

Enhancing English Language Proficiency in HRM: A Strategic Imperative for Logistics Efficiency

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Abstract

Good human resource management is critical to organizational success in the frantic logistics environment. The importance of English language skills in this setting cannot be overstated. This study piece dives into the interconnected connection between human resource management and English language abilities in the logistics sector. The internationalization of trade and the spread of supply chains across borders has prompted the development of a common language for communication. English, as the international corporate lingua franca, is critical in overcoming linguistic gaps across varied logistics teams and stakeholders. This article discusses the significant impact that English proficiency has on numerous facets of logistics operations. This study looks into the critical importance of English language competency in human resource management in the logistics industry, focusing on cross-cultural communication, talent acquisition, and retention. A comprehensive analysis of the literature, case studies, and surveys within the logistics industry was conducted to assess the significance of English language skills. Our research demonstrates a significant link between English language competency and effective cross-cultural communication, which is essential for timely information exchange in logistics operations. The strategic importance of English language ability for logistics organizations is highlighted by this research. In order to enable the staff to communicate effectively and promote operational excellence, it highlights the need for ongoing investment in language training programs. The findings of this study highlight the fact that comprehending English is a strategic need in the field of global logistics, not just a desired talent.

Keywords

English; logistics; HRM; communication

INTRODUCTION

Effective human resource management is a key component of organizational success in the dynamic and linked world of global logistics. The logistics industry, which is essential for the cross-border flow of goods and services, has grown more complicated and diverse, calling for the greatest levels of cooperation and communication. The language used to carry out these processes is at the core of this intricacy, and as the world's dominant business tongue, English plays a unique role.

The logistics sector no longer operates inside national borders; instead, it smoothly spans continents, with supply lines reaching every part of the world. The demand for a common language to simplify information sharing, activity coordination, and contract negotiation has grown as a result of the globalization of logistics, which has also increased the volume and complexity of international trade. English has been the preferred language in the logistics industry as it has become the *de facto* language of international trade.

The people who organize, carry out, and oversee the complex procedures that guarantee that items arrive at their destinations effectively and on time are at the center of every logistics operation. To attract and develop the talent needed for the challenging and dynamic environment of the logistics sector, effective human resource management is essential. The importance of English proficiency in human resource management and logistics hasn't, however, been thoroughly investigated.

Although the logistics industry understands the value of English language competence, little systematic study has been done to examine how English proficiency affects different aspects of human resource management in this business. This study tries to close this gap by illuminating the significant influence that English language proficiency has on logistics operations.

The main goal of this study is to investigate and examine how human resource management in the logistics industry interacts with English language proficiency. It specifically aims to:

- 1) Consider the function that English language ability plays in intercultural dialogue between logistics teams and with outside partners.
- 2) Look at how English competence affects attracting and keeping talent, which shapes the logistics workforce.
- 3) Identify and assess techniques for improving English language proficiency among logistics workers.

English proficiency's role in promoting cross-cultural communication among logistics teams and with external stakeholders is one of the key topics this study explores. The capacity to overcome linguistic obstacles can mean the difference between success and failure in a field where rapid information sharing is essential. Beyond communication, the research examines how English language proficiency affects the recruitment of and retention of talent in the logistics sector. A team with good English language skills is better able to navigate the complex world of global logistics, bringing in and keeping top talent that is essential for innovation and success.

Additionally, the study explores methods and best practices for boosting logistics staff members' English language ability. Among other things, this entails evaluating the success of language-learning initiatives, identifying potential areas for development, and establishing a strategy for businesses to develop and maintain their language-skills as a strategic asset.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, the researchers will explore the literature review as supported data theoretically in doing this research.

English Language Proficiency

The capacity to successfully use the English language for diverse communication purposes is referred to as English language competency. It includes various factors that, when combined, impact how well someone can express themselves and comprehend others when speaking English. English language proficiency is referring to one's capacity to use language for a number of communicative reasons. The English language competency is typically assessed using five achievements indicators such as accuracy, fluency, complexity, appropriacy, and capacity (Adytia, 2020).

English proficiency is essential for job success and growth, as well as for opening doors to economic opportunities (Rao, 2017). English proficiency is not only a valued skill, but it also opens the door to countless work chances and career advancement. It enables people to traverse the global job market, gain access to information and resources, as well as successfully communicate in the international business sector.

English language proficiency is required for students and graduates to effectively communicate, interact, and perform in a globalized and multilingual society (Tran et al., 2023). English language proficiency is essential for students and graduates navigating a globalized and multilingual society. It not only expands educational and career opportunities, but it also improves cross-cultural competence, communication skills, and global citizenship. English proficiency is a valuable asset that enables people to flourish in a continuously interrelated world.

Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management is a key aspect of the larger issue of Customer Service Relationship Management and Environmental Management. Green Human Resource Management is a distinct branch of human resource management that focuses on HRM policies and practices to encourage green behavior among an organization's employees in order to build an ecologically sensitive, resource efficient, and socially responsible workplace and firm (Cooke et al., 2020). Human Resource Management (HRM) is crucial in the wider environment of organizational management, comprising critical components such as Customer Service Relationship Management and Environmental Management. Within this complex framework, Green Human Resource Management emerges as a distinct and specialized discipline.

Historically, human resource management has stressed the function of job analysis as the cornerstone for an integrated HRM system. Job analysis rigorously analyzes the precise duties and required abilities for completing a certain job or position in the organization (Buller & McEvoy, 2012). Job analysis is a dynamic process that changes as businesses change and adapt to new problems and possibilities. Revisiting and updating job analyses on a regular basis allows HR managers to stay up with altering job responsibilities, technological improvements, and industry trends, ensuring that the system for human resources management remains flexible in responding to the demands of the firm.

Strategic Imperative

Strategic imperatives and a customer-centric strategy have a symbiotic relationship. In today's dynamic business climate, companies which prioritize their customers within their strategic goals and decision-making processes are more likely to achieve sustainable development, competitive advantage, and adaptability. This alignment promotes the notion that customer pleasure and loyalty are critical drivers of a company's long-term success (Al-shammari & Baporikar, 2023). Moreover, Strategic imperatives will be necessary to: raise strategic clock speed; focus portfolios with multiple business models; shorten strategic life cycles; develop "go-to-market" flexibility; promote competitive innovation; and manage intra-enterprise cannibalism (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). Strategic imperatives are critical tools for organizations looking to increase their strategic clock speed, allowing them to adjust quickly to changing market conditions and emerging possibilities while staying ahead of competitors in a fast-developing business landscape. They also play an important role in managing intra-enterprise cannibalism, assisting businesses in making strategic decisions that balance the innovation of new offerings with the maintenance of existing revenue sources, ensuring a sustainable approach to growth and market leadership.

Logistics Efficiency

The following picture represents a model of logistics performance where logistics efficiency influences logistics performance in an organization (Fugate & Stank, 2019):

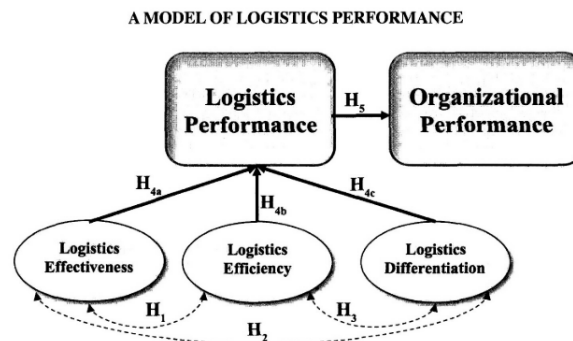


Figure 1. Model of Logistics Performance (Fugate & Stank, 2019)

The picture above shows that efficiency relates to the internal function of logistics and is typically expressed by a certain percentage of the usual level of inputs to the real level of outputs. The following picture shows the indicators that have been found in Fugate & Stank:

APPENDIX B (cont.)

Logistics Efficiency (range: Poor – Excellent)

For the following items, please rate your business unit's performance on logistics activities **for the previous fiscal year**.

Item {all items adapted from Bobbitt 2004}

Q12 Percent of Orders Shipped to Customers from the Primary Location Designated to Serve Those Customers.

Q13 Line Item Fill Rate (percentage of order items the picking operation actually found).

Q14 Percent of Orders Shipped on Time.

Q15 Percent of Shipments Requiring Expediting.

Q16^a Inventory Turns per Year.

Q17 Average Order Cycle Time (time in days between order receipt and order delivery).

Logistics Effectiveness (range: Much Worse – Much Better)

For the following items, please rate your business unit's **actual performance compared to budgeted performance**, based on the **previous fiscal year results**.

Item {all items adapted from Bobbitt 2004}

Q18 Sales (Dollars).

Q19 Transportation Costs

Q20^b Warehousing Costs

Q21 Inventory Costs.

Q22 Total Logistics Costs.

Organizational Performance (range: Far Below Competitors – Far Above Competitors)

In your judgment, how did your BUSINESS UNIT perform relative to its major competitor in the previous fiscal year with respect to each criterion? If you are associated with a company that does not consist of business units or divisions, please answer the following based on your company.

Item {items adopted from Baker and Sinkula (1999) and Matsuno (2000)}

Q23^c Overall Performance.

Q24 Market Share Growth in our Primary Market.

Q25 Sales Growth.

Q26 Percentage of New Product Sales Generated by New Products.

Q27 Return on Sales.

Q28 Return on Assets.

Q29 Return on Investments.

Figure 2. Indicators of Logistics Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Organizational Performance (Fugate & Stank, 2019)

Joash and Luke (2020) mentioned that there are some skills must have in supply chain management and one of them is communication skill. The communication skills especially English language will support and influence the international logistics activities. They promote teamwork, improve problem-solving abilities, aid in international negotiations, and add to the overall efficiency and robustness of the supply chain. As supply chains become more global, the ability to successfully communicate across borders becomes a key advantage in optimizing logistical processes. The capacity to communicate across borders is a significant advantage in the setting of a worldwide supply chain. As supply chains cover numerous geographical regions and entail contacts with partners from varying cultural backgrounds, efficient communication becomes critical, which is typically facilitated by expertise in a common language like English. It promotes seamless collaboration, lowers the chance of misinterpretation, and aids in the smooth execution of cross-border logistics activities.

Also, logistics efficiency benefits the productivity of total carbon factors in an economy with reduced carbon emissions. Economic efficiency can be increased by lowering the production of carbon dioxide emissions from the standpoint of logistical efficiency (Wang et al., 2022). Improving logistical efficiency benefits not just economic efficiency but also environmental sustainability goals. Businesses can improve their economic performance while also contributing to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly economy by lowering carbon emissions through optimized transportation, inventory management, and energy-efficient practices.

METHODS

Utilizing a triangulated approach, a thorough methodology was used to achieve the research goal. The research design includes a comprehensive analysis of the body of prior research, case studies, and surveys carried out within the logistics sector. A comprehensive grasp of the consequences and best practices for English language competency in logistics human resource management was gained by combining the insights from these sources.

- 1) Literature Review: The foundation of this research was a thorough examination of academic papers, business reports, and pertinent periodicals. This made it possible to pinpoint the main trends, difficulties, and possibilities connected to linguistic competence in the context of logistics. A literature review is a comprehensive review of academic papers, books, and other sources related to a specific subject, field of research, or theory, providing a description, overview, and critical assessment of these works in the process (Ramdhani et al., 2014).
- 2) Case Studies: In order to get useful insights into how top logistics businesses take advantage of English language skills, real-world case studies were carefully examined. These case studies provided insightful illustrations of the approaches and results connected to language-focused human resource management. A case study can additionally be defined as an intense; systematic assessment of a single individual, group, society or other entity in which the researcher analyzes detailed data on numerous variables (Heale & Twycross, 2018).

3) Surveys: Among logistics professionals and specialists, surveys were performed to supplement the literature review and case study research. These surveys provide both quantitative and qualitative information about the impact and prospective areas for improvement of the industry's present level of language ability. The majority of surveys use some type of questionnaire, which is also called as a 'inventory,' a 'test,' a 'batterie,' a 'checklist,' a 'scale,' a 'survey,' a 'schedule,' a 'index,' or a 'indicator' (Young, 2015).

This research aims to give a complete and nuanced exploration of the significance of English language competency in logistics human resource management by triangulating information from these many sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the survey done by the researchers in the logistics sectors, there are some implications of this research in regards to how English proficiency affects logistics efficiency:

1. Organizations are increasingly operating in multicultural environments in a worldwide society. Understanding and navigating varied cultural conventions, attitudes, and communication styles is required for cross-cultural communication. English proficiency serves as a common language, allowing personnel from all linguistic origins to communicate effectively.
2. English ability improves communication efficiency significantly within global teams. A common language avoids misconceptions, promotes clarity in communicating ideas, and speeds up decision-making processes. Efficient communication adds to total workforce productivity and performance, particularly in disciplines such as human resource management (HRM), where efficient communication is critical.
3. Companies that have a great reputation for English proficiency offer an appealing environment for global talent. Communication skills that are strong indicate a commitment to inclusivity and a readiness to work with a varied team. As a result, the firm is positioned as a desirable employer for individuals seeking worldwide career prospects.
4. English proficiency might be critical in retaining employees. Employees are more willing to engage with their colleagues and supervisors when they feel at ease and confident in their language abilities. This open communication environment generates a sense of belonging, job satisfaction, and loyalty, which lowers turnover rates.
5. Logistics efficiency refers to the streamlined processes involved in managing human resources across multiple locations in the context of HRM, where excellent communication is essential. Improving English language competency in HRM provides smooth coordination, lowers operational friction, and contributes to overall human resource logistics efficiency.
6. English language ability is a strategic essential for firms seeking to prosper in a globalized economic landscape. It becomes a critical component of HRM strategy, ensuring that the

staff has the language skills needed to handle the complexity of cross-cultural communication and contribute to logistics efficiency.

The followings are the result based on the three main points that become the center of interest of the research:

A. Cross-Cultural Communication

Cross-Cultural Communication and English Proficiency

Our review of the literature, case studies, and survey data demonstrated a constant and robust relationship between English language competency and efficient cross-cultural communication in the logistics sector. English developed as the unifying medium via which information flowed effortlessly across many logistics teams and exchanges with external partners.

Impact on Communication Efficiency

The dominance of English in cross-cultural communication increased communication efficiency dramatically. English-speaking teams reported fewer instances of miscommunication, shorter response times, and an enhanced capacity to handle difficulties quickly. This was especially noticeable in high-stress scenarios, such as supply chain breakdowns, where prompt and precise communication was required.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that English language ability is more than a talent; it is a competitive advantage. Language training and proficiency are prioritized in logistics businesses' human resource management processes, making them better suited to traverse the intricacies of global supply chains. Cross-cultural communication that is effective immediately adds to smoother operations, fewer errors, and, ultimately, improved customer satisfaction.

B. Talent Acquisition and Retention

Attracting Global Talent

According to our findings, logistics firms that prioritized English proficiency in their hiring processes were more effective in acquiring a diversified pool of global talent. English ability was considered as a key asset and a representation of the organization's dedication to global excellence by prospective employees, particularly those seeking overseas employment.

Employee Retention

Furthermore, logistics companies who engaged in English language training programs for their current employees had greater employee retention rates. Employees with high English abilities were more likely to feel competent in their professions, contribute effectively to foreign projects, and advance in their careers, resulting in enhanced job satisfaction and loyalty.

Discussion

These findings demonstrate that English language competency is more than just a communication tool; it is also a critical driver of personnel management in logistics. Logistics organizations that prioritize language skills as part of their human resource management strategy obtain a strategic advantage by attracting and retaining top employees in a highly competitive field.

C. Strategies for Enhancement

Effective Language Training Programs

Our research identified several effective strategies for enhancing English language skills within the logistics workforce. The most successful programs incorporated both classroom instruction and practical language use in work-related scenarios. These programs were often tailored to address industry-specific terminology and communication challenges.

Continuous Learning and Development

An essential aspect of language proficiency enhancement was the recognition that proficiency is an ongoing process. Successful organizations encouraged continuous learning and development, providing resources for employees to improve their language skills throughout their careers.

Discussion

The strategies for enhancing English language proficiency outlined in our research offer logistics organizations a roadmap for success. By implementing effective language training programs and fostering a culture of continuous learning, organizations can ensure that their workforce remains adaptable, responsive, and globally competitive.

CONCLUSION

The interconnected world of global logistics and port management demands a multifaceted approach to human resource management. In this context, the role of English language proficiency has emerged as a strategic imperative, underpinning the efficiency and competitiveness of logistics organizations. This research has delved into the profound impact of English language skills on cross-cultural communication, talent management, and operational excellence within the maritime logistics sector.

The findings of this study underscore that English language proficiency is more than a skill; it is a strategic asset that drives operational efficiency and strengthens the competitive edge of logistics companies. Effective cross-cultural communication is pivotal to the seamless flow of information, reduced errors, and timely decision-making in an industry where every moment counts. The ability to attract and retain top talent, fostered by a commitment to English language proficiency, ensures that logistics organizations remain adaptable, innovative, and positioned for sustained growth in a globalized marketplace.

Moreover, this research offers actionable insights into enhancing English language skills within the workforce, emphasizing the importance of continuous learning and development. By investing in language training programs and fostering a culture of language proficiency, logistics organizations can bolster their capacity to adapt to evolving industry trends and effectively navigate the complexities of international logistics.

In conclusion, this research emphasizes that English language proficiency is not merely a choice but a strategic necessity in maritime logistics and port management. As the logistics sector continues to expand its global footprint, the ability to communicate effectively in English becomes a defining factor in success, innovation, and growth. By embracing English language proficiency as a cornerstone of human resource management, logistics organizations can optimize their operations, enhance their competitive positioning, and ensure their continued success in a dynamic and interconnected world.

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