



# **17<sup>th</sup> GEM&L International Conference on Management & Language**

**22-24 May 2024**

Conference venue:

**University of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw, Poland**

Okopowa 59, 01-043 Warszawa, Poland

**The future of language in international business  
management**



The organizers wish to warmly thank our sponsor



**PROGRAMME OUTLINE**  
All times are CEST (local) time

**Tuesday, 21 May 2024, Pre-Conference**

- 16:30 Pre-conference city walk by **Mike SZYMANSKI**  
Meeting place: South entrance to the Metro Centrum (Warsaw Subway/Underground Central Station [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centrum\\_metro\\_station](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centrum_metro_station))
- 19:00 Dinner will be part of the city walk. Those who would like to join for dinner but not the walk can get in touch with Mike for restaurant directions: +48-530-069-875

**Wednesday, 22 May 2024**

- 08:30–09:30 Registration [Hallway near Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)  
with coffee/tea [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 09:30–10:00 Welcome address [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)  
**Philippe LECOMTE**, President of GEM&L  
**Konrad JANOWSKI**, Rector of UEHS in Warsaw  
**Eric CORNUEL**, President of EFMD  
**Michał WILCZEWSKI**, Associate Professor, UEHS in Warsaw
- 10:00–11:00 First keynote address [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)  
**Helene TENZER**, LMU Munich School of Management, Germany  
*Multilingual virtual team communication in the AI era: Implications and future research*
- 11:00–11:30 Coffee break with **group photo** [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 11:30–13:00 Round Table [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)  
*AI in language-sensitive IB research: Opportunities and challenges*  
**Agnieszka CHIDLLOW**, Birmingham University Business School  
**Eric CORNUEL**, President of EFMD  
**Anna GUMKOWSKA**, Head of the AI Working Group, IAB Polska  
**Rebecca PIEKKARI**, Aalto University School of Business  
**Helene TENZER**, LMU Munich School of Management  
  
Moderator: **Mike SZYMANSKI**, Gies College of Business
- 13:00–14:00 Lunch [Canteen \(Floor I\)](#)
- 14:00–15:00 **Session 1** [Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 15:00–15:30 Coffee break [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 15:30–16:30 **Session 2** [Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 16:30–17:30 **Nigel HOLDEN prize and GEM&L awards** in the presence of our Guest of honour, **Eric CORNUEL**, President of EFMD [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)  
  
**GEM&L annual general meeting** [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)
- 19:30 **Reception & Gala Dinner with Welcome Drink** at Warszawski Sen - Mateusz Gessler  
Address: Koszykowa 63, 00-667 Warszawa

**Thursday, 23 May 2024**

- 08:30–09:00 Coffee/tea [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 09:00–10:00 Second keynote address [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)  
**Agnieszka CHIDLOW, Birmingham University Business School, UK**  
*Cultivating responsible cross-language research: A focus on responsibility and transparency*
- 10:00–11:00 **Session 3** [Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 11:00–11:30 Coffee break [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 11:30–13:00 **Session 4** [Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 13:00–14:00 Lunch [Canteen \(Floor I\)](#)
- 14:00–16:00 **Session 5: Doctoral sessions** [Room 201 \(Floor II\)](#) & [Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 16:00–16:30 Coffee break [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 16:30–18:00 **Session 6** [Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 19:00 **Dinner at Restaurant MOMU**  
Address: Wierzbowa 9/11, 00-094 Warszawa  
(not included in the conference fee)

**Friday, 24 May 2024**

- 08:30–09:00 Coffee/tea [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 09:00–10:30 **Session 7** [Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 10:30–11:00 Coffee break [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 11:00–12:30 **Session 8** [Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 12:30–13:30 Closing session with final cocktail sponsored by EFMD [Open space on Floor VI](#)
- 13:30 Afterwork for doctoral students organized by **Hilla BACK**  
Venue to be confirmed.

## FULL PROGRAMME

All times are CEST (local) time

### Tuesday, 21 May 2024, Pre-Conference

- 16:30 Pre-conference city walk by **Mike SZYMANSKI**  
Meeting place: South entrance to the Metro Centrum (Warsaw Subway/Underground Central Station [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centrum\\_metro\\_station](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centrum_metro_station))
- 19:00 Dinner will be part of the city walk. Those who would like to join for dinner but not the walk can get in touch with Mike for restaurant directions: +48-530-069-875

### Wednesday, 22 May 2024

- 08:30–09:30 Registration [Hallway near Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#) with coffee/tea [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 09:30–10:00 Welcome address [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)  
**Philippe LECOMTE**, President of GEM&L  
**Konrad JANOWSKI**, Rector of UEHS in Warsaw  
**Eric CORNUEL**, President of EFMD  
**Michał WILCZEWSKI**, Associate Professor, UEHS in Warsaw
- 10:00–11:00 First keynote address [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)  
**Helene TENZER**, LMU Munich School of Management, Germany  
*Multilingual virtual team communication in the AI era: Implications and future research*
- 11:00–11:30 Coffee break with **group photo** [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)
- 11:30–13:00 Round Table [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)  
*AI in language-sensitive IB research: Opportunities and challenges*  
**Agnieszka CHIDLOW**, Birmingham University Business School  
**Eric CORNUEL**, President of EFMD  
**Anna GUMKOWSKA**, Head of the AI Working Group, IAB Polska  
**Rebecca PIEKKARI**, Aalto University School of Business  
**Helene TENZER**, LMU Munich School of Management  
  
Moderator: **Mike SZYMANSKI**, Gies College of Business
- 13:00–14:00 Lunch [Canteen \(Floor I\)](#)

14:00–15:00 **Session 1**

<b>Track 1: Forward-looking perspectives on language-sensitive IB research</b>
<b>Chair: Michał Wilczewski</b>
<b>Room: Room 323 (Floor III)</b>
<b>Stephanie Jo Kent, Jeff Shaul &amp; Jeffrey A. Kappen</b> Language action and the action of languaging in the coming world of automatic interpreting by artificial intelligence
<b>Jane Kassis-Henderson &amp; Geneviève Tréguer-Felten</b> 'Mono-Anglophonism': A risk for the future of management research

15:00–15:30 Coffee break [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)

15.30–16:30 **Session 2**

<b>Track 2: Language management in SMEs</b>
<b>Chair: Guro R. Sanden</b>
<b>Room: Room 323 (Floor III)</b>
<b>Zhonghui Ding &amp; Darja Saksida Bogataj</b> Language management and language choice in SMEs: Case study from Slovenian SMEs
<b>Daniela Bolzani &amp; Claudine Gaibrois</b> The empowering and disempowering role of language in entrepreneurship incubators

16:30–17:30 **Nigel HOLDEN prize and GEM&L awards** in the presence of our Guest of honour, **Eric CORNUEL**, President of EFMD [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)

**GEM&L annual general meeting** [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)

19:30 **Reception & Gala Dinner with Welcome Drink** at Warszawski Sen - Mateusz Gessler  
Address: Koszykowa 63, 00-667 Warszawa

## Thursday, 23 May 2024

08:30–09:00 Coffee/tea [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)

09:00–10:00 Second keynote address [Auditorium 234 \(Floor II\)](#)

**Agnieszka CHIDLLOW, Birmingham University Business School, UK**

*Cultivating responsible cross-language research: A focus on responsibility and transparency*

10:00–11:00 **Session 3**

### Track 3: Language in IB and management education

**Chair: Natalie Wilmot**

**Room: Room 323 (Floor III)**

**Danielle Taylor, Isabelle Corbett-Etchevers & Anne Bartel-Radic**

The paradox of language diversity: An ethnographic study of a European university alliance

**Michał Wilczewski, Rong Wang, Paola Giuri, Sheila M. Puffer, Anne-Marie Søderberg, Stephan Meschke & Juana Du**

The effects of cultural novelty on the interplay between language and sociocultural adjustment among international students

11:00–11:30 Coffee break [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)

11:30–13:00 **Session 4**

### Track 4: Migration and the multilingual workplace

**Chair: Rebecca Piekkari**

**Room: Room 323 (Floor III)**

**Annelise Ly**

"When is my Norwegian good enough?" Experiences of glass ceiling by highly skilled migrants in Norway

**Nadine Thielemann & Lejla Atagan**

Stories of transformation & self-empowerment - How migrants from the Balkans forge their identity as entrepreneurs

**Wilhelm Barner-Rasmussen, Claudine Gaibrois & Natalie Wilmot**

Opening doors, door openers, and closed doors: Language-related dynamics of migrants' access to work and integration at work

13:00–14:00 Lunch [Canteen \(Floor I\)](#)

14:00–16:00 **Session 5: Doctoral sessions**

<b>Track 5A: Doctoral session</b>	<b>Track 5B: Doctoral session</b>
<b>Chair: Agnieszka Chidlow</b>	<b>Chair: Mary Vigier</b>
<b>Room: Room 201 (Floor II)</b>	<b>Room: Room 323 (Floor III)</b>
<b>Oumnia Abidi &amp; Karim Mignonac</b> Qualifying voices: The interplay of accent and gender in applicant hireability evaluations	<b>Johanna Niskavaara</b> "If your goal is to grow internationally, you need people who fit that profile." The legitimizing role of foreign-born employees in SME internationalization
<b>Dina Elsousy</b> Language imposition and emotional control: A study on Francophone call centers in Egypt	<b>Bernadette Hofer-Bonfim</b> Global goals, local realities: A cross-country examination of non-financial reporting on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the banking sector
<b>Sazzad Talukder &amp; Wilhelm Barner-Rasmussen</b> Rewarding language performance in international small firms	<b>Hilla Back &amp; Philipp Back</b> Coping strategies to language barriers: Double-edged sword of virtuality on inclusion of linguistic minorities
<b>Clementine Chitulangoma</b> A new methodological approach for the study language, language use, and language users in organisational settings	

16:00–16:30 Coffee break [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)

16:30–18:00 **Session 6**

<b>Track 6: Language sensitivity in IB and management research</b>
<b>Chair: Wilhelm Barner-Rasmussen</b>
<b>Room: Room 323 (Floor III)</b>
<b>Patrick Shulist, Miguel Rivera-Santos &amp; Rebecca Piekkari</b> When theory and data speak different languages: Finding fit in linguistically diverse qualitative research
<b>Amy Church-Morel, Mary Vigier &amp; Anissa Louzir-Ben Hassine</b> Responsibility and language-sensitive management: Heuristics for the Anthropocene
<b>Laura Heldsinger &amp; Tracey Toefy</b> The impact of accent prejudice on decisions to hire

19:00 **Dinner at Restaurant MOMU**  
 Address: Wierzbowa 9/11, 00-094 Warszawa  
 (not included in the conference fee)

<b>Friday, 24 May 2024</b>
----------------------------

08:30–09:00 Coffee/tea [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)

09:00–10:30 **Session 7**

<b>Track 7: Language and linguistic diversity in the workplace</b>
--

<b>Chair: Danielle Taylor</b>
-------------------------------

<b>Room: Room 323 (Floor III)</b>
-----------------------------------

<b>Peter Daly &amp; Dardo de Vecchi</b>
---

Creating a 'company-speak' culture in your company
--

<b>František Tůma</b>
-----------------------

Pointing at technical drawings in multilingual workplace meetings
---

<b>Iga Maria Lehman</b>
-------------------------

Uniqueness in authorial self-representation: Reframing the concept of convincing writer in management and organization scholarship
--

10:30–11:00 Coffee break [Foyer near Room 323 \(Floor III\)](#)

11:00–12:30 **Session 8**

<b>Track 8: Intercultural communication, language and ideology</b>
--

<b>Chair: Claudine Gaibrois</b>
---------------------------------

<b>Room: Room 323 (Floor III)</b>
-----------------------------------

<b>Michał Wilczewski, Oleg Gorbaniuk &amp; Arkadiusz Gut</b>
--

Spirituality, language, and intercultural effectiveness: Navigating cultures with love
--

<b>Guro R. Sanden</b>
-----------------------

Stories for global impact: A comparative analysis of storytelling models in business communication
--

<b>Veronika Lovrič</b>
------------------------

Beyond words: Understanding linguistic authority in international workplaces
--

12:30–13:30 Closing session with final cocktail sponsored by EFMD [Open space on Floor VI](#)

13:30 Afterwork for doctoral students organized by **Hilla Back**. [Venue to be confirmed.](#)



## KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

### Multilingual virtual team communication in the AI era: Implications and future research



**Helene Tenzer** is Associate Professor of International Management at LMU Munich School of Management in Germany. Her research interests include language diversity in multinational organizations, multilingual and virtual teams, leadership in multinational organizations, international HRM and OB. Helene is on the Editorial Review Boards of *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of World Business and Management International Review*. Her work has been published in journals such as the *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Leadership Quarterly*, *Journal of World Business* and *Academy of Management Learning and Education*. Helene also runs a mailing list for international management researchers with an interest in language, which currently has about 130 international subscribers.

#### Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming the way multilingual virtual teams (MVTs) communicate. For example, state-of-the-art AI tools for machine translation (e.g., Google Translate) can reduce language barriers in the communication of MVTs. In this keynote, I will provide an overview of potential AI applications to support MVT communication. For each application, I will discuss how AI tools may facilitate communication across language barriers. However, given that existing AI tools are far from error-free, I will also delve into the current technological uncertainties faced by MVTs in how AI tools process language. On this basis, I will explore how MVT members interact with AI tools, how these tools influence team dynamics, and how they affect diversity, equality, and inclusion within MVTs. My discussion culminates in proposing meaningful directions for future research, which aim to stimulate empirical research and theory development for language-related international business research. Throughout my keynote, I will adopt an interdisciplinary lens by bringing together insights from language-sensitive research in international business with evidence from other disciplines such as psychology and computer science, which is vital for comprehensively understanding the transformative effects of AI on communication within MVTs.

### Cultivating responsible cross-language research: A focus on responsibility and transparency



**Agnieszka (Aggie) Chidlow** holds the distinguished position of full Professor of International Business at the University of Birmingham (UK) and currently serves as a secondee to the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) an initiative by the UN Global Compact. Widely acknowledged as a prominent capacity builder for impactful initiatives, she is an esteemed advocate for knowledge exchange and engagement in the realm of responsible management scholarship. Her eminence is underscored by numerous accolades recognising her exceptional service to the academic community. Her research, published in leading academic journals, has positioned her as a preeminent authority in her discipline on a global scale. As a Working Board Member of the Responsible Research in Business and Management global network

(RRBM), where she found the “RRBM on Tour” symposium, an accreditation panel member of the Accreditation of MBAs and BGA (AMBA & BGA), and an international advisory board member to numerous Higher Education institutions globally, she actively contributes to shaping the landscape of responsible management education. A stalwart in her commitment to advocating credible research methodology, she serves as an international advisory board member of the Consortium for the Advancement of Research Methods and Analysis (CARMA) and is one of the co-founding members of the Academy of International Business Research Methods-Shared Interest Group (AIB RM-SIG). Moreover, her editorial contributions extend to several internationally recognised and impactful journals, further solidifying her standing as a distinguished figure in the academic community and beyond. Additional information about her can be found on various social media platforms.

### **Abstract**

As members of a cross-language scholarly community, we actively contribute to and advance ongoing research debates through the generation and dissemination of scientific knowledge that transcends linguistic boundaries. Consequently, our endeavours play a crucial role in the intricate development of knowledge. The primary objective of the keynote is to catalyse an engaged discourse on responsible cross-language scholarship by directing participants’ attention not only towards a researcher’s scientific responsibility and integrity but also towards key stakeholders in Higher Education ecosystems. This includes the Responsible Research in Business Management (RRBM) global network, founded by the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) as well as the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), an initiative of UN Global Compact. As thought leaders, such entities are dedicated to promoting responsible research and management education within the realm of social sciences.

## **CONFERENCE PAPER ABSTRACTS**

### **Track 1: Forward-looking perspectives on language-sensitive IB research**

**Stephanie Jo Kent, Jeff Shaul & Jeffrey A. Kappen**  
*GoSign, Inc. USA; Drake University, USA*

#### **Language action and the action of languaging in the coming world of automatic interpreting by artificial intelligence**

We draw attention to the transformative influence of Neural Machine Translation (NMT), a specific application of deep learning in the realm of artificial intelligence (AI) already delivering language products and services across the spectrum of international business. The implications of ubiquitous machine translation span and exceed entire organizations, touching upon every aspect of business, every type of employee, customers, and suppliers. How strictly will the performance baselines be regulated? What will be the role of language-sensitive researchers in orienting management and labor to a new languaging landscape?

**Keywords:** Automatic interpreting, artificial intelligence, languaging, chronotopes, plurilingualism, foreignization

**Jane Kassis-Henderson & Geneviève Tréguer-Felten**  
*ESCP Business School, France & CNRS, Gestion & Société, France*

#### **‘Mono-Anglophonism’: A risk for the future of management research**

In recent years, calls have been made for the recognition of the role played by language in management research, with an emphasis on the need for reflexivity and contextual interpretation. The aim of this

paper is to take stock of the situation today and understand the obstacles preventing ideas and theories from being acknowledged when they are produced and circulated in other languages than English. The paper is in part conceptual and in part a manifesto in favour of greater intellectual openness. It is based on the observation that the intellectual traditions and biases specific to each language and culture tend to hinder the free circulation of knowledge. Drawing on IB and IM sources as well as on translation studies, cognitive linguistics, psychology and the history of science, the paper proposes ways of overcoming the hegemony of English. This is essential to safeguard the field from an epistemological monoculture.

**Keywords:** Reflexivity, intellectual bias, epistemological monoculture, knowledge circulation, hegemony of English, translation.

## Track 2: Language management in SMEs

**Zhonghui Ding & Darja Saksida Bogataj**

*School of Economics and Business, Ljubljana University, Slovenia*

### Language management and language choice in SMEs: Sase study from Slovenian SMEs

This study investigated the role of language in SMEs based on case studies in 6 Slovenian companies involved in business with China. We generally investigated the language strategies, language management, and language choice in Slovenian SMEs when negotiating with international partners. We also discovered two types of misunderstandings caused by languages in cross-cultural communication. Subsequently, the remedial measures SMEs usually take to avoid misunderstandings are investigated. In addition, this study also examined the relationship between language and trust building and found that speaking the other party's language plays a key role in the initial establishment of a trust relationship.

**Keywords:** Language management, language strategy, language choice, language and trust

**Daniela Bolzani & Claudine Gaibrois**

*University of Bologna, Italy & Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland*

### The empowering and disempowering role of language in entrepreneurship incubators

This interdisciplinary paper brings together Entrepreneurship Studies and Language-Sensitive Research in International Business by analyzing how language shapes the power relations between entrepreneurial support professionals and participants in entrepreneurship support initiatives. The qualitative study is based on semi-structured interviews, conducted in Italy, with twenty incubator professionals from both profit and non-profit programs and with eleven entrepreneurs of a non-migrant and migrant background. Preliminary findings from the analysis show that the expert vocabulary that the incubator professionals use and the lack of 'translation' of concepts has an empowering effect on the trainers and a disempowering effect on the future entrepreneurs. It also prevents participants in entrepreneurship incubator programs from getting as much as they could out of the trainings due to both a lack of understanding and of a feeling of exclusion. We conclude by discussing our contribution to Entrepreneurship Studies and to Language-Sensitive Research in IB.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship studies, language-sensitive IB, incubators, entrepreneurial support, power relations, expert vocabulary, translation of meanings

### Track 3: Language in IB and management education

**Danielle Taylor, Isabelle Corbett-Etchevers & Anne Bartel-Radic**

**Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, France; Univ. Grenoble Alpes, France; Univ. Grenoble Alpes, France**

#### **The paradox of language diversity: An ethnographic study of a European university alliance**

European discourse views language diversity as both an identity marker and strategic device, and yet truly implementing it in the organizational context is surprisingly challenging. This study aims to understand how language diversity is experienced and implemented concretely within the context of the European University Initiative. A multilevel, ethnographic study of a European University Alliance examines the official rhetoric of language diversity and experiences within its linguistically-diverse teams. As a result, this study dives into the paradox of language diversity and its advantages and challenges within a trans-European organization for its virtual project teams consisting of teachers, researchers and staff.

**Keywords:** Ethnography, European University Alliance, global virtual team, language diversity

**Michał Wilczewski, Rong Wang, Paola Giuri, Sheila M. Puffer, Anne-Marie Sørderberg, Stephan Meschke & Juana Du**

***University of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw, Poland; Peabody College of Education and Human Development, Vanderbilt University, USA; University of Bologna, Italy; D'Amore-McKim School of Business, Northeastern University, USA; Copenhagen Business School, Denmark; TU Bergakademie Freiberg, Germany & School of Communication and Culture, Royal Roads University, Canada***

#### **The effects of cultural novelty on the interplay between language and sociocultural adjustment among international students**

Recent research has revealed the significant role of perceived cultural differences in shaping the intercultural experiences of diverse individuals. Yet, our understanding of how cultural novelty influences the relationship between language and cultural adjustment remains limited. This study addresses this gap by examining the moderating effect of cultural novelty on the relationship between foreign-language proficiency and cultural adjustment. Survey data from 1,092 international students in five countries were analyzed using mediation and moderated mediation analyses. The moderating effect of cultural novelty was confirmed, specifically in the host-language context, where cultural novelty weakened the interplay between host-language proficiency and socializing with domestic students. Moreover, this research illuminates the impact of the lingocultural context on adjustment. The findings carry implications for both research and practical applications, aiming to maximize the benefits of language skills in enhancing student adjustment and the overall educational experience.

**Keywords:** Language, cultural novelty, intercultural communication theory, cultural adjustment theory, social identity theory, international students

### Track 4: Migration and the multilingual workplace

**Annelise Ly**

***NHH Norwegian School of Economics, Norway***

**"When is my Norwegian good enough?" Experiences of glass ceiling by highly skilled migrants in Norway**

There is a common belief that local language proficiency is a barrier to employment, causing migrants to struggle in securing positions that match their level of qualifications and experiences (Piller, 2016). This belief suggests a rational labour market narrative where, once migrants reach a suitable language proficiency level, they will have the same opportunities to compete than locals. However, would local language proficiency still be important in a relatively small country, with a local language predominantly confined within its national borders and where the population has a high proficiency in English?

The present study investigates how highly skilled migrants (HSM) perceive the relationship between knowledge of local language and workplace integration in Norway. Based on interviews, it sets light on their professional experiences and their reflections about local language proficiency. The findings show that despite their local language skills, the informants felt that they were not advancing in their careers as much as they deserved. For them local language proficiency was used as an excuse not to promote them and give lower salaries. The findings suggest the existence of a glass ceiling for HSMs.

**Keywords:** Highly skilled migrants, language proficiency, discrimination, competence, glass ceiling

**Nadine Thielemann & Lejla Atagan**

*WU - Vienna University of Economic & Business, Austria*

### **Stories of transformation & self-empowerment - How migrants from the Balkans forge their identity as entrepreneurs**

This paper explores the intersection of migrant experiences and entrepreneurship, specifically focusing on migrants from the Balkans running businesses in Vienna's gastronomy sector. The study employs a narrative approach, inviting Balkan migrants to share their transformative journey from newcomers to business owners. By examining the narratives, the paper aims to uncover the plot pattern of the migrant-to-entrepreneur narrative and the way how the agency of the teller evolves characterizing the identity construction of these migrant entrepreneurs. Our findings suggest that this plot pattern combines features of the habitual entrepreneurial story (e.g., hard work, striving for autonomy) with features typical of migrants' narratives (e.g., vulnerability, engagement with the host society's migration discourse), which turns the observed plot into a distinct pattern of the entrepreneurial narrative, one that frames the path to entrepreneurship as self-empowerment.

**Keywords:** Migrant entrepreneurship, narrative identity, plot, agency, interview-based research

**Wilhelm Barner-Rasmussen, Claudine Gaibrois & Natalie Wilmot**

*Åbo Akademi University, Finland; University of St. Gallen/ BernUniversity of Applied Sciences, Switzerland & University of Lincoln, UK*

### **Opening doors, door openers, and closed doors: Language-related dynamics of migrants' access to work and integration at work**

We analyze highly qualified international migrants' experiences of work life in host locations from the perspective of how these experiences are (co-)shaped by language. Based on qualitative pilot studies in the German-speaking part of Switzerland and in Finland [UK data to be added], some commonalities and differences are identified. Migrants with less job market bargaining power appear under greater pressure to know the local language(s), presenting a further challenge in valorizing their professional qualifications and forcing them into often less desirable niche positions. However, migrants with sufficient qualifications to eventually land high-level jobs that can be carried out in English may also find themselves in precarious positions where they need help from others. This pattern appears more pronounced in a context with fewer migrants (Finland in this case). We find some indications of how such help can be institutionalized, pointing towards firm-level and societal implications of the study.

**Keywords:** Migration, migrant, language-sensitive IB, employment, work life

## Track 5A: Doctoral session

**Oumnia Abidi & Karim Mignonac**  
*Toulouse School of Management, France*

### Qualifying voices: The interplay of accent and gender in applicant hireability evaluations

This study investigates accent and gender biases in hiring. We draw on previous empirical research conducted in a variety of contexts that reveals that non-native speakers are often devalued in comparison with native speakers, particularly on the "big two" dimensions of social categorization, warmth, and competence. However, the evaluation of non-native speakers is not uniformly negative since ambivalent evaluations are also observed. Furthermore, gender plays an important role, with ambivalent evaluations depending on the gender of the speaker. Given the complexity and nuanced nature of evaluations of non-native speakers, our research project aims to further examine the intersection of accent and gender in shaping perceptions of warmth and competence and the subsequent hireability evaluations. To investigate these hypotheses, we ran a first study in a French context, using a between-subject experimental approach with four conditions. Initial findings suggest accent positively impacts warmth perceptions for men, but not for women, who are inherently perceived as warm due to gender. Moreover, perfectly qualified candidates for competency-based jobs remain unaffected by gender, accent, or their intersection. Future experiments will explore differences arising with different non-native accent origin and job context.

**Keywords:** Accent bias, gender stereotypes, non-native speakers, hiring decisions

**Dina Elsousy**  
*University of Strasbourg, EM Strasbourg Business School, France*

### Language imposition and emotional control: A study on Francophone call centers in Egypt

Our thesis work examines the potential relationship between language imposition and emotional control in the context of call centers, particularly those outsourced to foreign countries. The study delves into the impact of language standardization on emotional aspects within call center work, where agents are tasked with expressing positive emotions and concealing negative ones. Drawing on the theoretical framework of emotional labor (Hochschild 1979, 1983), the research aims to understand how emotional control explains call center agents' reaction to language imposition. For this purpose, a qualitative methodology was employed with French-speaking call center agents in Egypt. Four main themes were extracted from the findings: multilingual communication, language requirements and emotional control, consequences of non-adherence to rules and requirements, and call center agents' reactions. The findings revealed that call center agents respond adaptively or non-adaptively, not to language imposition, but to the requirement of exclusively positive expressions with customers.

**Keywords:** Language imposition, emotional control, emotional labor, call center agents' reactions.

**Sazzad Talukder & Wilhelm Barner-Rasmussen**  
*Åbo Akademi University School of Business and Economics, Finland*

### Rewarding language performance in international small firms

We explore how HR decision-makers reward employee language performance in international SMEs. A five-year data collection among 22 internationally active Finnish small firms captures their process of developing language performance standards and shows that it tends to occur in three phases. Building on social exchange theory, we attempt to understand HR decision-makers' perceptions, initiatives, and decisions throughout this process.



**Keywords:** Language capability, language performance, reward, international business, SME, HR, social exchange, resource sharing

**Clementine Chitulangoma**  
*University of Bradford, UK*

### **A new methodological approach for the study language, language use, and language users in organisational settings**

**Purpose:** I undertook this study to suggest a new and novel way of carrying out language sensitive research. The traditional methods of carrying out research in language sensitive literature are still very useful for answering research questions, however, embracing methodological approaches used in other disciplines will help IB language researchers to address problems from different perspectives so as to come up with new and compelling solutions to research problems.

**Study design/methodology/approach:** I carried out a literature review to find out what approaches to problem solving previous IB language researchers had used in the past. Then I attended an inter disciplinary conference at my university and discovered an interesting and robust method for uncovering hidden nuances called "Interpretive phenomenological Analysis." I discovered that it was a qualitative research method and because quantitative research methods outnumber qualitative research methods in language sensitive literature, I decided that it could be a useful method to add to our repertoire of methodological approaches.

**Findings:** I found an answer to the problem I was trying to address, that of identifying novel methodological approaches, in Interpretive phenomenological Analysis. A methodological approach, borrowed from the field of psychology which can also be used in language sensitive studies.

**Originality/value:** The articles that I examined in my literature review, did not contain "Interpretive phenomenological Analysis" therefore I feel that by including this approach to data collection in language sensitive literature, value will be added to the field

**Keywords:** Language, methodological approaches, interdisciplinary studies.

### **Track 5B: Doctoral session**

**Johanna Niskavaara**  
*Aalto University School of Business, Finland*

### **"If your goal is to grow internationally, you need people who fit that profile." The legitimizing role of foreign-born employees in SME internationalization**

This study explores the role of foreign-born employees (FBEs) in SME internationalization. FBEs are conceptualized as an inward form of internationalization, bringing in resources that enhance a company's ability to further internationalize. The study finds that FBEs play an important role in connecting inward and outward internationalization in two ways. Firstly, they can provide easier access to markets, especially through their native language skills. Secondly, FBEs play a role in legitimizing an SME as an international company, making it a credible player in global markets and also an attractive workplace for other FBEs. The research is based on empirical data collected from a small company operating in Finland, and it employs qualitative research methods. The study contributes to the literature on firm internationalization and human resource management by highlighting the role of FBEs as key resources for SMEs.

**Keywords:** Foreign-born employees, internationalization, SMEs, HRM, migration

**Bernadette Hofer-Bonfim**

*WU - Vienna University of Economic & Business, Austria*

**Global goals, local realities: A cross-country examination of non-financial reporting on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the banking sector**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reporting, including Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) reporting, is increasingly important in organizational communication, and shaped by institutional factors. While institutional distance's influence on CSR reporting is acknowledged, the existence of a country-of-origin effect in DEI reporting remains unclear. This study addresses this gap by examining DEI reporting in Brazil, Italy, and the USA, focusing on the banking sector. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, the study analyzes textual and visual elements in reports from 2013, 2017, and 2021. Preliminary findings suggest diminishing country-specific differences, possibly due to global standardization pressures and the phenomenon of "diversity washing." Further research is needed to explore standardization pressures and genuine DEI efforts, informing strategies for promoting meaningful change globally.

**Keywords:** Diversity, equity and inclusion, CSR reporting, country-context-perspective, banking sector, mixed-methods discourse analysis

**Hilla Back & Philipp Back**

*Aalto University School of Business, Finland*

**Coping strategies to language barriers: Double-edged sword of virtuality on inclusion of linguistic minorities**

Information technology has been found to support organizations' diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives through 'leveling the playing field' for members of certain minority groups. However, the dark side of information technology has remained largely overlooked. In this qualitative interview study at a multinational professional service firm in Finland, we explore how highly-skilled migrants who are not proficient in the local language of their country of residence cope with language barriers in physical and virtual settings. Results show that while coping strategies were primarily emotion-focused in face-to-face work, they turned more problem-focused in virtual work. For linguistic minorities, this resulted in a reduction of short-term emotional strain, but also greater inclusion thresholds. These findings challenge the prevailing assumption that technology universally overcomes hidden barriers, emphasizing the need for tailored DEI-initiatives that consider the individual needs of different minority groups.

**Keywords:** Language, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), virtual work, coping strategies, migration

**Track 6: Language sensitivity in IB and management research**

**Patrick Shulist, Miguel Rivera-Santos & Rebecca Piekari**

*Aalto University, Finland; Babson College, USA & Aalto University, Finland*

**When theory and data speak different languages: Finding fit in linguistically diverse qualitative research**

The management literature is increasingly interested in developing theory about diverse contexts. Here, qualitative methods are especially well suited, given their ability to delve into context. However, with this contextual diversity comes another, often overlooked, factor: linguistic diversity, namely the use of languages other than English or of variants of English that differ substantially from that used in publishing. While this linguistic diversity is often viewed as a 'solvable' methodological issue, we argue that it instead fundamentally shapes the process of theory building. Indeed, as translation studies has long emphasized, moving between languages and dialects inevitably results in shifts or losses of



meaning. Thus, the data from which one is theorizing are altered any time translation occurs. As a result, a focus on fit becomes critical for building robust theory; the approaches to translation must align with the theory that is being built, with the methods being used, and with the linguistic realities of the empirical context. Overall, we broaden discussions of linguistic diversity in qualitative research to include the implications for theory building.

**Keywords:** Translation, qualitative methods, theory-method fit, meaning shifts, meaning loss, dialects

**Amy Church-Morel, Mary Vigier & Anissa Louzir-Ben Hassine**  
*IREGE - Université Savoie Mont Blanc, France; ESC Clermont Business School, France & Higher Institute of Computer Science and Management of Kairouan, Tunisia*

#### **Responsibility and language-sensitive management: Heuristics for the Anthropocene era**

Given the complexity and the dominant influence of international business in this Anthropocene era, organizational heuristics relating to notions of responsibility are key to understanding the business-society interface and to the practices of management and collaboration. This paper builds on the previously developed notions of corporate sociolinguistic responsibility to consider what constitutes responsible language-sensitive management and the frameworks behind decisions pertaining to language practices and responsibility. We propose an approach for knowledge work on heuristics for responsible language-sensitive management. To do this, we draw on extant research on corporate social responsibility, language-sensitive management in international business and heuristics, and highlight possibilities for future empirical research.

**Keywords:** Language, responsibility, heuristics, international management, sustainability, Anthropocene

**Laura Heldsinger & Tracey Toefy**  
*Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, South Africa*

#### **The impact of accent prejudice on decisions to hire**

This study investigates South African hiring managers' attitudes towards two varieties of Black South African English accents in a hypothetical South African employment scenario. The paper shows that covert discrimination can occur towards individuals with less prestigious accents. Statistically significant results confirmed the hypotheses and indicated that participants perceived that the candidate who spoke with the Crossover Black South African English (CBSAE) accent was more superior, attractive, and dynamic in their speech compared to the candidate who spoke with the Traditional Black South African English (TBSAE) accent. Furthermore, evaluation of speech influenced participants' perception of the candidates' job suitability; the CBSAE accented candidate was found to be more suitable for the job and was recommended to progress in the recruitment process over the TBSAE accented candidate. These results emphasise a need for a redress of covert discrimination in the South African workplace to reduce such occurrences.

**Keywords:** Accent discrimination, bias, crossover, South African English accents, hiring decisions.

### **Track 7: Language and linguistic diversity in the workplace**

**Peter Daly & Dardo de Vecchi**  
*EDHEC Business School, France & KEDGE Business School, France*

### Creating a ‘company-speak’ culture in your company

Corporate newcomers need to become quickly operational in company-speak, the specialized language of a corporate linguistic community, to avoid misunderstanding and miscommunication. Understanding what company-speak is, how it is defined and employed in a company is key for human resource professionals (HRPs). This paper introduces company-speak, its importance when onboarding newcomers and its characteristics. We provide step-by-step instructions on how to develop a company-speak culture within your company, raise awareness of the four aspects of company-speak, organize company-speak within your language policy, and sustain company-speak competence and culture within the company. With these steps, HRPs can raise linguistic awareness and facilitate effective newcomer onboarding from a language perspective.

**Keywords:** Company-speak, corporate language, terminology, newcomers, onboarding

**František Tůma**

*WU - Vienna University of Economic & Business, Austria*

### Pointing at technical drawings in multilingual workplace meetings

This study focuses on interactions in multilingual workplace meetings in small companies that produce material goods. Although many previous studies of workplace meetings have focused predominantly on language use, there is growing awareness that participants use language together with embodied and material resources (e.g., pointing at technical drawings) to build action in situated ways. In line with this, the present study explores how staff members in multilingual workplace meetings use technical drawings and language resources when collaboratively resolving issues in design and production. This multimodal conversation analytic study is based on three hours of video recordings of naturally occurring meetings in two small companies. The action-by-action analysis focuses on how participants use pointing gestures in situated ways. It suggests that a wide range of pointing gestures are used in concert with (sometimes relatively simple) language resources to configure complex actions, such as describing a problem, making suggestions, and rejecting criticism. These findings shed light on the multimodal organization of multilingual workplace interactions.

**Keywords:** Workplace interaction, conversation analysis, multimodality, pointing gestures, meetings, multilingualism

**Iga Maria Lehman**

*University of Social Sciences in Warsaw, Poland*

### Uniqueness in authorial self-representation: Reframing the concept of convincing writer in management and organization scholarship

My purpose in this paper is to throw light on challenges in presenting qualitative work in management and organization studies and look at ways to improve the reporting of research. Specifically, following Van Maanen (1995a, 1995b), I argue for stylistic uniqueness in our authorial self-representations which is inscribed in the notions of dialogicality and equality, indeterminacy, conjunctive logic, and authorial presence. This approach challenges many of our received and more or less unquestioned notions of what makes management and organizational texts valuable and convincing. Most importantly, it rejects the concept of writer as “conquering hero” in favor of writer who is sensitive to the needs and feelings of all involved in this process, including the writer themselves, co-authors, the reader and research subjects.

**Keywords:** Writing on management and organizations, qualitative research, stylistic uniqueness, sensitivity

## Track 8: Intercultural communication, language and ideology

**Michał Wilczewski, Oleg Gorbaniuk & Arkadiusz Gut**

*University of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw, Poland; Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland/Casimir Pulaski Radom University, Radom, Poland & The Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń, Poland*

### **Spirituality, language, and intercultural effectiveness: Navigating cultures with love**

Research yields contradictory results on the relationship between an individual's spirituality, i.e., the relationship with God/the Transcendent, and their cultural development. To address this gap, we conceptualize a model that explores the effects of two dimensions of spirituality, namely, love for God and love for others, on the behavioral aspect of intercultural competence, i.e., intercultural effectiveness (IE), through ethnocentrism. We test this model using data from 144 international students self-identifying as Christians, Muslims, belonging to other religions, and non-religious. Our findings confirm the positive impact of spirituality on IE by reducing ethnocentrism. We establish interesting suppressing effects of both love for God and love for others, suggesting intricate dynamics of different spirituality dimensions within the intercultural communication model. Furthermore, we identify direct effects of host language and English proficiency on IE, and establish that host language attenuates the adverse impact of ethnocentrism on IE. This study offers valuable implications for higher education institutions and beyond.

**Keywords:** Intercultural effectiveness, intercultural communication, language, spirituality, love, international student

**Guro R. Sanden**

*BI Norwegian Business School, Norway*

### **Stories for global impact: A comparative analysis of storytelling models in business communication**

This paper explores the role of storytelling in corporate communication, with a focus on international business contexts. It compares four influential storytelling models – *Freytag's Pyramid* (Freytag, 1863, in Herman et al., 2010) *Hero's Journey* (Campbell, 2008), *Story* (McKee, 1998), and *Storynomics* (McKee and Gerace, 2018), – to analyze their structures and implications for effective communication. The comparative content analysis reveals commonalities in narrative structure; use of conflict; climax; and transformation across models. However, differences emerge in the models purpose and application; number of stages; emphasis on story elements; and origin. The discussion highlights the power of character-driven stories for international business communication. Practical insights suggest the applicability of these models in crafting compelling narratives for diverse audiences.

**Keywords:** Storytelling, corporate communication, international business, business communication, narrative structure

**Veronika Lovritš**

*University of Ostrava, Czech Republic*

### **Beyond words: Understanding linguistic authority in international workplaces**

This study investigates linguistic authority in an international unit of an EU institution in Luxembourg. Using socio-pragmatic discourse analysis, it explores language workers' stances towards workplace language use. Findings reveal the influence of language ideologies, such as elite multilingualism and native speakerism. Despite benefiting the institution which seeks to reduce language work costs, these ideologies disproportionately affect workers in unstable situations of international mobility and temporary work contracts. Thus, the paper advocates for heightened critical language awareness,

aiming to sensitise stakeholders to language ideology effects and the uneven use of linguistic authority in the organisation. The discussion is especially relevant to public institutions endorsing multilingualism while relying mostly on English. Beyond this specific context, conceptualisation of linguistic authority offers inspiration for understanding and improving employees' work experiences in multilingual organisations that aim to attract and retain young international talent.

**Keywords:** Mobility, linguistic authority, language ideology, European institutions, internal communication