18th GEM&L International Conference

on Management & Language

Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria

8- 10 May 2025

Challenges of language and communication in rapidly changing business contexts

Conference venue:
Welthandelsplatz 1,

1020 Vienna, Austria

The organizers wish to warmly thank our partner

PROGRAMME OUTLINE
All times are CEST (local) time

Wednesday 7 May 2025, Pre-Conference

17:30   **Pre-conference guided tour** (free for participants, sponsored by WU)
Meeting place: WU campus entrance West (Welthandelspl., 1020 Vienna)

19:00   **Welcome Dinner at "Meierei" (Address: Prater Hauptallee 3)**
(pre-paid upon registration)

Thursday, 8 May 2025, Day 1

08:45–09:30   Registration with coffee/tea

09:30–10:00   Welcome address Room AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
Philippe LECOMTE, President of GEM&L
Jens SEIFFERT-BROCKMANN, Head of the Department of Business Communication, WU Vienna
Elisabeth PETERS, Department of Business Communication, WU Vienna

10:00–11:00   First keynote address Room AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
Gerlinde MAUTNER, Vienna University of Economics and Business
Leadership through the language lens

11:00–11:30   Coffee break with **group photo** in front of Meeting Room 1

11:30–12:30   **Cross-cultural and Strategic Management special session** Room AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
Guest editors: Leigh Anne LIU, Philippe LECOMTE, Guro SANDEN, Michał WILCZEWSKI

12:30–13:30   Lunch at "Das Campus" (building D2)

13:30–15:10   **Session 1**

15:10–15:30   Coffee break

15.30–16:20   **Session 2**

16:20–16:40   **Nigel HOLDEN prize and GEM&L awards** Room AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1

16.40–18:10   **GEM&L ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and board elections** Room AD.0.122 Meeting Room 2

19:30   **Reception & Gala Dinner with Welcome Drink** Wiener Rathauskeller (Rathausplatz 1)

Friday, 9 May 2025, Day 2

08:30–09:00   Coffee/tea

09:00–10:00   **Second keynote address** Room AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
Jasmin MAHADEVAN, Hochschule Pforzheim
Intersections of language and power in international business studies: Observations from critical ethnography

10:00–11:15   **Session 3 – Parallel tracks**

11:15–11:45   Coffee break

11:45–13:00   **Round table on IB and communication teaching** Room AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1

13:00–14:00   Lunch at "Mensa" (building TC)

14:00–15:40   **Session 4 – Parallel tracks**

15:40–16:00   Coffee break

16:00–17:40   **Session 5**

17:40–18:30   **GEM&L new board meeting** Room AD.0.122 Meeting Room 2

19:00   **Dinner** at **Restaurant Stadtheuriger Gigerl** (Rauhensteingasse 3)
(pre-paid upon registration)

Saturday, 10 May 2025, Day 3

08:30-09:00   Coffee/tea

09:00–10:40:   **Session 6**

10:40–11.00   Coffee break

11:00–12.15   **Session 7**

12:15–13.00   **Closing session with final cocktail** in front of Meeting room 1

13.00   **Afterwork for doctoral students** organized by Bernadette HOFER-BONFIM & Magdalena ZEHETGRUBER
Meeting point: registration desk

FULL PROGRAMME
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              Guest editors: Leigh Anne **LIU**, Philippe **LECOMTE**, Guro **SANDEN**, Michał
              WILCZEWSKI
              Authors: Wilhelm **BARNER-RASMUSSEN**, Amy **CHURCH-MOREL**, Jagat
              KUNWAR, Hélène **LANGINIER**, Johanna **NISKAVAARA**, Guro **SANDEN**,
              Mary **VIGIER**, Michał **WILCZEWSKI**

12:30–13:30   Lunch at "Das Campus" (building D2)

13:30–15:10   **Session 1**

Track 1: The future of language-sensitive research in international business
Room: AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
Chair: Guro Sanden
Linyu Liu, Rebecca Piekkari, Susanne Tietze & Kaisa Koskinen Navigating boundaries within translatorial spaces: The essential role of paraprofessional translators in multinationals
Hilla Back, Rebecca Piekkari & Annelise Ly From controlling to caring: The future of language-sensitive research in international business
Päivi Karhunen & Aija Nurminen From language-sensitive IM research towards research on language-sensitive IM?
Wilhelm Barner-Rasmussen, Claudine Gaibrois, Marjana Johansson & Natalie Wilmot Scandalizing the language blindness of OS through an intersectional perspective on language in the context of migration

15:10–15:30   Coffee break

15.30–16:20   **Session 2**

Track 2: Professional identity and minority languages
Room: AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
Chair: Amy Church-Morel
Peter Daly Commodification of a minority language: The case of Irish with the BAC le Gaeilge language initiative
Veronika Lovrits & Soňa Kalenda Vránová Discursive image of a profession as an aspect of resilience in social work students

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              Jasmin MAHADEVAN, Hochschule Pforzheim
              Intersections of language and power in international business studies: Observations from critical ethnography

10:00–11:15   **Session 3 – Parallel tracks**

Track 3: Linguistic complexity and conflict	Track 4: Language strategies and negotiations in global business
Room: AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1	Room: AD.0.090 Meeting Room 6
Chair: Michał Wilczewski	Chair: Wilhelm Barner-Rasmussen
Virpi Outila, Carol Reade & Rebecca Piekkari When language becomes a liability: Experts on Russia amidst geopolitical shock	**Vincent Montenero, Yadira Martinez-Pantoja & Emil Velinov** Language strategies of MNCs in the Czech Republic
Birgit Gabriel & Hélène Langinier Contextual reflexivity: Harnessing insider positions in diverse organizational contexts	**Adrian Barragan Diaz, Elena Poliakova & Amelie Callens** Negotiating across languages: Ethical implications of the foreign language effect
Jagat Bahadur Kunwar & Claudine Gaibrois Linguistic integration: A critical review, alternative understandings, and implications for organizations	**Elena Poliakova** Language as a strategic choice and source of power in negotiations: Nuances and coping mechanisms

11:15–11:45   Coffee break

11:45-13.00   **Round table on IB and communication teaching** Room AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
              Panellists:
              Wilhelm **BARNER-RASMUSSEN**, Åbo Akademi University, Finland
              Marie-Thérèse **CLAES**, WU Vienna, Austria
              Claudine **GAIBROIS**, Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland
              Rebecca **PIEKKARI**, Aalto University School of Business, Finland
              Mike **SZYMANSKI**, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, USA
              Tracey **TOEFY**, GIBS Business School, South Africa

              Moderator:
              Miya **KOMORI-GLATZ**, WU Vienna, Austria

13:00–14:00   Lunch at "Mensa" (building TC)

14:00–15:40   **Session 4 – parallel tracks**

Track 5: Multilingualism and identity in higher education	Track 6: Intercultural competence and diversity in the workplace
Room: AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1	Room: AD.0.090 Meeting Room 6
Chair: Mary Vigier	Chair: Claudine Gaibrois
Marie-Thérèse Claes Balancing language diversity in universities: Local identity, politics, and internationalization	**Yi Ren, Chao Chuan Chen & Huan (Harry) Wang** Cultivating second language communication competence in the workplace for immigrant workers
Amy Church-Morel Language-sensitive management in higher education: An autoethnographic approach to quality and responsibility	**Colin Heller & Juliana Petri Mendes** Assessing the impact of cross-cultural training on the adjustment process of Latin-American expatriates in Austria
Michal Wilczewski, Ewelina Wilczewska & Iryna Bilokon Pathways to cultural adjustment: A configurational analysis of international students' experiences in a non-Anglophone context	**František Tůma & Dina Stanković** Counseling in intercultural settings: Inclusion and interactivity in workshops for prospective entrepreneurs
Iga Lehman Textual construction of charisma in inaugural addresses of higher education leaders	**Bernadette Hofer-Bonfim** Analyzing cross-country diversity reporting through the lens of a language-sensitive mixed-methods framework

15:40–16:00   Coffee break

16:00–17:40   **Session 5**

Track 7: Doctoral session
Room: AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
Chair: Rebecca Piekkari
Oumnia Abidi Challenging bias, claiming identity: How non-native speakers reframe their accents in the workplace
Maria Annukka Jakkula Competency mapping of paraprofessional translators in situated contexts
Andres Guillermo Covilla Martinez The language of leadership: A deep-learning approach to business leaders' influence on social media
Evelina Lucas & Guro R. Sanden Linguistic ethnography in business studies: Concepts and applications

17:40–18:30   **GEM&L new board meeting** Room AD.0.122 Meeting Room 2

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Saturday, 10 May 2025, Day 3

08:30–09:00 Coffee/tea

09:00–10:40 **Session 6**

Track 8: Doctoral session
Room: AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
Chair: Kristina Humonen
Sijie Ren & Margaret Schomaker
The impact of language focused artificial intelligence (AI) tools on linguistic self-efficacy in immigrant socio-professional integration
Dmitrii Rodionov
Role of language in the organizational socialization of migrant knowledge workers
Sergi Casals & Juan Carlos Díaz-Vásquez
Corporate language in changing business contexts: From standardization to terminological harmonization in MNCs
Johanna Niskavaara
Language practices building and expressing the international identity of a small firm

10:40–11.00 Coffee break

11:00–12.15 **Session 7**

Track 9: Language and communication dynamics in organization contexts
Room: AD.0.114 Meeting Room 1
Chair: Mike Szymanski
Adesh Chetram & Tracey Toefy
Harnessing the power within: The influence of internal communications and organisational citizenship on employee advocacy
Kristina Humonen, Spencer Hazel & Adam Brandt
Capturing the complexity of public writing in multilingual online strategy meetings: A conversation analysis approach
Nadine Thielemann & Regina Göke
Office folklore revisited: From resistance to resourcefulness

12:15–13.00 **Closing session with final cocktail** in front of Meeting room 1

13:00 **Afterwork for doctoral students** organized by Bernadette **HOFER-BONFIM** & Magdalena **ZEHETGRUBER**
Meeting point: registration desk

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Leadership through the language lens

Gerlinde Mautner is Professor of English Business Communication at *Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien* (Vienna University of Economics and Business). An applied linguist by training, and maintaining close links with British academia, she pursues research interests located at the interface of language, business and society. For many years, her work has also had a strong methodological focus, concerned in particular with the ways in which corpus linguistics can help put discourse studies on more robust empirical foundations.

Abstract

In management and organisation studies, leadership has become a key concept, with significant impact on theory development, research designs and impact outside academia. There are some critical voices questioning the underlying ideologies (e.g., Learmonth and Morrell 2019), but they are generally drowned out by the louder chorus of mainstream leadership researchers.

In keeping with GEM&L's overall mission, this talk asks what linguistics can contribute to leadership research both conceptually and methodologically. Drawing on recent interdisciplinary projects (Gillings, Learmonth and Mautner 2024; Mautner, Learmonth and Gillings, under review), I will make a case for using Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies to unpack and critique linguistic constructions of leadership.

References:

Gillings, M., Learmonth, M. & Mautner, G. (2024). Taking the road less travelled: How corpus-assisted discourse studies can enrich qualitative explorations of large textual datasets. *British Journal of Management*, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12816.

Learmonth, M., & Morrell, K. (2019). *Critical Perspectives on Leadership: The Language of Corporate Power*. London: Routledge.

Mautner, G., Learmonth, M. & Gillings, M. (under review): The follower in leadership studies. A linguistic analysis and critique.

Intersections of language and power in International Business Studies: Observations from critical ethnography

Jasmin Mahadevan is Professor of International and Cross-Cultural Management at Pforzheim University, Germany. Most of her research focuses on categorizations of the (cultural) other, and how and why these manifest, and out of which interests and under which boundary conditions, often in changing, culturally-complex or multi-local settings. She often employs interpretive and critical ethnographic methods and has published on paradigms and methodology, migration and integration, culture and identity, and power and reflexivity. Her latest project investigates COVID-induced changes to leadership, organizational belonging and work-home resource integration in Germany.

Abstract

Language has been investigated as a relevant aspect of how power-inequalities and power-effects manifest in International Business settings. Ethnography, however, is often sceptical towards language, based on the premise that 'what people say they do' and 'what people *really* do (or: interpret, expect, perceive)' will always differ, as human beings are not fully aware of how and why they use and experience language in certain, and not in other ways. Thus, there is the need to pay attention to the 'language' of people's embodied appearances and performances. For example, clothing is understood as functioning as the second layer of how our body speaks to the world. Furthermore, wider boundary conditions, such as learned categories of race, gender, ethnicity or class, and discourses regarding them, might inform – and often distort – what is (not) transmitted or (not) received in interpersonal interactions.

My main message in this talk is thus the need to widen our understanding of what constitutes 'language' in International Business settings, and I will exemplify this requirement by means of three studies.

The first study shows the limit of full enculturation and perfect fluency in another language: it presents the case of an American lawyer in Paris who, once having learned to speak 'perfect French', finds this to be a disadvantage (Kassis-Henderson and Cohen, 2020). The second study reflects on the researcher's body in an Indo-German multinational company, and how she herself is categorized in terms of culture, caste and power, based on how she dresses and what food she consumes (Mahadevan, 2015). The third study unravels how 'drinking tea the wrong way' – either green or black with milk – in a Chinese-Pakistani mining operation is indicative of a post-colonial power-struggle symbolizing disruptive changes in the International Business system (Kakar and Mahadevan, 2020).

In all three studies, despite their differences, power, language, system, discourse, and embodied performances and perceptions intersect to shape a certain International Business reality, and all three involve 'language' in the wider sense. I will conclude by outlining methodological avenues for implementing the wider ethnographic approach to language, based on the understanding that we need such an approach for doing justice to the complexities and power-configurations of today's International Business.

References

Kakar Q and Mahadevan, J (2020). Configurations of power and cultural explanations: The case of a Chinese–Pakistani mining project. In: Mahadevan J, Primecz H and Romani L (Eds), *Cases in Critical Cross-Cultural Management – an Intersectional Approach to Culture.* Taylor & Francis (Routledge), pp. 86-99.

Kassis-Henderson J and Cohen L (2020). The paradoxical consequences of 'the perfect accent' – a critical approach to cross-cultural interactions. In: Mahadevan J, Primecz H and Romani L (Eds), *Cases in Critical Cross-Cultural Management – an Intersectional Approach to Culture.* Taylor & Francis (Routledge), pp. 12-21.

Mahadevan J (2015) Caste, purity, and female dress in IT India: Embodied norm violation as reflexive ethnographic practice. *Culture and Organization*, 21(5): 366-385.

<p style="text-align:center">CONFERENCE PAPER ABSTRACTS</p>

Track 1: The future of language-sensitive research in international business

Linyu Liu, Rebecca Piekkari, Susanne Tietze & Kaisa Koskinen
Aalto University School of Business, Finland, Sheffield Hallam University, UK, Tampere University, Finland

Navigating boundaries within translatorial spaces: The essential role of paraprofessional translators in multinationals

In this study we draw on emerging research on paraprofessional translation to shed new light on the activity of navigating different types of boundaries within multinational corporations. Paraprofessional translators, though not hired as professional translators, engage in various translation tasks in connection with their everyday work. By focusing on their contexts and practices, this study aims to unpack the role paraprofessional translators play in facilitating communication and knowledge exchange across complex boundaries within multinationals. Drawing on a case study of the Innovation unit within a Nordic engineering multinational, we identify four translatorial spaces where linguistic, cultural, organizational, and/or knowledge-based boundaries were being navigated. In addition, our case study sheds light on the key communicative acts of paraprofessional translators. They include translation decisions ranging from mundane yet synergistic tasks to more complex and strategic activities. Our findings highlight that paraprofessional translators play a key role in fostering a collective mindset within the organization and serve as grounded strategists, driving the strategic direction of multinationals. By underscoring the significant impact of their work, our study advocates for greater recognition of paraprofessional translators within MNCs and broader IB research.

Keywords**:** Boundary navigating, paraprofessional translators, multinational corporations, translatorial spaces, translation decisions

Hilla Back, Rebecca Piekkari & Annelise Ly
Aalto University School of Business, Finland, NHH Norwegian School of Economics, Norway

From controlling to caring: The future of language-sensitive research in international business

The field of language-sensitive research in international business (IB) explores language diversity in multinational and multilingual organizations. Over the years, this field has been dominated by functionalist approaches that consider language an instrumental tool of corporate strategy and an organizational factor to be controlled. In this paper, we argue that the view of language as a corporate control mechanism is giving way to alternative approaches that underscore a sense of caring, sharing and responsibility. We define responsible language use as intrinsically inclusive, multivocal, and multilingual. This definition emphasizes linguistic (in)justice and is based on moral and ethical considerations. This shift to responsible language use is particularly visible in four topics that we highlight as promising avenues for future research: i) language and migrants; ii) language and EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion); iii) language and technology and iv) language and research methodology. In discussing them, we distill key concepts and propose potential research questions that nudge the field from a focus on controlling to a focus on caring.

Keywords: Language-sensitive IB, responsible language use, migration, EDI, technology, methodology

Päivi Karhunen & Aija Nurminen
LAB University of Applied Sciences, Finland

From language-sensitive IM research towards research on language-sensitive IM?

This paper contributes to language-sensitive IM scholarship by introducing insights from applied linguistics and language education practice. We elaborate the concepts of language awareness (Hawkins, 1984) and language affordances (Aronin and Singleton, 2012), and shift the focus from English and MNC with its highly skilled IB professionals to national languages and domestic organizations which are facing the language issue through immigrant workforce. Based on the second author's participant observations during her 30 years of experience as a language educator, we build an organizational typology based on the different attitudes and capabilities of firms as to language-aware policies and practices. We enrich our typology with real-life case examples from the organizations the second author has worked with.

Keywords: Language aware management, language affordances, local language, immigration

Wilhelm Barner-Rasmussen, Claudine Gaibrois, Marjana Johansson & Natalie Wilmot
Åbo Akademi University, Finland, Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland, University of Glasgow, Adam Smith Business School, UK, University of Lincoln, Lincoln International Business School, UK

Scandalizing the language blindness of OS through an intersectional perspective on language in the context of migration

This paper proposes an intersectional perspective on language in the context of migration as a contribution to address the 'language blindness' in Organization Studies. While the role of language for the social construction of organizational realities has been broadly acknowledged in the field, language in the plural - or language diversity - has only received scant attention. The paper draws on recent advances in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion research and the notion of intersectionality as a conceptual lens to trace how language and migration dynamically interact to create disadvantages and privileges in organizations. These dynamics are not universal, but rather specific to various national, societal or organizational contexts. We focus here on organizational context. The paper also makes a contribution to the emerging interest in language and migration in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion research.

Keywords: Language, migration, intersectionality, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Track 2: Professional identity and minority languages

Peter Daly
EDHEC, France

Commodification of a Minority Language: The case of Irish with the BAC le Gaeilge language initiative

Late modernity or globalization does not seem to align well with efforts to maintain linguistic heterogeneity. Yet, there seems to be a globalization backlash regarding protecting minority languages. This theoretical paper reports on an initiative that mobilizes the Irish language as a resource for business in Dublin by new speakers of Irish. We examine how an Irish language advocacy organization, *Conradh na Gaeilge,* has implemented this initiative (*BAC le Gaeilge*) to include visual commercial engagement (signage, websites, advertising, etc.) coupled with the use of some Irish language words by business owners and retailers across Dublin. The initiative is analysed from three theoretical perspectives: the Bourdieusian concept of linguistic market; Heller's commodification of languages; and Spolky's (2004)

framework for language planning and policy (LPP). This analysis raises questions concerning language ownership, linguistic habitus and the promotion of Irish as a business resource.

Keywords: Irish, commodification, language advocacy, language as resource, new speakers

Veronika Lovrits & Soňa Kalenda Vránová
Uni Luxembourg, Luxembourg, University of Ostrava, Czech Republic

Discursive image of a profession as an aspect of resilience in social work students
The study examines how discourse shapes professional resilience, focusing on social responsibility and sustainability in social work. Resilience is framed as a joint outcome of individual and organisational factors with impacts at personal, institutional, and societal levels. Data from focus groups with MA social work students were analysed sociolinguistically, providing new insights into professional identity and its organisational support. A social constructivist analysis reveals how students navigate their roles and counter discourses marginalising their profession and clients. The his article emphasises the importance of fostering supportive discursive environments and encouraging cross-disciplinary collaboration to help future social workers manage negative discourses, ultimately contributing to resilience within the profession and the organisations they serve.

Keywords: Resilience, discourse, stance, social work, university

Track 3: Linguistic complexity and conflict

Virpi Outila, Carol Reade & Rebecca Piekkari
San Jose State University, USA, Aalto University School of Business, Finland

When language becomes a liability: Experts on Russia amidst geopolitical shock
Language-sensitive research in the field of International Business has explored the effects of language on human resource management. However, the relationship between language and careers has received limited attention and the few studies on this topic tend to regard language as an inherent part of an individual's career capital. Our qualitative study focuses on the experiences of Finnish managers working in cross-border trade with Russia following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Given the historically high importance of Russian trade to Finland and the abrupt surge of anti-Russian sentiments in the country, the geopolitical conflict hit these experts on Russia based in Finland particularly hard. This geopolitical conflict resulted in a career shock as the Russian language skills and deep knowledge of Russian business and culture became a liability for these experts overnight. For many experts, the conflict triggered a shift to a new career identity, indicating individual resilience in the face of highly disruptive circumstances. The findings of this study provide insights into the dynamics of language-driven career paths amidst geopolitical conflicts.

Keywords**:** Language, geopolitical conflict, career shock, career development, career identity

Birgit Gabriel & Hélène Langinier
EM- Strasbourg, France

Contextual reflexivity: Harnessing insider positions in diverse organizational contexts
In this paper, we want to clarify the way practitioners that are currently doing research in their organization can develop the necessary reflexivity to harness the potential of their insider position for

their research. To this end, the two authors compare their research approaches and experiences in the context of their doctoral studies in two different organizations. The fields compared are a French/German public media company located in France at the French-German border and a "Big Four" international audit and advisory company in the multicultural environment of Luxembourg. Based on this comparison, our contribution is to identify the way in which internal organizational power logics shape the corporate priorities that define the dimensions that the "researcher-insider" need to take into account while accounting for their reflexivity throughout their research process. This leads us to call for a "contextual reflexivity" that emphasizes the need to understand the importance of the interrelation between cultural, geographic and organizational context in which the researcher-insider is immersed.

Keywords: Researcher-insider, contextualized reflexivity, multicultural organization, language

Jagat Bahadur Kunwar & Claudine Gaibrois
Åbo Akademi University, Finland, Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland,

Linguistic integration: A critical review, alternative understandings, and implications for organizations
Linguistic integration is a critical element of migration, because it shapes inclusion in social, cultural, and economic spheres. In the workplace, linguistic integration affects employability, career advancement, and organizational productivity. Linguistic integration has conventionally been tied to proficiency in the host country language and assessed through formal tests, but this narrow focus often neglects the practical, situational language needs. The multilingual capacities of migrants are therefore undervalued, with monolingual biases perpetuating systemic inequalities. This paper proposes that a bidirectional approach that emphasizes mutual adaptation between migrants and host societies, while leveraging multilingualism as a resource, would be useful for fostering inclusivity and enhancing integration outcomes in organizations and society in general.

Keywords: Linguistic integration, migration, language proficiency, multilingualism, language policy, workplace integration

Track 4: Language strategies and negotiations in global business

Vincent Montenero, Yadira Martinez-Pantoja & Emil Velinov
Czech Technical University, Prague University of Economics and Business, Skoda Business School, Czech Republic

Language strategies of MNCs in the Czech Republic
The Czech Republic has become an important working destination for expatriate workers and an important location for companies to operate. It is undeniable that language is a challenge in the Czech Republic, not only for expatriates, but also for international companies that seek to operate in the country. Despite of the importance of the language for social and working integration, companies and expatriates lack clear and sustainable language strategies. This paper will elucidate whether the multinational corporations operating in the Czech Republic have a language strategy and the importance of the Czech language from a managerial and an employee perspective, and explore the main reasons why expatriates have or not have learned the language and the individual strategy that expatriates have adopted to support their integration into the Czech society.

Keywords: Language strategy, Czech language, sociocultural adjustment, language in MNCs

Adrian Barragan Diaz, Elena Poliakova & Amelie Callens
IESEG School of Management, France

Negotiating across languages: Ethical implications of the Foreign Language Effect

In an increasingly globalized world, the phenomenon of the Foreign Language Effect (FLE) has garnered significant attention for its impact on decision-making and negotiation processes. This research examines how negotiating in a foreign language influences unethical behavior using experimental data derived from ultimatum bargaining games and face to face negotiations. Our findings reveal that participants negotiating in a foreign language exhibit higher tendencies toward self-interest behaviors, including exaggerated lying and lower offers, compared to their native-language counterparts. Additionally, language influenced the use of conflict-avoidance strategies, which were more prevalent among native language negotiators and fully mediated the relationship between language and offers, resulting in better offers when participants negotiated in their native language. By exploring the intersection of language, ethics, and negotiation strategies, this research contributes novel insights to the fields of behavioral psychology and organizational management. Practical implications for multilingual negotiation scenarios and ethical decision-making are discussed.

Keywords**:** Foreign Language Effect (FLE), ethics, negotiation, negotiation strategies, decision making

Elena Poliakova
IESEG School of Management, France

Language as a strategic choice and source of power in negotiations: Nuances and coping mechanisms

This paper brings together language-sensitive International Business (IB) and Negotiation research to examine language choice in multilingual negotiations. The study expands our understanding of language as a strategic choice and a source of power in negotiations by presenting the experiences of 21 practicing negotiators from France in multilingual contexts. The results show that since negotiation is a time-bound, purposeful, and structured communication process on a specific topic, the choice of a non-native language might not have such persistent effects as in continuous internal communication and can be compensated for by specific practices. In this sample, technology does not replace human negotiators, but is a support tool, which can mitigate a language barrier before and during negotiations. The study also explores how to negotiate from a position of powerlessness and suggests ways to strategically use a foreign language to reach better negotiation outcomes. New variables, relations, and boundary conditions identified by the informants during the interviews are proposed to be tested in quantitative studies.

Keywords**:** Language choice, negotiations, language strategy, native language, foreign language, power, technology

Track 5: Multilingualism and identity in higher education

Marie-Thérèse Claes
WU Vienna, Austria

Balancing language diversity in universities: Local identity, politics, and internationalization

Universities today face a critical challenge: balancing global competitiveness and the preservation of local linguistic and cultural identities. The rise of English as the dominant academic lingua franca has streamlined internationalization efforts but sparked backlash, particularly in Europe, where language and

identity are tightly interconnected. With the resurgence of nationalism, language policies in higher education have become a focal point of political and cultural debates. This paper examines these dynamics through key examples, highlighting the need for inclusive strategies that balance global engagement with local identity, fairness, and practical concerns.

Keywords Language, universities, identity, politics, internationalization, lingua franca

Amy Church-Morel
IREGE - Université Savoie Mont Blanc, France

Language-sensitive management in higher education: An autoethnographic approach to quality and responsibility

While connections between research and teaching may be thought of as a foundation of responsibility and quality in higher education, occasions to explore and investigate these connections can, in practice, be rarer than one might expect or desire. In this paper, I propose ways of examining some of my language-related experiences, endeavors, and choices as a teacher in international management through the lens of language-sensitive scholarship. Using autoethnography and an abductive approach of interpreting phenomena through the lens of scholarship, my hope is to make clearer sense of my own practice to confirm and develop it for the future and also to perhaps propose ways of making mobilising scholarship more deeply and significantly in the process of evaluations and audits of higher education. A work in progress, the idea here is to outline the method and prototype of its application and then to complete the study for the full version of the paper.

Keywords: Language, international management, autoethnography, higher education, quality, responsibility

Michal Wilczewski, Ewelina Wilczewska & Iryna Bilokon
University of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw, Poland

Pathways to cultural adjustment: A configurational analysis of international students' experiences in a non-Anglophone context

International students face challenges to success due to language barriers and adaptation difficulties. While the role of language in cultural adjustment is well-documented, the specific conditions that facilitate this process remain unclear. To address this, we conducted a fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) of 41 structured interviews with international students in a non-Anglophone country. Findings reveal that English proficiency, communication with co-ethnics, and a perceived inclusive climate are necessary for adjustment. We identify three student profiles—cultural *integrators*, *enclavers*, and *separators*—highlighting diverse adjustment pathways. This study advances understanding of the interdependence between individual, sociocultural, and environmental factors in cultural adjustment, offering practical recommendations for international students and academic stakeholders.

Keywords: Adjustment/adaptation; foreign language(s); intercultural communication; international student; fsQCA (fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis)

Iga Lehman
WSB University, Poland

Textual construction of charisma in inaugural addresses of higher education leaders

This paper examines the role of rhetorical tactics in constructing textual charisma in the inaugural addresses of higher education leaders. By analyzing examples from these addresses, it demonstrates how rhetorical devices—such as metaphors, personal accounts and inclusive language—enhance credibility and emotional resonance. These strategies allow leaders to balance authority with relatability, establish trust, and foster engagement and a shared sense of purpose among their audiences.

While existing research on charismatic leadership has primarily focused on verbal communication, this inquiry shifts attention to the underexplored domain of written discourse. Building on Aristotle's *pistis*—the interplay of ethos (ethical appeal) and pathos (emotional appeal)—and framed within the author's (xxxx) model of textual charisma, this paper examines how leaders craft written messages to inspire, motivate, and connect with diverse stakeholders.

Keywords: Textual charisma, rhetorical charismatic tactics (RCTs), leadership communication, ethos and pathos

Track 6: Intercultural competence and diversity in the workplace

Yi Ren, Chao Chuan Chen & Huan (Harry) Wang
Montclair State University, USA, Rutgers University, USA, Siena College, Italy

Cultivating second language communication competence in the workplace for immigrant workers

Immigrants' second language communication competence (L2CC) is crucial for their full participation in organizational life. Drawing upon and integrating theories and research on intergroup relations, cross-cultural second language acquisition, and organization and management, we build a theoretical model of the development of L2CC. We first analyze the decoding and encoding processes of second language communication and conceptualize L2CC in terms of linguistic, sociopolitical, and cultural knowledge and skills. We then propose that individual immigrant employee's career aspiration and acculturation attitudes directly drive their social contact with others in the second language (L2 contact), and organizational structure and practice factors indirectly affect L2 contact by providing contact conditions. Furthermore, organizational factors also moderate the mediating relationships between the individual antecedents and L2 contact on one hand, and those between L2 contact and L2CC on the other hand. We then discuss how L2CC affects outcomes in terms of performance, reputation, and network centrality.

Keywords: Management communication, second language, competence, culture

Colin Heller & Juliana Petri Mendes
FH Kärnten University of Applied Sciences, Austria

Assessing the impact of cross-cultural training on the adjustment process of Latin-American expatriates in Austria: A case Study in an international company in Carinthia

This proposal deals with the effects of a customized intercultural training (CCT) on the adaptation of Latin American expatriates in Austria, especially in the regional context of Carinthia.

The work addresses the challenges posed by cultural differences and the need for effective integration strategies to improve expatriate success, including the language barrier. Through a combination of

literature review on the topic, survey questionnaires conducted with 12 Latin American expatriates and semi-structured interviews conducted with 3 participants, the effectiveness of a tailor-made CCT program is evaluated, program developed and implemented as part of this study to improve expatriates' adjustment in terms of social interactions, workplace dynamics and cultural integration.

The results show that CCT significantly helps expatriates to understand Austrian cultural norms. This reduces psychological stress and improves communication skills, with participants reporting greater confidence and comfort in social and professional situations after the training.

Keywords: Cross-cultural training, corporate language, effective communication, expatriate adjustment, cross-cultural adjustment, Latin American expatriates

František Tůma & Dina Stanković
WU Vienna, Austria

Counseling in intercultural settings: Inclusion and interactivity in workshops for prospective entrepreneurs

This paper explores participation management during online counseling workshops organized by a city-run organization in Austria. The participants are prospective entrepreneurs who are linguistically and culturally diverse and with varying familiarity with Austrian regulatory frameworks for businesses. To help the facilitators make the workshops more interactive and inclusive, we collected and analyzed video recordings of the workshops focusing on how the facilitators manage participation and how the participants respond. Our analysis draws on a collection of 61 facilitator-initiated sequences and follows the principles of multimodal conversation analysis. This short paper presents two data extracts highlighting the importance of wait time and the expected response modality, adding to the research on career counseling, multicultural counseling, and online counseling. Our recommendations for practice are informed by the analysis and include considering the wait time and response modality as well as familiarizing the participants with the affordances of the online environment at the beginning.

Keywords: Career counseling, technology-mediated interaction, entrepreneurship, conversation analysis

Bernadette Hofer-Bonfim
WU Vienna, Austria

Analyzing cross-country diversity reporting through the lens of a language-sensitive mixed-methods framework

This paper presents a language-sensitive mixed-methods framework for analyzing diversity reporting across countries, integrating textual and visual analyses to address gaps in comparative diversity research. Grounded in cross-linguistic corpus-assisted discourse studies (CL-CADS) and visual content analysis, the framework was developed to examine patterns of diversity discourse in sustainability reports from Brazil, Italy, and the United States. Findings reveal both universal trends, such as the centrality of gender in diversity reporting, and context-specific variations, including differences in the centrality of specific diversity categories such as race, age, and disability. This work contributes to interdisciplinary diversity research by offering a replicable and language-sensitive methodology for uncovering cultural and institutional influences on globally evolving diversity, equity, and inclusion discourses.

Keywords: Diversity reporting, cross-linguistic analysis, mixed-methods research, cross-cultural management

Track 7: Doctoral session

Oumnia Abidi
Université Toulouse Capitole, France

Challenging bias, claiming identity: How non-native speakers reframe their accents in the workplace
This study explores how non-native speakers in France navigate accent-related prejudice and negotiate their professional identities through narrative identity work. Using a qualitative approach, it examines the persistent tensions that accents create between self-perception and external judgements, particularly in the French sociolinguistic context which prioritises linguistic correctness. Through semi-structured interviews with 22 professionals from diverse backgrounds and professional environments, the study reveals how accents serve as both stigmatised markers and tools for resilience, connection and agency. The results highlight the participants' strategies for reframing their accents, managing stereotype threat and asserting their professional legitimacy. By focusing on the participants' narratives, this research challenges the dominant views based on the deficit of non-native accents that have dominated the literature on the subject and contributes to theoretical expansion by integrating identity work, as advocated by scholars in the field.

Keywords: Non-native accents, professional identity, speaker perspective, qualitative research

Maria Annukka Jakkula
Tampere University, Finland

Competency mapping of paraprofessional translators in situated contexts
The global trends of work are characterized by mobility and international workforce whereby organizations are faced with translating to employees pathways to experienced belongingness, social identity and exchange, support structures, while reducing uncertainty and building trust (Lazarova et al. 2023, pp. 10–11). Sparked by the approach "Translation Constitutes Organizations (TCO)" (Piekkari et al. 2021, pp. 588–589), this study aims for depth, focusing on paraprofessional translators' competencies in the situated contexts of a sports equipment company called ActiveLife (pseudonym). There are no hired interlingual translators in the company, and paraprofessional translation is taken on by employees as the situation requires (Jakkula 2024). Through an interpretive analysis of ethnographic data, the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities – i.e. the competencies (Sanghi 2019) of employees who also translate and interpret as a regular part of their work – unfold, providing the basis for future research to widen the scope to other companies and organizations and paving the way for building a competence model for this distinct yet overlooked (e.g. Ciuk et al., 2019, Penttilä et al., 2021) group.

Keywords**:** Competency mapping, paraprofessional translation, organizational effectiveness, workplace studies, ethnography

Andres Guillermo Covilla Martinez
Høyskolen Kristiania, Norway

The language of leadership: A deep-learning approach to business leaders' influence on social media

This paper presents a new approach to understanding business leaders' social influence on social media. Drawing on sensemaking and signaling theory, this approach is operationalized using a novel deep-learning methodology that compares the style of business leaders' tweets to a benchmark corpus. This comparison generates a quantifiable measure of social influence, which is termed the "leadership signal". A proof-of-concept study using a corpus of tweets from Fortune 500 CEOs demonstrates the potential of this methodology to analyze and interpret business leaders' social media communication. This approach offers new avenues for leadership development and theory building in digital media spaces.

Keywords: Business leaders, sense making, social media, deep learning, communication

Evelina Lucas & Guro R. Sanden
Norwegian School of Economics, Norway, BI Norwegian Business School, Norway

Linguistic ethnography in business studies: Concepts and applications

This conceptual paper examines and discusses the application of linguistic ethnography (LE) into business studies in order to obtain deeper insights into communication and organisation dynamics. LE approaches combine methodologies from linguistics and ethnography to study how language use in natural settings reflects and shapes its environment. We argue that these approaches are useful for business studies for three main reasons: firstly, as they provide rich, authentic data for understanding complex business issues; secondly, as researcher involvement ensures access to a richer, more multifaceted dataset; and finally, as LE analyses can offer valuable practical implications for organisations. Despite these significant benefits of LE, this approach remains largely untapped in business research. We discuss ways to remedy this situation while stressing the necessity for thorough, systematic procedures in data analysis, which include, for instance, a significant focus on researcher reflexivity.

Keywords: Linguistic ethnography, researcher reflexivity, data collection, interdisciplinary, conceptual paper

Track 8: Doctoral session

Sijie Ren & Margaret Schomaker
Faculty of Business Administration, Université Laval, Canada

The impact of language focused artificial intelligence (AI) tools on linguistic self-efficacy in immigrant socio-professional integration

This research proposal[1] explores the impact of language-focused AI tools on the socio-professional integration of immigrants, focusing on their influence on linguistic self-efficacy and workplace communication. Language proficiency is crucial for integration, yet traditional methods often fail to address the flexibility and contextual needs of professional environments. AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Duolingo, and DeepL, offer personalized, adaptive learning experiences that may empower immigrants to overcome linguistic barriers. Drawing on Bandura's theory of human agency, we examine the potential of these tools to enhance confidence, autonomy, and professional capabilities, while

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[1] This proposal has been prepared for submission to a grant agency. The authors composed the original text in French, translated it into English using DeepL, and polished it into its present form.

acknowledging the limitations of these tools, such as the danger of over-reliance and the lack of cultural nuance. We develop propositions for testing the transformative potential of AI tools in reshaping language learning and integration, driving innovation in workplace practices, and promoting digital equity for diverse communities.

Keywords: Language-focused AI tools, linguistic self-efficacy, Immigrant socio-professional integration, workplace integration, immigrant language barriers

Dmitrii Rodionov
EM Lyon, France

Role of language in the organizational socialization of migrant knowledge workers

Drawing from in-depth semi-structured interviews, this study examines the experience of individual management consultants who unexpectedly relocated abroad due to a geopolitical crisis in Eastern Europe and their socialization process in new locations. Success factors include an individual's language skills and social capital, and the type of relocation arrangement performed by the employer. Theoretical contribution lies in understanding the role of language in organizational socialization. Practical implications can help HR managers arrange relocations and refine the onboarding process. Individual consultants should invest in their language and social capital.

Keywords**:** Skilled migrants, language, socialization, qualitative research

Sergi Casals & Juan Carlos Díaz-Vásquez
Universidad EAFIT, Columbia

Corporate language in changing business contexts: From standardization to terminological harmonization in MNCs

Multinational corporations (MNCs) face the dual challenge of balancing global integration with local responsiveness and ensuring effective internal communication across multiple contexts that evolve in response to global, local, and organizational dynamics. In these changing environments, corporate language—particularly company-specific terminology, i.e., the vocabulary that represents the MNC's specialized knowledge—must continuously adapt both externally to diverse markets and stakeholders and internally to maintain operational effectiveness. MNCs typically address this challenge through language standardization policies, specifically the adoption of a common corporate language, which often aims at language homogenization. Drawing on critical realist principles, this study demonstrates, through an intensive case study of a financial services provider operating across Spanish-speaking countries, that terminological harmonization—achieved through systematic documentation and organization of terminological variation across contexts—offers a feasible and effective alternative to standardization as homogenization.

Keywords**:** Corporate language, language standardization, terminological harmonization, organizational adaptation, multinational corporations

Johanna Niskavaara
Aalto University School of Business, Finland

Language practices building and expressing the international identity of a small firm

This study provides a novel way of understanding language choice in internationalizing small firms. Based on a qualitative single case study and an interpretive approach, the study illustrates how a small internationalizing firm builds and expresses its organizational identity, i.e. who they are as an

organization, through their language practices. The choice of which language to use is meant to influence stakeholder perceptions and convince them that the company is international. By recruiting and placing foreign-born employees at the customer interface, the case company became multilingual which underlined its international identity. However, they later shifted to using English and justified the decision again with their international identity. By showcasing the symbolic value of language choice, this study contributes to the language-sensitive literature in International Business, which, to date, has not treated the choice of language as central to building and expressing organizational identity in the pursuit of legitimacy as an international firm.

Keywords: Organizational identity, language, internationalization, SMEs, foreign-born employees, legitimacy

Track 9: Language and communication dynamics in organization contexts

Adesh Chetram & Tracey Toefy
Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, South Africa

Harnessing the power within: The influence of internal communications and organisational citizenship on employee advocacy

This paper unpacks the relationships between Internal Communications, Employee Brand Advocacy and Organisational Citizen Behaviour. Despite consensus in Organisational Brand and Communication literature that effective communications positively impact employee willingness to endorse and defend their employer's brand, the study tests this in a post pandemic setting in which remote and hybrid work change the nature of internal communication. Survey data from 411 participants confirmed that IC and OCB both significantly influence EBA. Interestingly, OCB was found to negatively moderate the IC-EBA relationship, which raises the argument that employees with such behaviour may naturally advocate for the brand, IC may be ineffective, or stimuli outside of IC is required.

Keywords: Internal communications, employee brand advocacy, organisational citizen behaviour, internal communication channels.

Kristina Humonen, Spencer Hazel & Adam Brandt
Newcastle University, UK

Capturing the complexity of public writing in multilingual online strategy meetings: A conversation analysis approach

Digital conferencing tools now allow colleagues to collaborate remotely, including real-time document editing. However, writing in a shared document means doing so "publicly" under the gaze of others. Drawing on data from senior-level online strategy meetings at an international startup, this study examines how second-language (L2) users manage this potentially face-threatening activity. Building on workplace research that highlights issues like language performance anxiety and perceived status loss when required to work in an L2, the findings show how meeting participants monitor the writing process and mitigate potential threats to professional identity when note-takers encounter writing difficulties. Using Conversation Analysis (CA), we analyse spoken, written and bodily actions to provide a detailed account of L2 writing processes and interactions. While this study contributes to GEM&L's Stream 3, its methodological focus makes it particularly relevant to Stream 5. CA remains underutilised in business studies, and we believe that CA offers a valuable methodological approach, especially for language-sensitive IB and Management research.

Nadine Thielemann & Regina Göke
WU, Vienna, Austria

Office folklore revisited: From resistance to resourcefulness

Office folklore provides a unique lens through which to study workplace culture and its alignment with the *zeitgeist*. Historically, studies on office folklore from the 1970s and 1980s highlighted recurring themes such as gender struggles and dissatisfaction with workplace organization, often articulated through humor. This study revisits office folklore in contemporary German-speaking workplaces to explore how the themes and messages conveyed by office folklore have shifted. Using textual hermeneutics and a systematic open and axial coding approach, we analyzed a dataset collected via snowballing at different workplaces in Austria and Germany. Three core thematic clusters emerged, reflecting ambivalent, negative, and positive ways today's employees deal with the challenges posed at modern workplaces. Humor as a coping strategy plays a dual role: it serves as a tool for stress relief and is used to resist subtly against workplace constraints. Negative coping strategies suggest detachment, while positive strategies are used to resource activation to sustain performance. We discuss our findings through frameworks such as job(dis)engagement and organizational misbehavior, emphasizing their implications for understanding modern workplace dynamics and culture. Finally, these messages provide valuable diagnostic insights for organizational listening and adapting to the evolving needs of the workforce.