



THE EFFECT OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES ON THE CONTEMPORARY INTELLIGENCE PROCESS

Alias: Nicole TANNHAUS

ABSTRACT

The Intelligence Community's goal is to thoroughly examine the complex international system that is continually evolving. Mutually supportive communication strategies have the potential to better prepare the Intelligence Community for the effective implementation of new changes in order to optimize collective security. I intend to emphasize the potential of intercultural communication in the sphere of security, underlining its relevance in the dynamic international system. In the face of asymmetric challenges, intelligence profile organizations' hierarchical orientation based on the primus inter pares approach cannot be a viable answer for fostering common values. Even in hierarchical cultures, with an accent on respecting authority, the partners' particular uniqueness is supported through direct communication, without jeopardizing cohesion and shared aims. Intercultural communication may contribute to bettering relationships between partners and make better use of the international setting. In the Intelligence Community, a collective integration of the partners is desired, establishing the framework of a strategic coordination.

Keywords: *intelligence, intercultural communication, strategies, security, connection.*

Nowadays, the powerful transmission of a message (book, news from the newspaper, film) has instantaneous global implications. Although sending a written message from Britain to Australia took 48 days in the nineteenth century, an identical message may now be sent in seconds by e-mail. When compared to all that has been sent collectively throughout the history of humanity, information transmission is far more direct, and its volume is much bigger now. The development of a sophisticated information and communication society has brought with it strengths and weaknesses. The way in which communication can be an ally for contemporary intelligence communities is a challenge, but also a strategic objective. Effective communication is the foundation for gaining the ability to operate among individuals who have various perspectives on truth, tradition, history, and culture (Smith, 2005).

Asymmetric threats can be defined as the broad and unpredictable outlook of military, paramilitary and information operations led by nations, bodies, individuals or indigenous forces placed under their command, specifically targeting weaknesses and vulnerabilities in an enemy administration or armed force (Kolodzie, 2001, p. 16). General Dr. Vasile Paul explains in the "Military Observatory" (2001) newspaper that asymmetry in the field of military issues and national security represents the action, organization and thought (conception), different from that of the adversary, in order to maximize personal advantages, exploiting the weaknesses of the opponents, getting the initiative or gaining freedom of action. It may be: political-strategic, military-strategic, and operational or a combination of all of them (Paul, 2001).

Another important concept to understand is intercultural communication, whose explicit thematization was done for the first time by the American ethnologist and semiotician T. H. Hall. The concept of "intercultural communication" appeared for the first time in his work, *The Silent Language* (Hall), published in 1959, and quickly became popular. This concept refers to the study and practice of communicating across cultural boundaries. In addition, Michael Schugk (2004) defines intercultural communication as communication between representatives of two (or more) different cultures. Intercultural communication can, in principle, also take place within a nation, namely between representatives of different ethnicities (Schugk, 2004).

Intercultural communication is an approach

to relationships among members of these groups that focuses on the recognition and respect of cultural differences, seeks the goal of mutual adaptation leading to biculturalism rather than simple assimilation, and encourages the development of multicultural awareness on the part of individuals and organizations to enable empathic understanding and competent coordination of action across cultural differences.

Intercultural communication is required for complete integration in the collective process of asymmetric threat prevention. The requirement for communication in the intelligence process entails not only the coordination of activities in pursuit of a single goal, but also continual feedback, which allows for increased trust between partners, hence enhancing long-term performance. As Cabin (2010) presents, people communicate in order to inform, in order to inform themselves, in order to know, in order to know themselves, in order to explain, in order to explain themselves, in order to understand, in order to understand themselves.

At present, research in the sector strives to turn the intelligence community into a continuously-learning organization that is constantly adapting to changes and is minimizing bureaucratic delays (Barger, 2005). In this new context, communication is essential when it comes to sharing new strategies among partners, improving the effectiveness of the contemporary security environment. Each intelligence service leaves long-term transformational imprints in relation to other similar organizations. Through intercultural communication, one may overcome the numerous disparities that prevent the construction of a homogenous group that, through dynamism and mutual support, can tackle innovative forceful difficulties (terrorism, human trafficking, classical and information piracy). When we talk about intercultural communication in intelligence organizations, we refer to situations that may occur, which can be simpler or more complex, ranging from communication between two subjects from two organizations from different countries, to communication among several subjects, from several organizations based on different countries, which may not coincide with the origin countries of the subjects (Barger, 2005).

Also, according to Neculăesei (2017), through strengthening the strategic communication within the European Union, NATO, and other forms of international cooperation, the diplomatic component of the country's National Defence Strategy is enhanced.

Evolving Intelligence Community – Ongoing Challenges

One of the goals of the intelligence services is to defend national culture; yet, today's collective interest surpasses the protection of a single homogenous human group. Another goal of the organizations of intelligence profiles is to confront, professionally, a variety of dangers (external or internal, traditional or unconventional) that might affect citizens (individually and collectively), as well as sectors of strategic importance to a state (territorial integrity, protection of the business environment). There are several interpretations and definitions provided, but in general, the intelligence process may be defined as knowledge or processed information that aids decision-makers in optimizing their resources or reducing ambiguity and ignorance (National Defense Strategy 2015-2019). Each state's performance is supported by an intelligence system that is heavily focused on tactics for implementing participatory and efficient management, even though intelligence services are merely instruments for policy implementation, not decision-makers or policy-building factors (CIA apud Dimitriu & Duyvesteyn, 2014).

The intelligence field intends to develop a national security architecture based on three pillars: traditional information sources, open sources, and secured personal data. The recruitment of human sources and the interception (and, where necessary, decoding) of information are at the heart of perfect intelligence. In addition to original human intelligence (HUMINT), there are intelligence components that decode signal-based information transmission - signals intelligence (SIGINT), satellite domain and photographic recognition - imagery intelligence (IMINT), radar and electronic intelligence (ELINT), and so on (Sindie, 2015, p. 75). Of course, Open-Source intelligence (OSINT) must also be considered.

Frequently, when analyzing information sources with critical material for national security, the ethical rules that apply in civil society cannot be found totally in the field of intelligence. To support National Security Strategies, more and more think-tanks (an organization that unites a group of multidisciplinary experts to undertake study around certain policies, topics, or ideas) profile in states that respect freedom of expression

and intercultural exchange. Hence, the intercultural communication methods special to this sector differ from those of other domains, with these representing the manner in which the challenges of security factors are approached based on distinct reasoning. Communication synergies assist subjects in overcoming the sensitivities and biases imposed by their own culture, allowing them to cope with variety and transcend old ideological debates, uniting in the face of new dangers.

Although the hierarchical model is critical, understanding the influence of geopolitical conditions on rethinking the strategy for confronting new common dangers demands a synergistic collaboration, with intercultural communication having an essential function (Omand, 2009).

Intercultural Communication as a Game Changer in the Intelligence Process

The worldwide characteristics of the intelligence process need a thorough examination of how collaboration in the management of information exchange is carried out.

The international dimensions of intelligence operations refer not only to international collaboration among intelligence agencies, but also to a rising internationalization of intelligence collection. In the long run, the idea of supervising the intelligence services is complicated, as well as the result of a new hybrid intelligence gathering, where both public and private agencies have an important role to play (Omand, 2009, p. 8).

Synergistic communication in intelligence may equate to performance optimization via the optimal utilization of intercultural information with which it functions worldwide. International cooperation at the organizational level, with similar objectives in the field of collective security protection, encompasses three separate communication approaches: transcultural, intracultural, and intercultural (van Burren, 2003), as follows:

- Transcultural communication is only possible if there is a formal, often overly formal, contact between institutions that not only do not exchange information, but also do not seek a genuine long-term reconciliation. It usually occurs between competing systems which hold opposing political views and still do not publicly

maintain a declarative state of conflict. One example is the cumbersome communication that occurs between governments based on autarchy (a policy aimed at creating a closed national economy, for example, North Korea) and international organizations.

■ Intracultural communication refers to information exchange interactions that occur synchronously among societies with shared values. It develops inside a core culture that serves as the foundation for the others and establishes shared methods. (A good example could be the current communication between the independent security services of the Member States at the level of the European Union, as well as at the level of their joint organizations, like Europol or Eurojust.)

■ Intercultural communication is an interactive process that encapsulates how two or more security systems, each with their own unique features, engage with one another and are capable of establishing a foundation for joint collaboration in order to simultaneously tackle the same challenges. It is even more common in the current security context for governments to voluntarily cooperate so as to counter the new asymmetric threats that target them all.

The personal analysis of the distinction, from the standpoint of intelligence strategy, of various communication styles shown above demonstrates that, at the moment, there is no room for pure cultures in the area of secret services. There is a more or less desirable harmonization of global system requirements, which seeks collective security by collectively countering asymmetric threats.

In the context of intelligence partnership, it is doubtful that cultural synergy will emerge immediately (Nedelcu, 2008). The communicative process evolves gradually (depending on the partners' knowledge at the time), and due to the sensitivity of the field, no organizational culture of the partners should be overlooked. Rather, it seeks to deepen issue resolution by monitoring how the solution is perceived differently by all partners. Intercultural communication has as a prime aim the acceptance of participatory management, in which balance is achieved when action is collective rather than individual.

The current modifications in collective security interest (in particular, the European landscape and on an extended level, the Euro-Atlantic landscape) do not specifically promote cross-cultural communication in which the partners' connection is not highlighted. Contemporary synchronicity urges us towards a synergistic collaboration, where the catalyst is interaction,

not coexistence.

Until recently, we had to deal with a communication centered on multicultural values in the field of long-term plans; "multiculturalism explains the peculiarities of the action between social actors (single individuals or groups) who live next to each other" (Neculăseși, 2017, p. 22). The example of intercultural communication is particular to historically significant alliances, which in the past formed partnerships only on the basis of the concept of immediate benefit with old allies frequently turning into opponents, and vice versa – a perspective of the Realism paradigm. If Britain joined with Prussia during the Napoleonic Wars, France was the partner picked by the London-based government in order to combat the trend of Germanic hegemony during the two World Wars.

In both situations, we are dealing with multicultural cooperation in which only that information useful to the specifics of the situation was shared at the right time, without looking for a catalyst for future security strategies. In the past, this sort of communication was justified since intelligence agencies strongly supported the landscape of a pure culture, that of the country from which they came, which was not always in harmony with the states in proximity.

We can no longer talk of an autocentric style of communication based on the separation between our own values (considered superior) and external ones, depicted as aggressive in official propaganda. Intercultural communication entails interaction, and individuals who utilize it want to benefit from the efficiency of their partners by borrowing techniques that might aid in the battle against common threats (conventional and asymmetric). Accepting functional communication, which focuses not only on traditional defensive specialties, but on the acceptance of strategic importance, is becoming increasingly vital.

Intercultural communication in intelligence has no effect on a state's ethnicity, language, or specific values; it simply operates with values that cannot be confined inside the boundaries of national cultures. There is a process for its development that comprises a shared set of values, the giving of proper respect to hierarchical values, regardless of the state, as well as a competitive internal environment, in order to improve competitive advantages at the external level. The intelligence communities' elitism is not a barrier, but rather a guarantee of a standardized value system that organizes its strategy. Intercultural dialogue is used to pursue a performance orientation with the goal of getting a competitive edge.

A direct communication legitimizes achievement by accepting the other collaborators as partners in order to achieve mutual benefits.

In the context of asymmetric challenges, the orientation towards the hierarchy of organizations with intelligence profiles, based on the first among equals principle, also known as *primus inter pares*. It is a Latin phrase which is often used as an honorary title for someone who is officially equal to other members of their organization but is treated with unofficial respect due to their lengthy tenure in office. This phrase could additionally indicate that the individual in concern is a particular authority in the group or an unofficial or secret leader (Hutchinson Encyclopedia, 2005). A strategy based on this principle cannot be viable for promoting common values. Even in hierarchical societies, with an emphasis on obeying authority, the own uniqueness of the partners is encouraged, without altering the solidarity and common objectives.

It cannot be overlooked that cultural specificity leaves its imprint on the partners' direct communication style, as it defines the methods of individuals participating in the management of current situations. Thus, a partner from the Southeast Asian cluster, which is characterized by self-censorship and an above-average level of autocracy, may initially feel slightly uneasy towards the non-assertive communication of the Anglo-Saxons, who in discussions generally use the first person and have an open attitude in discussion (Gavreliuc, 2011).

Intercultural communication can improve relationships between various partners and utilize the institutionally collaborative international context in a useful way. Intercultural management is therefore inextricably linked to this type of communication. It seeks to identify and use effective tools and methods to better know, exploit, and manage cultural differences, in order to improve or achieve positive results (market benefit, image, implantation perspective) by the enterprise (country, nation, region, business) in relation to other cultural areas (Pirju, 2014, p. 172).

A collective integration of partners is therefore sought via management methods, through communication, in intelligence collaboration, building the framework of a strategic coordination, based not on imperatives, but rather on interdisciplinarity. In particular, everyone is entitled to make their full contribution in direct proportion to the possibilities of addressing the common requirements. The intelligence organization's culture cannot be altered through communication; it can only be more easily adapted to the new specificities encountered.

It is possible to build new operational ideas, enhance existing ones, and develop new deterrent instruments to counter asymmetric threats. Some historic rivalries may be overcome through dialogue tactics, and in the face of mutual peril, a global approach can not only generate a synthesis of new best practices, but also assist to develop tighter links in the future.

The connections formed during the intelligence process may be strengthened by adopting tactics that will aid in boosting the competitiveness and credibility of the intelligence services on a global scale. The success or failure of any team (whether or not it contains new members) is also determined by how synergy is formed at the level of interpersonal communication. Pleasant communication should not be regarded as a disguise for paternalistic behavior; on the contrary, it can elicit an effective attitude to tasks from people engaged, based on engagement and harmonization between internal motivation and collective aims.

Communication has also expanded beyond the polycentric stage, which seeks to uncover disparities (the Cold War model). The emphasis is on a synergistic comparison, which aims at the interaction of various organizations in the field in order to find the optimal strategic balance for in-depth study in the domain of international relations. Hence, internationalization of communication alters established paradigms and creates a relative dependency in which common interests overlap. The rising openness to the liberalization of the international market implies increasing interest in cultural diversity. As a result of an objective comprehension of the existing environment based on variety, good communication copes with risk circumstances and can even gain advantages.

Intercultural communication amongst actors also plays an important role in removing, as much as possible, any kind of discomfort and distrust that manifests itself collectively. Its significance stems from the way it interacts with social media which "is notably relevant to public security and safety. Understanding the content of social media systems provides an opportunity to better understand and respond to the audience they serve. In a society characterized by the spread of communications, SOCMINT (social media) is a relevant component of intelligence work" (Omand et al., 2012, p. 62).

After the September 11, 2001 attacks, international synergistic collaboration in the field of message content analysis, with an influence on collective security, became a necessity. Improving communication between different international agencies has, as a direct effect, the

increase of performance at strategic, operational, and practical level. Effective communication allows partners' requirements to be understood, enhancing the likelihood of collectively making decisions at the UN, EU, or NATO levels. Barriers can be surmounted in the areas of common policies, cross-border security measures, protection of personal information.

At European level, effective and intercultural communication is the foundation through which a state security strategy may gain widespread support and become a European Union collective policy. Communication can help to maximize decision-making in theaters of operations, allowing governments to successfully unify in the face of a common threat. Through communication, excellent solutions can be found, regarding the effective analysis of the cultural values of the opponents (language, culture, tradition). Making and verifying hypotheses is no longer a singular phenomenon; on the contrary, the group's analytic skills are developing.

As Mitu (2015) explains, communication strategies allow to improve cooperation between intelligence agencies inside the same structure or with organizations outside of it, including institutions from the public or private sector, partner services from other countries, and services from the same state. This change in perspective is an inevitable result of the intelligence services' transition from the paradigm known as need to know (in which the access of collaborators and customers of information is restricted by classification levels, established according to the criterion of the need to know) to the paradigm known as the need to share (the need to share information in order to receive, instead, new ones and pool the resulting knowledge) (Mitu, 2015, p. 160).

Conclusion

The current situation of communication in intelligence collaboration is quite complex, because it depends on the intercultural dominance of the partners and the organizational cultures of the institutions with attributions in this domain from different states, which, through their own thinking strategies, interpret the information with classified content. In order to streamline the process, personal data, managed by social media companies, specialized in communication (Google, Facebook), represent goods with real value for intelligence services. "Personal data will be the new oil – a valuable resource of the 21st century. It will emerge as a new asset class touching all

aspects of society. At its core, personal data represents a post-industrial opportunity. It has unprecedented complexity, velocity and global reach" (World Economic Forum, 2011, p. 5).

There is a risk that, as communication technologies spread more widely, certain information with intelligence characteristics or potential can become public, cancelling the intelligence professionals' labor, which is not at all low value (let us remember the big scandals regarding the disclosure of classified information appeared, initially, in the press).

Efficient communication between intelligence agencies and strategic partners, but also with civil society (in areas of unclassified information), will be a requirement for a positive transformation of the social view of how the collective interest is defended (without major risk factors being involved).

Furthermore, communication strategies have a functional purpose in the field of intelligence, in order to simplify the need to know, which is required for a new approach to global security concerns (terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration, or organized crime). Paying closer attention to specific global communication methods, as well as their message, may assist governments safeguard and develop their national security strategy, as well as take the lead in crisis prevention. An intelligence analyst's job is difficult because he must grasp the core of the information in real time. In most circumstances, he must not only receive information about but also understand the facts under inquiry.

In this field, risk management is fairly high, and the intelligence cycle must be capable of long-term exploitation of collaboration based on communication in order to face future difficulties. These issues no longer allow for an autonomous stance and professionalism based on solitude; they can be countered by a collective, organized system of information, which, through synergistic collaboration, can offer us even a relative advantage.

We believe that via synergistic communication, information of strategic interest may freely and easily circulate between partners, be improved when needed, and adapted to new difficulties. Collaboration among intelligence services, each with its own organizational plan, is required in order to remove the existing institutional obstacles between countries.

Individual and organizational goals are reinforced via communication, allowing for the creation of a vision for intelligence partnership. Moreover, successful ties

between intelligence services may be developed through intercultural communication. Consequently, in order to achieve effective synergy in this area, which has a significant impact on a state's security, the intercultural communication process has a sine qua non effect on long term orientation.

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