



19th GEM&L Annual Conference on Management & Language

The Power of Language(s): Communication Dynamics in Contemporary Organizing

Dates: 27–29 May 2026

Hosting Institution: BI Norwegian Business School

Address: Nydalsveien 37, 0484 Oslo, Norway

Deadline for all submissions: January 31, 11:59 PM CET

Conference website: <https://gempl.eu/gempl-2026-bi-oslo/>

Call for Papers

Introduction

In an era marked by technological acceleration and heightened global uncertainty, understanding the ways we communicate, collaborate, and construct meaning across languages is more important than ever. Whether in hybrid teams, AI-driven workflows, or stakeholder negotiations across cultures, **language(s)** – spoken, written, coded, or silent – are at the center of how international organizations and employees function, adapt, and lead, making language a powerful tool in international business and management.

The **GEM&L 2026 Conference** invites submissions that explore **the power of language(s)** in contemporary organizing. Language serves as a powerful instrument for personal influence, power dynamics, and coordinated action (Harris, 2018). Analyzing the interplay between language, power, and intercultural communication is crucial to understanding how power is exercised and negotiated within organizations, particularly in the digital age (Al-Badawi et al., 2025).

As organizations undergo rapid digitization, technology increasingly permeates all aspects of enterprise operations. This transformation aligns with the rising importance of teamwork and open innovation as key drivers of organizational performance (Sun, 2024). Successfully navigating this evolving landscape demands a deeper understanding of effective communication strategies, especially within virtual teams where factors such as time-zone differences and communication-based faultlines can impede collaboration and coordination (Taras et al., 2024; Wong et al., 2024). Leveraging digital technologies effectively hinges on strong team communication (Sun, 2024).

Therefore, language and communication are fundamental to the dynamics of contemporary organizing. They shape power relations, contribute to shaping organizational structures as well as determine the effectiveness of both virtual and physical teams. By understanding these dynamics, organizations can better navigate modern complexities and leverage communication for strategic advantage. Language is not merely a conduit for information; it is a powerful force shaping organizational realities and power dynamics.

We welcome research that reveals how language influences, reflects, and reshapes global business, workplaces and collaboration and cross-linguistic collaboration across diverse settings. Key guiding questions include: How do multilingual individuals, teams, and organizations navigate increasingly complex environments? How are new technologies like AI changing the nature of cross-linguistic communication and identity in organizations? What does linguistic power mean in a data-driven world?

We are especially interested in problem-driven, theoretically grounded research that also provides empirical contributions and speaks to a range of disciplines – international business, communication studies, organization theory, linguistics, human resource management, education, and beyond. Research grounded in real-world challenges – whether practical, ethical, social, or strategic – is strongly encouraged.

To inspire your contributions, we have outlined a few key areas of inquiry below that may help guide your thinking. Please note that these are not formal tracks, and are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive.

- **Language as power:** How is language used to include or exclude, lead or dominate, in organizational life? How do linguistic choices shape legitimacy, identity, participation and access in transnational environments (Back & Piekkari, 2024; Barner-Rasmussen, Gaibrois & Wilmot, 2024; Ciuk et al., 2023; Gaibrois et al., 2023; Johansson & Śliwa, 2023; Luring et al., 2025)?
- **Accents, intelligibility, and native-speakerism:** How do accents, pronunciation, and perceptions of fluency affect leadership, credibility, and equity (Hideg et al., 2024; Kalra et al., 2025; Szymanski & Brighi, 2025)? In what way can different language fluency levels create asymmetries and hierarchies in the workplace (Kim & Angouri, 2023)? Which other language-related factors could play a role in such dynamics?
- **Language and AI:** Digitalization and artificial intelligence are transforming communication and coordination, particularly in multilingual and virtual work environments (Froese et al., 2025). AI-powered tools (e.g., real-time translation, voice recognition, multilingual writing assistants) are reshaping how people interact across languages and cultures. These technologies challenge traditional language hierarchies, reshape expectations around fluency, and may introduce new power asymmetries rooted in algorithmic bias and lacking cultural data training (Tenzer et al., 2024). How do these developments influence inclusion, credibility, and authority in global teams and organizations? How can we understand the evolving role of language in digitally mediated work?
- **Multilingual competence at work:** How do multilingual professionals leverage their skills and identities at work? What are the organizational practices that enhance or hinder language-based value creation (Church-Morel & Bartel-Radic, 2016; Kalra & Danis, 2024)? How do language ideologies and biases operate in practice? What are the dynamics of language standardization, involving not only English but other meta-languages? (Barner-Rasmussen et al., 2024).

- **Language across disciplines:** Language can serve as a window into a range of other phenomena (Piekkari, 2024). How can language-sensitive IB research contribute to adjacent fields such as management education, critical management studies, or intercultural communication? What can we learn from other disciplines and what can other disciplines learn from our work?
- **The practitioner lens:** How can organizations better integrate language diversity into strategy, HR, leadership, and learning? How do they handle tensions between global standardization and local communication needs and approach the notion of responsibility with respect to various stakeholders? (Michalski & Śliwa, 2021; Taylor, 2021).
- **Methodological advancements:** We invite submissions that explore novel methodological approaches in language-sensitive IB research, particularly with regard to the language-power dimension. Contributions may address various issues, such as how researchers can be respectful to local languages in research published in English (Tietze, 2022). We welcome diverse methodological approaches that highlight the power of language from both the researcher's and the informant's perspectives.

Potential Publication

We are pleased to confirm that **all full papers accepted for presentation at GEM&L 2026** will be eligible for a **fast-track review process** with the **European Journal of International Management (EJIM)**. This fast-track process does **not guarantee publication**, but it does ensure that submissions aligned with the journal's scope will **bypass initial desk rejection** and proceed directly to peer review, potentially expediting the review timeline.

Further details and submission instructions will be shared during and after the conference.

Awards

GEM&L will present a series of awards to recognize outstanding contributions to the conference:

- **Best Paper Award**

Sponsored by the **European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD)**, this award recognizes the most outstanding full paper presented at the conference, based on criteria including originality, theoretical and methodological rigor, and contribution to the field.

- **Best Doctoral Paper Award**

Sponsored by **#NORA - The Nordic Alliance for Communication & Management** at BI Norwegian Business School, this award honors the best full paper presented by a doctoral student at the conference. Selection criteria include originality, relevance, theoretical and methodological rigor, and the overall contribution to advancing either research or practice. The recipient of the Best Doctoral Paper Award will receive a prize of EUR 500.

- **Best Reviewer Award**

This award acknowledges the essential work of our peer reviewers and will be presented to the reviewer who provides the most constructive, insightful, and collegial feedback.

- **New Insight Award.**

This award will recognize a particularly thought-provoking or innovative short paper/early-stage submission that sparks new ideas or debates. Both submissions from doctoral students and regular conference participants are eligible for the New Insight Award.

All awards will be announced during the conference.

Submission Process

All submissions to GEM&L 2026 must be uploaded via the official **GEM&L website**: <https://geml.eu/geml-2026-bi-oslo/>. Submissions sent via email or other platforms will not be accepted.

All submissions must be original and should not have been previously accepted for publication elsewhere. All papers will undergo a **double-blind peer review process**. Reviewers will be assigned based on subject-matter expertise, and as part of GEM&L's collaborative review model, authors may be asked to review up to two other submissions.

To encourage a wide range of contributions and engagement, we offer **two submission formats**:

- **Full papers** (up to 10,000 words, including references and appendices):

These submissions should present mature, theoretically grounded research with clear methodology and contributions. Accepted papers will be presented in standard conference sessions and reviewed accordingly. These will go through the traditional double-blind review process and be presented in standard 15-minute slots followed by Q&A. Full papers will be eligible for the conference's Best Paper Award and the Best Doctoral Paper Award.

- **Short papers** (2,000–4,000 words, including references and appendices):

This format is intended for exploratory, early-stage research or conceptual ideas that would benefit from feedback and discussion. Accepted short papers will be featured in interactive sessions set up to facilitate dialogue and provide constructive feedback to the authors. These submissions will also be peer-reviewed, with an emphasis on developmental potential. Short papers will be eligible for the conference's New Insight Award.

Formatting Guidelines

- Submissions must be in **Word (.doc or .docx)** format.
- **Author name(s), institutional affiliation(s), and email address(es)** should appear on the **first page only**. No identifying information should appear in the rest of the document to preserve the integrity of the **double-blind review** process.
- Use **Times New Roman**, size 12, with **2.5 cm margins** on all sides.
- Include an **abstract** (150-200 words) and **4–6 keywords**.
- Use **APA Style, 7th edition** for references. See the reference section for examples.

Detailed submission instructions and the upload portal will be available on <https://geml.eu>.

Timeline

- **Call for Papers Released:** October 2025
- **Submission Open:** January 1, 2026
- **Submission Deadline:** January 31, 2026
- **Notification of Acceptance:** March 15, 2026
- **Early bird registration deadline:** April 15, 2026
- **Conference Dates:** 27-29 May 2026, Oslo, Norway, with pre-conference activities on May 26

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