

Dear GEM&L colleagues and friends!

I am happy to share with you my last newsletter as GEM&L president.

At the GEM&L Annual Conference at WU Vienna, a new administrative board was elected. Congratulations to Guro Sanden on her election as head of GEM&L. I wish her all the best and have 100% confidence in her to lead GEM&L in the direction we have given for the past 13 years: an academic association dedicated to the study of language and languages in international business and IB research. My congratulations to the members of the new administrative board, and in particular to the newcomers Hilla Back and Carlo Brighi. I am very grateful to the new board for appointing me as honorary president of GEM&L.

I would like to pay tribute to the colleagues who are leaving the Board but who remain active and committed to GEM&L, Mary Vigier, who was with me from the start of the GEM&L adventure in 2003 when the 'Management Schools' group was created, and in 2007 when our first research conference was held; Komal Kalra, who played an essential role on the Board and who continues to sit on the Scientific Committee and Madeleine Bausch, who has skilfully led the webinars over the last three years. Additionally, I would also like to express my gratitude to other pioneers of the association, members of the four administrative boards and the scientific committee since 2013; Betty B. Beeler, Amy Church-Morel, Linda Cohen, Dardo de Vecchi, Claudine Gaibrois, Jane Kassis-Henderson, Bohdan Pawlyszyn, Geneviève Tréguer-Felten, Natalie Wilmot; and to the members of the GEM&L advisory Boards, Jo Angouri, Wilhelm Barner-Rasmussen, Mary-Yoko Brannen, Agnieszka Chidlow, Janne Tienari, Marjana Johansson, Terry Mughan, Rebecca Piekkari, Sierk Horn, Martyna Śliwa and Susanne Tietze; to Jean-François Chanlat, loyal supporter of GEM&L right from the outset and to Nigel Holden, who generously financed an award for the best doctoral paper for 5 years out of his own funds, in recognition of the work carried out by GEM&L, as well as to the organisers of the GEM&L International Conferences, Keith Surridge (ESSEC), Dardo de Vecchi (KEDGE), Rebecca Piekkari (Aalto), Jane Kassis-Henderson (ESCP Paris), Dorte Lønsmann (CBS), Natalie Wilmot (Sheffield), Hélène Langinier (EM Strasbourg), Christoph Barmeyer (Passau), Ludovica Maggi (ISIT Paris), Michał Wilczewski (Warsaw), Elisabeth Peters & Johannes Schnitzer (WU Vienna).

GEM&L in its current international format was founded in 2012 after 5 years of conferences with only a national scope on the role of languages in the training of future managers. In 2012 at ESSEC Paris, the GEM&L conference was still bilingual in French and English. It wasn't until 2015 at Aalto University School of Business, organised by Professor Rebecca Piekkari, that the GEM&L international conference was held in English only. Since then, we have had an annual conference every year except 2020 (the COVID year) in a European capital city or country.

Over all these years, which have been rich in intellectual production, the importance of language and languages in IB has continued to assert itself as a major theme in academic research. Language has become central to the international development of companies, which has been boosted by globalisation.

GEM&L has progressed alongside these developments, as well as changes in attitudes that influence the choices made by researchers. English, previously seen as the hegemonic language of business and as a barrier to business performance, is now increasingly seen as an opportunity based on the richness of linguistic diversity. Voices are being raised in favour of the promotion of a "Multilingua Franca" or of a translingual use of BELF in corporate communication. Studies on language policies advocate parallellingualism as a guided principle for managing multilingualism. Language-sensitive IB scholars call for bridging disciplinary boundaries and for cross-fertilization between language and global leadership.

Calls for innovative methodological approaches are also being addressed today, challenging traditional qualitative research methodologies. Other scholars call for reconsidering, refashioning and reconceptualising research methodologies in international Business. Multi-paradigmatic approaches are recently gaining increasing interest as well as interpretive phenomenological analysis and critical discourse analysis in conducting empirical research. Not only is methodological innovation on the agenda of future research but also new perspectives in theorizing, aiming at “Reconciling theory and context”, where context is seen as essential and not a hindrance to theorizing.

Additionally, collaboration between disciplines has profoundly transformed the research landscape, particularly as we are concerned with the collaboration between IB researchers and sociolinguists, and critical linguists. As a result, there has been a profound change in the way we look at translation and its role in organisations.

Looking at the social and technological developments in today’s world that will shape the future of research, there is the issue of international mobility, with the influx of high and low skilled migrants that many GEM&L colleagues are exploring, and the issue of generative AI that we tackled last year in Warsaw. The social dimension of management, the concepts of corporate social responsibility and of responsible management research in line with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals are important topics on the rise. The agenda for the future is therefore very rich and the language-sensitive IB research stream is thriving thanks to you, and thanks to our senior scholars who encourage their doctoral students to attend GEM&L conferences. We are very grateful to everyone. And we are convinced that GEM&L still has a significant future ahead.

To conclude these years rich in scientific exchanges and human encounters of the highest quality, I would like to say a warm thank you to all authors and outstanding anonymous reviewers without whom GEM&L would not have become what it is today, a key player in the language-sensitive IB research stream.

I have been so happy collaborating and sharing this wonderful journey with you. I am profoundly grateful to all of you.