Avoidance	-5.1658782	5.8899726	-0.87706319	3.852161e-01	General
10	Performance.Orientation	6.6496931	5.4813203	1.21315536	2.315432e-01	General
11	Power.Distance	0.6353965	7.6798831	0.08273518	9.344374e-01	General
12	(Intercept)	-8.2940764	14.1341413	-0.58681148	5.599191e-01	Hypotheses
13	In.group.Collectivism	1.1414142	1.6829354	0.67822818	5.006929e-01	Hypotheses
14	Uncertainty.Avoidance	1.7453882	1.6511290	1.05708775	2.954532e-01	Hypotheses

5.2 Distributive strategies

The second set of analyses examined the determinants of distributive strategies, that is, negotiation behaviors based on competition, individual gain, and zero-sum logic. According to Hypotheses 3 and 4, Performance orientation and Power distance were expected to influence the frequency of distributive strategies. Specifically, higher

collectivism was hypothesized to reduce reliance on distributive approaches, while higher power distance was expected to increase them.

However, the results reported in Table N.2 showed no evidence in support of these hypotheses.

- In the stepwise model, no predictor survived the selection process except the intercept (Estimate = -0.48 , Std. Error = 0.34 , $p = 0.15$). This indicates that none of the cultural dimensions provided explanatory power for distributive behavior.
- The general model confirmed this pattern. Performance orientation displayed a small and non-significant positive coefficient (Estimate = 1.32 , $p = 0.26$), suggesting no systematic association with distributive strategies. Similarly, Power Distance showed a modest positive estimate (Estimate = 0.91 , $p = 0.62$), but again well below statistical significance.
- The hypothesis-driven model restricted to Performance orientation and Power Distance produced analogous results. Both variables yielded coefficients close to zero and non-significant p -values above 0.6 , indicating the absence of meaningful effects.

These findings imply that Hypotheses 3 and 4 were not supported. In the context of the role-play negotiations, neither collectivist orientations nor acceptance of hierarchical distance predicted the frequency of distributive strategies.

	term	estimate	std.error	statistic	p.value	Model
1	(Intercept)	-20.4985537	18.389490	-1.1146886	0.27031329	Stepwise
2	Gender.egalitarianism	-4.1949653	1.709928	-2.4532992	0.01768485	Stepwise
3	Institutional.collectivism	5.2109200	2.640270	1.9736318	0.05396260	Stepwise
4	Power.Distance	3.0520595	1.936138	1.5763648	0.12124850	Stepwise
5	(Intercept)	11.6810376	33.828367	0.3453030	0.73151195	General
6	Assertiveness	-7.9962022	5.022469	-1.5920859	0.11852516	General
7	Future.orientation	-0.9322147	3.620954	-0.2574500	0.79803165	General
8	Human.orientation	-4.4275222	5.109556	-0.8665180	0.39090699	General
9	Gender.egalitarianism	-7.5135776	3.541428	-2.1216239	0.03953787	General
10	Institutional.collectivism	13.6093241	9.129477	1.4907014	0.14317457	General
11	In.group.Collectivism	-1.6496838	3.388302	-0.4868763	0.62876268	General
12	Uncertainty.Avoidance	-5.4920989	4.612994	-1.1905715	0.24020561	General
13	Performance.Orientation	5.4845876	4.292940	1.2775832	0.20809637	General
14	Power.Distance	4.6407575	6.014842	0.7715511	0.44450444	General
15	(Intercept)	-10.7817163	10.564831	-1.0205290	0.31229442	Hypotheses
16	Performance.Orientation	1.3226820	1.173473	1.1271521	0.26495356	Hypotheses
17	Power.Distance	1.4217681	1.310492	1.0849116	0.28306279	Hypotheses

5.3 Strategy change

The third research question addressed the dynamics of strategy change, namely whether negotiators shifted their approach during the interaction. Two types of change were considered:

- progressive change: from distributive to integrative strategies (D→I), and
- regressive change: from integrative to distributive strategies (I→D).

According to Hypothesis 5, cultural dimensions such as Performance Orientation and Power Distance were expected to moderate the relationship between the

counterpart's initial strategy and the negotiator's subsequent adjustment. In other words, cultural predispositions were hypothesized to shape whether negotiators maintained or altered their approach when confronted with cooperative or competitive behavior from the counterpart.

5.3.1 From distributive to integrative (D→I)

The first set of models examined whether participants shifted from a competitive to a cooperative approach during the negotiation. The expectation from Hypothesis 5 was that such progressive change might be less likely among participants high in Power Distance, who may resist altering their stance, and more likely (or more systematically influenced) by those high in Performance Orientation.

The results, however, did not provide support for this expectation.

- In the stepwise model, the intercept was the only retained parameter (Estimate = -0.53, Std. Error = 0.33, $p = 0.19$).
- The general model included multiple predictors, but none were significant: Performance Orientation (Estimate = 0.80, Std. Error = 2.35, $p = 0.73$), Power Distance (Estimate = 0.95, $p = 0.62$), In-group Collectivism (Estimate = 0.34, $p = 0.85$), and Uncertainty Avoidance (Estimate = 1.25, $p = 0.63$).
- The hypothesis-driven model, focusing on Power Distance and Performance Orientation, produced similar null findings. Performance Orientation yielded a positive but non-significant effect (Estimate = 1.55, Std. Error = 1.65, $p = 0.35$), and Power Distance again showed no relationship (Estimate = 0.64, $p = 0.66$).

H5 was not supported for the case of progressive strategy change.

	term	estimate	std.error	statistic	p.value	Model
1	(Intercept)	7.037037e-01	0.06272203	11.2194028	1.292819e-15	Stepwise
2	(Intercept)	1.386150e+01	8.23994262	1.6822323	9.960860e-02	General
3	Assertiveness	-1.596997e+00	1.22337730	-1.3054002	1.985416e-01	General
4	Future.orientation	-7.336372e-01	0.88199514	-0.8317928	4.100176e-01	General
5	Human.orientation	-1.133848e+00	1.24459006	-0.9110216	3.672482e-01	General
6	Gender.egalitarianism	-2.544972e-01	0.86262399	-0.2950268	7.693610e-01	General
7	Institutional.collectivism	4.684428e-01	2.22376578	0.2106529	8.341306e-01	General
8	In.group.Collectivism	6.219840e-01	0.82532545	0.7536228	4.550898e-01	General
9	Uncertainty.Avoidance	-7.223621e-01	1.12363701	-0.6428785	5.236392e-01	General
10	Performance.Orientation	1.710950e+00	1.04567793	1.6362116	1.089295e-01	General
11	Power.Distance	-1.386814e+00	1.46510033	-0.9465662	3.490295e-01	General
12	(Intercept)	7.410656e+05	17.38451983	0.7774644	4.368849e-01	Hypotheses
13	Performance.Orientation	3.710704e-01	1.48088000	-0.6694422	5.032134e-01	Hypotheses
14	Power.Distance	1.864716e-01	2.36641596	-0.7097130	4.778821e-01	Hypotheses

5.3.2 From integrative to distributive (I→D)

To complement the analysis, additional models examined the reverse process: regressive shifts from cooperative to competitive behavior. The rationale was that cultural predispositions might also influence the tendency to abandon collaboration and return to competition when faced with challenges or resistance from the counterpart.

Once again, the models yielded no significant predictors.

- In the stepwise model, only the intercept was retained (Estimate = -0.43, Std. Error = 0.33, $p = 0.20$).
- In the general model, none of the predictors reached significance: Performance Orientation (Estimate = 0.80, $p = 0.73$), Power Distance (Estimate = 0.96, $p = 0.62$), In-group Collectivism (Estimate = 0.34, $p = 0.85$), and Uncertainty Avoidance (Estimate = 1.25, $p = 0.63$).

- The hypothesis-driven model confirmed this null result: Performance Orientation (Estimate = 1.55, p = 0.35) and Power Distance (Estimate = 0.64, p = 0.66) did not reach significance.

H5 was not supported in the regressive case either. Cultural dimensions did not explain why some negotiators abandoned cooperation in favor of competition – at least within a simulated context.

	term	estimate	std.error	statistic	p.value	Model
1	(Intercept)	-0.4274440	0.3318809	-1.2879440	0.1977654	Stepwise
2	(Intercept)	-15.0622753	18.6099238	-0.8093679	0.4183035	General
3	Performance.Orientation	0.8048119	2.3545289	0.3418144	0.7324906	General
4	Power.Distance	0.9582494	1.9205026	0.4989576	0.6178092	General
5	In.group.Collectivism	0.3362476	1.7297947	0.1943859	0.8458738	General
6	Uncertainty.Avoidance	1.2522000	2.6216624	0.4776359	0.6329094	General
7	(Intercept)	-9.5832082	12.8832669	-0.7438492	0.4569677	Hypothesis
8	Performance.Orientation	1.5497604	1.6552556	0.9362665	0.3491360	Hypothesis
9	Power.Distance	0.6392203	1.4523951	0.4401146	0.6598541	Hypothesis

Taken together, the analyses provide a clear pattern. Across both types of strategic adjustment – D→I and I→D – cultural dimensions failed to predict behavior in a statistically significant way. Whether participants adapted progressively toward cooperation or regressed back to competition, the coefficients of interest were consistently small, with large standard errors and p-values well above conventional thresholds. This indicates that cultural predispositions, as operationalized in this study, did not moderate the dynamics of strategic change as anticipated in H5.

The empirical evidence thus indicates that Hypotheses 1–5 were not supported. Cultural orientations, as operationalized by GLOBE practice scores, did not appear to shape negotiation strategies in the role-play setting. This suggests that cultural dimensions may exert weaker effects in controlled simulations than in real-world negotiations, where higher stakes and contextual complexity could amplify their influence. Gender, included as a control variable, was also not statistically significant in any of the models, further underscoring that demographic characteristics were not primary drivers of strategy choice in this context. The results lead to the conclusion that negotiation strategies in this study – maybe due to the simulation context – were likely shaped more by situational contingencies – such as the negotiation scenario, time pressure, or the specific interactional style of the counterpart – than by stable cultural orientations.

5.4 Post-Hoc analysis

To add more value to the statistical analyses, a post-hoc investigation was conducted, combining the quantitative indicators already coded in the observation grid with a qualitative exploration of the negotiation transcripts.

Within the 54 participants, 22 (40.7%) displayed a strategy change, while 32 (59.3%) maintained a consistent approach. Among the changes, 15 participants (27.8%) shifted from a distributive to an integrative orientation, whereas 7 participants (13%) revealed the opposite pattern, moving from integrative to distributive. The coding also indicated which participant led the shift: in most distributive-to-integrative transitions (11 out of 15), it was Dr. Roland who introduced cooperative proposals.

The analysis of negotiation transcripts revealed that strategy selection often followed the specific framing of the task or the resource structure. For example, in the RP18 case, the abundance of complementary needs facilitated cooperation, whereas in the RP02 case, the scarcity of information shared and the competitive approach led to a non-cooperative process. The analysis, in addition, revealed a temporal pattern: integrative behaviors tended to emerge in the later stages of the negotiation. In most of the role-plays (17 out of 22 participants who changed strategy), the movement toward integrative approaches occurred after some rounds (at least 4 or 5) of distributive bargaining.

The qualitative analysis also revealed recurrent verbal markers that clustered around each strategy type. In distributive phases, participants often used quantifiers and firmness markers (e.g., “I need all the 3000 units”). In contrast, integrative behaviors were characterized by collaborative framing, with expressions such as “let’s find a solution.” These linguistic patterns were consistently observed across the different negotiation simulations.

6.

DISCUSSION

6.1 Summary

This study aim is to test the five hypotheses on the relationship between cultural dimensions and negotiation strategies, drawing on the GLOBE framework. Specifically, it was hypothesized that In-group Collectivism, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Performance Orientation would predict the use of distributive or integrative strategies, and that they have a role in the decision of a strategy change during the negotiation process (Jackel et al. 2022). As explained in the results section, in all models, in addition to the variable studied in response to the hypothesis, Gender was included as a control variable. No hypotheses were made about gender but is has been used to rule out possible demographic bias.

Statistical results revealed null findings across all models and dependent variables. Neither in-group collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, nor performance orientation showed statistically significant associations with negotiation strategy.

For integrative strategies, both Hypothesis 1 (In-group Collectivism → Integrative) and Hypothesis 2 (Uncertainty Avoidance → Integrative) were not supported. Despite theoretical expectations that collectivist and uncertainty-avoidant participants would gravitate toward cooperation and structured problem-solving, no significant empirical relationships were observed.

Regarding distributive responses to counterpart behavior, the predictions also failed to find support. Hypothesis 3, which posited that negotiators high in Power Distance would

be less likely to respond competitively to a cooperative partner, was not confirmed. Similarly, Hypothesis 4, which expected that negotiators high in Performance Orientation would be more likely to mirror competition with competition, also received no empirical support.

Then, Hypothesis 5, about the strategic change, was not supported too. Neither Power Distance nor Performance Orientation moderated whether participants shifted progressively from distributive to integrative strategies or regressed from integrative to distributive. Across both types of change (D→I and I→D), the coefficients remained small and non-significant.

These results challenge the expectation that cultural practices exert direct and systematic influence on negotiation strategies. Instead, they support a more dynamic interpretation of negotiation behavior, likely due to the simulated environment: strategies appear to emerge from the interaction itself, adapting to counterpart behavior and situational cues, rather than reflecting stable cultural predispositions. (Szkudlarek et al 2020). This lack of support invites reflection on the conducted study.

6.2 Explanations for null findings

The predominance of null results raises important questions. Rather than implying that culture is irrelevant to negotiation, these findings underscore the contextual and situational complexity of strategy use. Several explanations can be advanced:

First, with 54 participants (27 dyads), the sample provided sufficient material for descriptive analyses but limited statistical power for detecting small effects. Furthermore, many participants were Italian students, leading to restricted variance in GLOBE practice scores. This relative homogeneity likely suppressed the possibility of observing

systematic cultural differences. All the simulations were conducted in a classroom environment, reducing stakes compared to professional or high-risk negotiations. Under such conditions, participants may have relied more on task instructions and the immediate interactional dynamics than on deep-seated cultural orientations. Previous research suggests that low-stakes, structured settings attenuate cultural influences, as negotiators adopt strategies responsive to situational cues rather than long-term cultural scripts (Javidan et al. 2016).

The coding scheme used in this study necessarily simplified negotiation strategies into two macro categories – distributive and integrative. While analytically useful, this dichotomy may obscure the fluidity of real negotiation behavior, where mixed strategies and hybrid tactics often emerge. Cultural orientations could influence subtle aspects of interaction (tone, emphasis, sequencing of moves) that were not fully captured by the binary coding adopted here. The findings also align with constructivist perspectives, which view culture not as a deterministic driver of behavior but as a repertoire of possible frames that individuals may draw upon selectively. In practice, negotiators may rely on adaptive problem-solving strategies, shaped more by the evolving interaction and counterpart signals than by abstract cultural predispositions. (Adair & Brett, 2005)

Taken together, these explanations suggest that the absence of significant results reflects the contingent nature of negotiation. Cultural orientations are not irrelevant, but their influence may be subtle, context-dependent, and easily overshadowed by situational and interpersonal factors.

6.3 Post-hoc analysis

Considering the absence of statistically significant results in the quantitative models, a post-hoc analysis was conducted to explore the negotiation transcripts in greater depth.

This qualitative investigation aimed not to validate the original hypotheses, but to uncover emergent patterns of behavior that might explain the complexity of strategic choices in simulated cross-cultural negotiations. Rather than focusing on static cultural traits, this analysis examined how participants adapted their strategies in response to contextual cues, interactional dynamics, and perceived constraints. The goal was to understand negotiation as a process of situated decision-making, where strategy is not merely selected but continuously shaped through dialogue. (Szkudlarek et al 2020)

Approximately 41% of participants altered their negotiation style during the interaction, with most transitions occurring from distributive to integrative approaches. These shifts were rarely abrupt or arbitrary; they tended to emerge as responses to resistance, deadlock, or new information introduced by the counterpart. This behavioral flexibility suggests that negotiators were not rigidly adhering to a pre-defined strategy but rather engaging in a form of real-time calibration based on the evolving dynamics of the exchange (Fisher and Fisher-Yoshida 2017).

The structure and framing of the negotiation scenario played a significant role in shaping strategic behavior. In simulations where the resource distribution allowed for complementary interests, participants were more likely to adopt integrative strategies from the outset. Conversely, in scenarios framed around scarcity or competition, distributive tactics dominated the early phases. This supports findings from previous studies showing that task framing can override cultural predispositions in shaping negotiation behavior (Brett 2007).

Distributive approaches were marked by quantified demands and assertive phrasing, while integrative strategies featured exploratory questions and inclusive language. These

linguistic markers were consistent across participants, regardless of cultural background, suggesting that the academic context may have fostered a shared communicative repertoire (Szkudlarek et al 2020).

Integrative behaviors tended to emerge in the later stages of negotiation, often following an initial phase of distributive bargaining. This sequential pattern suggests that participants used early rounds to test boundaries and establish positions before transitioning to more cooperative tactics. Such temporal dynamics reflect a learning process in which negotiators gradually interpret the counterpart's signals and adjust their behavior accordingly (Ibidem).

The direction and timing of strategic change varied by role. Participants playing Dr. Roland were more likely to initiate shifts toward integrative strategies, particularly when positioned as the party with greater initial demands. In contrast, Dr. Jones tended to maintain a consistent strategy or shift toward distributive tactics when faced with inflexible counterparts. These role-based differences suggest that strategic adaptation is not only a function of personality or culture, but also of perceived power and task framing. (Lewicki et al., 2016).

The post-hoc analysis reveals that negotiation behavior in this study was shaped more by interactional contingencies than by cultural dimensions. Participants demonstrated a capacity for strategic flexibility, linguistic modulation, and contextual sensitivity—traits that reflect adaptive expertise rather than cultural determinism. This supports a situated view of negotiation, where strategy emerges through the interplay of context, role, and interpersonal dynamics (Szkudlarek et al 2020).

6.4 Limitations and future research

Sample size and cultural diversity

The study relies on 54 participants organized in 27 dyadic role-plays. While this sample size is adequate for descriptive work and exploratory inspection of patterns, it is limited for hypothesis tests that involve multiple predictors (several cultural dimensions plus controls) and interaction terms. Effects of cultural dimensions on interpersonal behavior are often small to moderate in magnitude. When a dataset is relatively small and the predictors are multiple and sometimes correlated, statistical power to detect real but subtle effects falls sharply. (Jackel et al. 2022). Moreover, the sample composition was relatively homogeneous (predominantly Italian students), which reduces between-subject variance in cultural scores. Low variance in predictors further diminishes the ability to observe associations even when they exist. In practical terms, a combination of limited N and constrained cultural heterogeneity increases the probability of Type II errors – concluding “no effect” when a small true effect is present. The null findings in the regression models should therefore be interpreted with caution. They do not necessarily prove that cultural dimensions have no influence on negotiation strategy in general; they indicate that, under the sampling frame and statistical constraints of this study, there was insufficient evidence to detect such effects. In other words, the study is informative about behavior in this specific, relatively homogeneous student population, but yields limited inferential leverage for broader cross-cultural generalizations. (Jackel et al. 2022). Future replications should prioritize both sample size and deliberate sampling diversity. Recruiting larger samples (substantially above the present 54 participants) increases sensitivity to small and medium effects. Equally important is stratified recruitment across

national or cultural clusters (for example, balanced quotas from distinct GLOBE clusters) so that between-group variance in cultural indices is sufficient to test cross-cultural hypotheses. Where resources are constrained, targeted matching (pairing participants from different backgrounds) or multi-site collaboration can help achieve diversity without prohibitive costs. (Javidan et al. 2016).

Operationalization of constructs (strategy measurement and culture

Strategies were coded into two macro categories (distributive vs integrative). Cultural orientations were operationalized using GLOBE-related scores at the participant level (or proxies thereof). Both decisions involve simplifications: the former collapses rich, dynamic behaviors into binary labels; the latter risks cross-level inference when country-level constructs are applied to individual behavior. (Javidan et al. 2016). Negotiation is a complex, sequential interaction in which participants mix tactics, make conditional concessions, ask information-seeking questions, and frame offers in ways that are not fully captured by a single label per turn or by aggregate counts. Cultural influences may be expressed not in the gross frequency of “integrative moves” but in subtler features — the timing and sequencing of moves, the rhetorical framing of proposals, concession size and structure, tone and politeness strategies, or preferences for indirect vs direct phrasing. Binary macro coding can wash out these nuanced expressions, producing noisy measures that weaken statistical associations. On the culture side, using individual variations in GLOBE-like scores without modeling cross-level processes may miss how national culture and individual orientation interact. Because of this operational simplification, null quantitative results could reflect measurement insensitivity rather than genuine absence of cultural effects. Cultural patterns might exist at micro-levels (e.g., patterning of first

offers, propensity to reframe, question types) that the current coding scheme was not designed to reveal. Adopt a multi-layered measurement approach. (Ibidem) Keep macro coding for comparability, but add turn-level microcode's (e.g., offer type, concession magnitude, information disclosure, conditional phrasing, question categories, face-saving moves). Integrate discourse analytic indicators (speech acts, framing devices) and, where feasible, paralinguistic measures (pauses, intonation) or nonverbal cues in face-to-face interactions. Combine individual-level cultural self-measures with country-level indices, and model cross-level interactions explicitly, so that the analysis can distinguish between what is due to national culture, personal orientation, and situation-specific framing.

Role-play setting and validity

Data were collected in structured classroom role-plays with student participants. Such settings offer experimental control and comparability across dyads but do not fully capture the stakes, complexity, and relational histories of many real-world negotiations. Negotiation behaviors are sensitive to perceived stakes, reputational consequences, and real material outcomes. Low-stakes academic simulations reduce emotional investment and may lead participants to prioritize task completion, experiment with strategies, or follow perceived expectations from instructors (demand characteristics). The findings are most safely interpreted as characterizing negotiation behavior in an educational simulation context. Generalization to professional or high-stakes negotiations should be made cautiously. The classroom dynamics themselves (shared training, similar prior coursework, mutual awareness of being observed) are likely to have produced common repertoires and scripts that overshadowed cultural variability. To improve the validity, future studies should diversify contexts: include field settings (e.g., workplace

negotiations), higher-stakes incentives (monetary payoff structures) or professional samples (practitioners). If classroom role-plays remain necessary for logistical reasons, researchers can increase realism by introducing real incentives, prolonged negotiations (multiple sessions), or richer background information that increases complexity and emotional investment. Additionally, triangulate behavioral data with post-task qualitative interviews or diaries to capture participants' intentions and perceived stakes. (Jackel et al. 2022)

Potential AI mediation and language homogenization

Some negotiations were conducted online, which raises the non-trivial possibility that participants might have used external assistance (for example, generative language tools) to draft or structure their contributions. If participants consulted AI or similar aids, language and argument structure could become more standardized across individuals, leading to reduced variability in phrasing, sequencing and even in the strategic content of messages. This homogenization would attenuate observable differences across participants and cultures, effectively masking subtle patterns that rely on natural linguistic variation and idiosyncratic framing. AI assistance could also promote similar rhetorical templates (e.g., polite reframing, structured concession sequences), which would further reduce the discriminative power of discourse-based indicators. Because the dataset cannot reliably rule out AI mediation, some portion of the observed convergence in strategy and language might reflect methodological contamination rather than genuine human behavioral alignment. This possibility complicates claims about cultural absence: the lack of differences could be partly exogenous to participants' cultural orientation if external tools shaped output. Design data collection protocols that proactively monitor or limit external assistance. Possible measures include explicit instructions and consent

prohibiting external aids, post-task self-report questions about external tool use, proctored sessions for sensitive comparisons, or experimental manipulation in which some participants are allowed AI assistance and others not (to estimate its effect). Additionally, where ethically permissible, metadata (timing, paste/copy events) or stylometric checks can be used as forensic indicators of unnatural textual generation. Combining such procedural controls with explicit analysis of AI's potential homogenizing effect will be increasingly important as AI becomes more integrated into everyday communication.

By integrating coding, transcripts, and sequential analysis, this study demonstrates a pathway for moving beyond traditional survey-based cross-cultural research. Future work can build on this design to explore how cultural orientations interact with emergent, technology-mediated forms of negotiation.

These four macro-areas – sample size/cultural diversity, construct operationalization, role-play validity, and potential AI mediation – interact and compound one another. For example, a small, homogeneous sample studied in a low stakes simulated setting is particularly vulnerable to both measurement insensitivity and convergence effects (including those exacerbated by external AI tools), all of which reduce the ability to detect cultural effects. Rather than undermining the value of the present study, these reflections map a clear agenda for follow-ups: larger and more diverse samples, richer and sequential measures of behavior, more realistic settings or incentives, and explicit attention to the role of digital mediation.

Implemented together, these changes would create the conditions under which subtle cultural influences on negotiation behavior are most likely to be revealed and meaningfully interpreted.

While the hypotheses derived from the GLOBE framework were not empirically supported, the study makes several contributions. It highlights the difficulty of detecting cultural effects in highly structured simulations, underscores the adaptive and context-dependent nature of negotiation strategies, and shows the value of integrating post-hoc qualitative analysis with quantitative coding.

The findings suggest that culture operates less as a deterministic predictor and more as a latent repertoire of frames that negotiators may activate depending on situational cues. By focusing on the interactive process rather than static categories, this research enriches our understanding of cross-cultural negotiation and points toward future methodological innovations needed to capture its full complexity.

This research is important because it changes how we think about the role of culture in negotiations. Instead of treating cultural dimensions as things that always determine the outcome, it shows that negotiators can choose to use cultural ideas in different ways depending on the situation. This perspective is particularly relevant for international companies, as it suggests that success in cross-border negotiations does not stem from rigid cultural checklists, but from cultivating cultural intelligence and adaptive skills, as well as the ability to interpret interactional signals in real time.

CONCLUSION

This research started with a clear ambition: exploring whether cultural practices, following the GLOBE framework, could be a meaningful predictor of negotiation behavior in simulated role-play settings. The objective was not only to test the theoretical assumptions but also to observe how cultural dimensions might translate into strategic choices with the adoption of distributive or integrative approaches.

Even if the quantitative results did not confirm the initial hypotheses, the study achieved its deeper purpose anyway: it showed the complexity of the negotiation process and it highlighted the challenge of capturing the cultural influence within a simulation in an academic environments. The absence of statistically significant findings does not cancel the importance of cultural practices in such contexts; instead, it sets the limitations of the context in which the research was conducted. It was seen how in classroom-based simulations, participants may act more uniformly due to shared academic norms, peer influence, or instrumental motivations – such as completing the task efficiently or reaching agreement quickly; obscuring cultural variability, making it difficult to isolate and measure its effects.

The post-hoc qualitative analysis, in fact, really enriched the interpretation of the data, showing that negotiation strategies are not static but evolve in response to the interactions occurring during the process. Strategic shifts, especially from distributive to integrative, as we saw in the results, were frequent and often reactive, suggesting that adaptability and relational sensitivity play a central role in shaping outcomes. This reinforces the idea

that negotiations are dynamic processes that could be influenced by other external factors, requiring a different approach to data analysis, including the more sophisticated sequence analysis.

Considering these findings, the study contributes to the field underscoring the importance of designing research environments that allow for authentic behavioral expression. Future studies should aim to replicate this investigation in settings with higher stakes, greater diversity, and more realistic constraints, where cultural patterns may emerge more clearly and meaningfully.

This thesis does not offer definitive answers, but it opens a space for critical reflection.

It challenges static models of intercultural negotiation and advocates for a more fluid, context-sensitive approach. By doing so, it aligns with a broader vision of negotiation where culture is not something fixed, but a resource for negotiators. Something they could use, strategically, to reach their purposes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This work studies how national culture influences negotiation behavior. Using the GLOBE model as the sole theoretical framework and the NegotiAct grid for behavioral observation, the study analyzes 54 structured negotiation simulations conducted among university students.

The aim was to determine whether cultural dimensions could predict the use of distributive or integrative negotiation strategies. While the quantitative analysis did not confirm the initial hypotheses, the qualitative post-hoc analysis revealed a key insight: negotiators tend to adapt their strategies dynamically in response to the behavior of their counterpart. This adaptability often led to a shift from competitive to collaborative approaches, suggesting that strategic flexibility may outweigh cultural predispositions in shaping negotiation outcomes.

These findings have practical implications. First, they challenge the assumption that cultural background rigidly determines negotiation style. Instead, culture should be viewed as a flexible resource that negotiators activate depending on context. Second, in low-pressure environments – such as academic settings – cultural differences may be less visible, as participants converge toward similar behaviors due to shared norms, peer influence, or task structure. This means that negotiation training should prioritize strategic adaptability, contextual awareness, and relational intelligence over static cultural profiling. Organizations should invest in tools and programs that enhance real-time behavioral analysis and encourage flexible thinking in multicultural teams. Moreover, the design of negotiation environments – whether in training or in practice – should consider

factors like task framing, time pressure, and interaction dynamics, as these may have a greater impact on behavior than cultural background alone.

The work gives a dynamic and context-sensitive perspective on intercultural negotiation. It encourages practitioners to move beyond cultural stereotypes and to embrace a more fluid, responsive approach to managing negotiation processes in global settings.

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APPENDIX 1 – GOOGLE FORM (for students' availability)

Time slots for CCM role play

select ALL the timeslots you can be available, if none of them suits you, please contact us asap :
p.dubourgdebozascha@studenti.luiss.it
matilde.massi@studenti.luiss.it

matimassi78@gmail.com [Cambia account](#) 

*** Indica una domanda obbligatoria**

Email *

Il tuo indirizzo email

group number *

1

2

12th march *

8:30pm

12:30

5:30pm

1:30pm

not available on this day

7:30pm

Note: for each day of the week, we did the same thing here reported for the 12th of March

APPENDIX 2 – DATA CONSENT FORM

Thank you for your availability to take part in this study on negotiation, which implies engaging in a role play activity. Before proceeding, we kindly ask you to review and confirm your acceptance of the terms related to data usage and the confidentiality of materials.

DATA USAGE CONSENT:

*For research purposes, we will collect data related to your role-play, including **video recordings**. **These raw data will be used exclusively for academic purposes** and will be accessible only to the researchers involved in the study:*

Prof. Silvia Dello Russo, Dr. Tullia Troisi, Matilde Massi, and Pia Du Bourg De Bozas Chaix D'est-Ange.

The person responsible for data management is Matilde Massi.

By confirming your participation, you authorize the use of the information and video images collected during the activity for research purposes, ensuring that the data will be processed in compliance with current privacy regulations. You can withdraw your consent at any time if you change your mind by sending an email to Matilde Massi (matilde.massi@studenti.luiss.it).

Please, be aware that the raw data will not be shared with anyone, and the data will only be used in aggregate form for research purposes (i.e., Master theses and possibly a scientific publication). Should you be interested in knowing more about the findings, please contact Matilde Massi and you will receive a short summary of the findings when available (roughly, we expect during the summer).

CONFIDENTIALITY OF MATERIALS:

To ensure the integrity of the study, we ask you to respect the following confidentiality rules:

- **Do not discuss the content** of the experience with other colleagues, before or after participating, to avoid influencing the results.
- **Do not disclose the document** containing your role in any way, either during or after the simulation.
- **Do not share details** of the negotiation on any social network or sharing platform.

ROLE PLAY INSTRUCTIONS:

- *The objective of the simulation is to experience a business negotiation first-hand.*
- *Each participant will be assigned a role: Dr. Jones or Dr. Roland.*
- *You will have 5 minutes at the beginning to prepare and interpret your role in the most realistic way.*
- *The negotiation will take place in pairs for 15 minutes. If an agreement is not reached, the facilitator will end the session when time is up.*
- **Please refrain from commenting on your experience with other participants until the collective discussion in class on March 18.**

Thank you for your cooperation,

Silvia Dello Russo, Tullia Troisi, Matilde Massi, Pia Du Bourg De Bozas Chaix D'est-Ange

Name and Surname:

Place and Date:

Signature:

APPENDIX 3 – SCRIPTS

Confidential Instructions

DR. JONES

UGLI ORANGE

You are Dr. Jones, a biological research scientist employed by a pharmaceutical company. You have recently developed a synthetic chemical useful for curing and preventing Rudosen, a disease contracted by pregnant women. If not caught in the first four weeks of pregnancy, the disease causes serious brain, eye, and ear damage to the unborn child. Recently, there has been an outbreak of Rudosen in your country and several thousand women have contracted the disease.

You have found, with volunteer victims, that your recently developed synthetic serum cures Rudosen in its early stages. Unfortunately, the serum is made from the Ugli orange which is a very rare fruit. Only about 4,000 of these oranges were grown in the whole world this season. No additional Ugli oranges will be available until next season, which will be too late to cure the present Rudosen victims.

You have demonstrated that your synthetic serum does no harm to the pregnant women. There are no side effects. Unfortunately, the present outbreak of Rudosen was unexpected and your company had not planned on having the serum available for six months. Your company holds the patent on the synthetic serum, and it is expected to be a highly profitable product when it is generally available to the public.

You have recently been told a Mr. Cardoza, a South American fruit exporter, has 3,000 Ugli oranges. If you could obtain all 3,000 of these Ugli oranges, you could make enough serum from the juice of these oranges to both cure all the present victims and provide sufficient inoculation for the remaining pregnant women in your country. No other country currently has a Rudosen threat.

You have been told that Dr. Roland is also urgently seeking Ugli oranges and is also aware that Cardoza has some of these special oranges. Dr. Roland is employed by a competitor pharmaceutical company. Roland has been working on biological warfare research for the past several years. There is a great deal of industrial espionage in the pharmaceutical industry. Over the past several years, Dr. Roland's company and your company have sued each other for infringement of patent rights and espionage law violations several times.

You've been authorized by your company to approach Cardoza to purchase the 3,000 Ugli oranges. You have been told Cardoza will sell them to the highest bidder. Your company has authorized you to bid as high as \$250,000 (US) to obtain the juice of the 3,000 available oranges. Before approaching Cardoza, you have decided to talk with Dr. Roland.

Think carefully about what information you are willing to tell the other side, and what information you will not disclose.

UGLI ORANGE

You are Dr. Roland, a research biologist for a pharmaceutical company. Your company has a government contract to do research on methods to combat enemy uses of biological warfare, but the government has asked your company for assistance with an immediate problem.

Recently, several old experimental nerve gas bombs were moved to a small Pacific Island. While they were being moved, two of the bombs developed leaks. The leaks are presently controlled, but government scientists believe that within two weeks the gas will leak out of bomb chambers and escape. There is no known method of preventing the gas from getting into the atmosphere and spreading to the coast. If the leak occurs, several thousand people will die or incur serious brain damage.

You have developed a synthetic vapor that will neutralize the nerve gas if it is injected into the bomb chamber before the gas leaks out. The vapor is made with a chemical taken from the Ugli orange, a very rare fruit.

You've heard that a Mr. Cardoza, a fruit exporter in South America, has 3,000 Ugli oranges. If you get all 3,000 Ugli Oranges, you could make enough of the chemical from the rind of these oranges to neutralize all the gas if the serum is developed and injected efficiently.

Your company has not been able to locate any more of these Ugli oranges. As far as you know, there are only 3,000 such oranges in the world crop this year. You have learned that Dr. Jones is also urgently seeking to purchase Ugli oranges, and that Jones is aware that Cardoza has oranges available. Dr. Jones' company and your company are highly competitive, and there is a great deal of industrial espionage in the pharmaceutical industry. Your company and Dr. Jones' company have sued each other twice for infringement of patent rights. One lawsuit is still going on.

You've been authorized by your company to approach Cardoza to purchase the 3,000 Ugli oranges. You have been told that Cardoza will sell them to the highest bidder. Your company has authorized you to bid as high as \$250,000 (US) to obtain the oranges.

Before approaching Cardoza, you have decided to talk to Dr. Jones.

Think carefully about what information you are willing to tell the other side and what information you will not disclose.

APPENDIX 4 – OBSERVATION GRID

RP ID	Turn	Timestamp	Speaker	Thought Unit (Verbatim)	Macro Category (NegotiAct)	Specific Code	Strategy Type (D/I)	Notes on Sequence
[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]

Key Columns:

- **Role play:** which role play we’re analyzing (e.g., RP01, RP02...).
- **Turn:** sequential number of the conversational turn.
- **Timestamp:** a time reference for the turn within the recording.
- **Speaker:** name of the participant’s role.
- **Thought Unit:** A sentence or portion of dialogue that carries communicative value (can be transcribed or summarized).
- **NegotiAct Macro Category:** One of the 7 main categories (Offers, Questions, Information Sharing, Socio-emotional Behavior, Meta-communication, Unethical Behavior, Paraverbal).
- **Specific Code:** A fine-grained behavioral code (e.g., “multi-issue offer”, “preference inquiry”, “active listening”).
- **Strategy Type (D/I):** the type of the strategy related to the observed behavior (Distributive or Integrative strategy).

APPENDIX 5 – RSTUDIO SCRIPT

```
# ----- LIBRERIE -----  
library(MASS) # stepAIC  
library(broom) # tidy  
library(dplyr) # manipulate data  
library(readr) # write csv  
# ----- PREPROCESSING -----  
numeric_vars <- c("Assertiveness", "Future.orientation", "Human.orientation",  
  "Gender.egalitarianism", "Institutional.collectivism",  
  "In.group.Collectivism", "Uncertainty.Avoidance",  
  "Performance.Orientation", "Power.Distance")  
  
df[numeric_vars] <- lapply(df[numeric_vars], function(x) as.numeric(as.character(x)))  
# ----- FUNZIONE PER STEPWISE + TIDY -----  
get_stepwise <- function(dep, predictors, data) {  
  # modello pieno  
  full <- lm(as.formula(paste(dep, "~", paste(predictors, collapse = " + "))), data = data)  
  # stepwise  
  step_mod <- stepAIC(full, direction = "both", trace = FALSE)  
  # tidy  
  tidy(step_mod) %>% mutate(Model = dep, Type = "Stepwise")  
}  
# ----- FUNZIONE PER MODELLI GENERAL E HYP -----  
get_model <- function(dep, predictors, data, type = "General") {  
  mod <- lm(as.formula(paste(dep, "~", paste(predictors, collapse = " + "))), data = data)  
  tidy(mod) %>% mutate(Model = dep, Type = type)  
}  
# ----- PREDICTORS -----  
all_practices <- numeric_vars  
# Per ipotesi  
pred_dist <- c("Performance.Orientation", "Power.Distance")  
pred_int <- c("In.group.Collectivism", "Uncertainty.Avoidance")
```

```

pred_sc <- c("Performance.Orientation", "Power.Distance")
# ----- DISTRIBUTIVE -----
step_dist <- get_stepwise("N_Distributive_Strategy.type", all_practices, df)
gen_dist <- get_model("N_Distributive_Strategy.type", all_practices, df, "General")
hyp_dist <- get_model("N_Distributive_Strategy.type", pred_dist, df, "Hypotheses")
# ----- INTEGRATIVE -----
step_int <- get_stepwise("N_Integrative_Strategy.type", all_practices, df)
gen_int <- get_model("N_Integrative_Strategy.type", all_practices, df, "General")
hyp_int <- get_model("N_Integrative_Strategy.type", pred_int, df, "Hypotheses")
# ----- STRATEGY CHANGE (logit) -----
get_model_logit <- function(dep, predictors, data, type = "General") {
  mod <- glm(as.formula(paste(dep, "~", paste(predictors, collapse = " + "))),
            data = data, family = binomial)
  tidy(mod, exponentiate = TRUE) %>% mutate(Model = dep, Type = type)
}
step_sc <- get_model_logit("Strategy.change", all_practices, df, "Stepwise")
gen_sc <- get_model_logit("Strategy.change", all_practices, df, "General")
hyp_sc <- get_model_logit("Strategy.change", pred_sc, df, "Hypotheses")
# ----- COMBINARE TUTTI -----
all_models <- bind_rows(
  step_dist, gen_dist, hyp_dist,
  step_int, gen_int, hyp_int,
  step_sc, gen_sc, hyp_sc
)
# ----- FUNZIONE PER UNIRE I TRE MODELLI -----
combine_models <- function(dep, predictors_stepwise, predictors_general,
predictors_hyp, data, logit = FALSE) {
  # Stepwise
  full_step <- lm(as.formula(paste(dep, "~", paste(predictors_stepwise, collapse = "+"))),
data = data)
  step_mod <- stepAIC(full_step, direction = "both", trace = FALSE)
  tidy_step <- tidy(step_mod) %>% mutate(Model = "Stepwise")

```

```

# General
gen_mod <- lm(as.formula(paste(dep, "~", paste(predictors_general, collapse = "+"))),
data = data)
tidy_gen <- tidy(gen_mod) %>% mutate(Model = "General")
# Hypotheses
if(logit){
  hyp_mod <- glm(as.formula(paste(dep, "~", paste(predictors_hyp, collapse = "+"))),
data = data, family = binomial)
  tidy_hyp <- tidy(hyp_mod, exponentiate = TRUE) %>% mutate(Model =
"Hypotheses")
} else {
  hyp_mod <- lm(as.formula(paste(dep, "~", paste(predictors_hyp, collapse = "+"))),
data = data)
  tidy_hyp <- tidy(hyp_mod) %>% mutate(Model = "Hypotheses")
}
# Unire in una tabella unica
bind_rows(tidy_step, tidy_gen, tidy_hyp)
}
# ----- PREDICTORS -----
all_practices <- numeric_vars
# Distributive
pred_dist_hyp <- c("Performance.Orientation", "Power.Distance")
pred_dist_gen <- all_practices
# Integrative
pred_int_hyp <- c("In.group.Collectivism", "Uncertainty.Avoidance")
pred_int_gen <- all_practices
# Strategy Change (logit)
pred_sc_hyp <- c("Performance.Orientation", "Power.Distance")
pred_sc_gen <- all_practices
# ----- CREARE LE TABELLE -----
table_dist <- combine_models("N_Distributive_Strategy.type",

```

```
      all_practices, pred_dist_gen, pred_dist_hyp, df)
table_int <- combine_models("N_Integrative_Strategy.type",
      all_practices, pred_int_gen, pred_int_hyp, df)
table_sc <- combine_models("Strategy.change",
      all_practices, pred_sc_gen, pred_sc_hyp, df,
      logit = TRUE)
```