

Short introduction to the topic

the GEM&L and GSOM SPbU Online Joint Symposium “How to bridge research and teaching in the field of “Language-sensitive International Business”

7th International research “Emerging Markets Conference -2020”

Over the last three decades, there has been a growing interest in language-sensitive studies. For language-sensitive IB scholars, the traditional view of language as merely representing reality has changed to become one of language as constructing reality.

Alongside these developments, there has been a move away from the focus on ‘national’ languages associated with their respective national cultures to a concern with the performative role of language as social process. This is reflected in a decoupling of language from culture in IB research.

Research has investigated how language-related phenomena play out on three levels: that of the individual, that of the team and that of the organisation. On the individual level, studies have been conducted on foreign language anxiety, on tension due to fluency asymmetry and on the stigmatisation of non-native speakers or members of minorities. On the group or team level, communication behaviour that facilitates or impedes work processes has been studied in research on trust building or boundary spanning; phenomena of exclusion, resistance and privilege and other consequences of language diversity in the workplace are the topics of recent studies. On the organisational level, language and knowledge transfer (between head office and subsidiaries), circuits of power and language clusters are among the key concepts on the agenda of language-sensitive scholars.

In the field of translation studies, there is a renewed interest in the role of translators as key agents in the cross-language knowledge transfer process and there is a new conceptualisation of the translation process as a creative activity, which shapes a new reality.

Finally, the implications of language-sensitive research for management education have been explored, leading to a call for greater attention to language issues in the curricula of business schools. In the light of the language-sensitive research, the symposium aims to address the following topics:

1. “Training business school and university students for global workplaces. Educational experiences and expectations from the corporate world”.
2. “Language-sensitive research and teaching: A dialogue across multiple boundaries”

Questions to be discussed (but not limited to):

- What language educators in business schools can learn from global businesses?
- What are the language issues faced by organisations in their international development?
- What are language-related needs of modern business?
- Why promote language diversity in business education?

- To what extent is language-sensitive research impacting management teaching and learning?
- How can we translate language-sensitive research outcomes into teaching agenda?
- What language-sensitive research outcomes need to be incorporated in the language curricula for business schools?