



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Master's thesis
<input type="checkbox"/>	Licentiate's thesis
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doctor's thesis

Subject	International Business	Date	1.2.2007
Author	Sebastian Schildt	Student number	
		Number of pages	179
Title	Nice to do business with you: Changing social cognition and emerging microculture in business relationships		
Supervisor	M.Sc. Foster Oforu		

Abstract

Research objective

This thesis describes how social cognition changes and microculture emergences in interpersonal interaction in developing intercultural industrial business relationships. Focal contents are social cognition and microculture. Focal processes are constituted by how social cognition changes and microculture emerges in the given contexts.

Research design, realisation, and findings

The thesis is grounded in existing theory. It was conducted on social constructivist and hermeneutical basic assumptions, which led to creating a new conceptual analysis model that was employed in realising the research objective. The thesis is cross-disciplinary. A thick description of the subject matter was created by transferring findings from cognitive social psychology, cultural anthropology, sociology, and education science into business scientific contexts. The quality of research was ensured by applying Lincoln and Guba's (1985) trustworthiness criteria, as well as Van de Ven's (1988) requirements for a good theory of change.

The focal constructs of social cognition and microculture are first defined and analysed separately, and then connected. Hereafter numerous perspectives on the focal processes of change are triangulated in creating a rich description on how social cognition changes and microculture emerges in the given contexts. It was found that social cognition changes and microculture emerges in what might essentially be called an autopoietic, recursive process. The process starts and ends with the business partners' social cognition itself. It reconciles the external with the internal, and creates a shared interpersonal reality, say a microculture, between the business partners. A social bond is established in the process, which can have significant business effects.

Contributions

The contributions of this thesis are threefold. First, the created conceptual analysis model contributes to conceptual analytic methodology in business sciences. It represents an improvement to Näsi's (1980) two conceptual analysis processes that are frequently used in Finland. Second, the subject matter of this thesis is little known in business sciences. This thesis opens new windows and avenues for theory development in international business. Third, managerial aspects of changing social cognition and emerging microculture reveal the practical importance of this thesis in real-life international business.

Key words	Social cognition, microculture, business relationships, conceptual analysis
Further information	