

Multilingual research, monolingual publications: management scholarship in English only?

Abstract

This paper identifies several stages of international management scholarship as multilingual in character as the conception and execution of research projects, whether empirical or theoretical, frequently require the use of several languages. These multilingual practices are contrasted with the monolingual nature of management research at the stage of disseminating newly generated knowledge: A stage that is dominated by the exclusive and taken for granted use of the English language. The paper challenges the ontological and epistemological assumption such monolingual practice is based upon and opens the ‘black box’ of international management research by asking questions about its language-based processes, which remain muted and ignored. In concluding, a turn to translation is proposed in order to harness the creativity inherent in multilingual research, while preserving the role of English as a shared language of knowledge.

KEYWORDS: *management research; international management research; language diversity; publication; management journals; English; hegemony; knowledge production.*

1 Introduction

In the inaugural edition of this journal in 2007 Cheng observed some ‘serious problems’ in international management research, which were created by wishing to advance theory rather than to understand the phenomenon under question (2007, pp. 7- 8). In 2016 Delios echoes those thoughts and criticises the field’s lack of engagement with context and its failure to provide rich accounts of the realities of doing international business. The intent of this paper is broadly aligned with these views as it draws attention to the diversity of linguistic contexts within which international encounters occur and offers some reflection about the role of translation in how multilingual experiences captured in the research process are written up in English. Specifically, the focus of this paper is on research investigations of languages and English in the situated contexts they are used and how such research investigations are then written up in English as the dominant global language of management knowledge. The

consequences of this approach, so it is argued, has not yet been fully acknowledged or incorporated in the discipline's intellectual projects.

The dominance of the English language is likened to a hegemonic influence on knowledge which narrows the trajectories and contours of bodies of international management knowledge in particular ways. Some contemporary contributions have provided evidence that the role of English in knowledge production is not a neutral one, but tied into processes of individual and collective identity regulation (Horn, 2015; Tietze and Dick, 2013) and is linked to invisibly disciplining academic identities and knowledge production in line with the normative value system and ideologies of a 'US-dominated era of globalization and global English' (Boussebaa and Brown, 2016, p.5).

As international management scholarship is an institution through which knowledge is created, organised and disseminated across organisational, national and cultural boundaries and in the light of emergent research evidence such as cited above, reflections on the process of knowledge production therefore also need to include considerations of crossing linguistic boundaries. The institutional forms of international management materialise as the existence of professional bodies and academies, which guard and control what kind of knowledge is produced and considered legitimate and also as practices which include a whole range of activities and protocols, ranging from the development of ethical standards for the conduct of research to the (individual) gaining of occupational entry through completion of doctoral studies, to the symbolic and ceremonial partaking in events such as sitting on selection boards, attending and hosting conferences, partaking in editorial or scientific committees and so on. The central practice of international management scholarship is the publication of research accounts, in particular in peer-reviewed management journals, without which neither entry nor advancement or standing in the academic management community can be achieved. Partaking in many of the above named institutional processes requires a good spoken command of the English language; participation in written dissemination requires a (near) native speaker command of English as these journals are almost inevitably produced in the English language and require impeccable English language manuscripts.

The contention of this paper is that the institutionalised and dominant publication practices of the management academy are monolingual in character: In other words, management academics have to publish their thoughts and research in the English language – and in the English language 'only', if they wish to achieve a successful career in their chosen

occupation and acquire standing and respect amongst their academic peers. While the existence of a shared language of knowledge is both necessary and desirable in order to distribute findings, insights and perspectives, its unquestioned and unreflective use has rendered it a hegemonic force which shapes the production and dissemination of management knowledge into particular directions.

In this paper I therefore set out to investigate some of the consequences of the ‘English only’ hegemony which dominates the institutional publication practices of the management academy. I also offer ‘translation’ as a concept and a means to preserve the perspectives generated within the coded knowledge systems of ‘other languages’ while using English as a shared language of knowledge in order to enable and lubricate the flow of knowledge across linguistically diverse members of the management community. As part of the aforementioned addressing of problems within international management scholarship, it is noteworthy that ‘translation’ as a metaphorical concept has been incorporated in international management scholarship, in particular through the inspirations provided by Scandinavian institutionalism (Czarniawska and Sevón, 2005). As the focus of this paper is mainly on written aspects of knowledge dissemination, it concentrates on the more linguistic aspects of translation, i.e. on the change process that can only be understood at the literal level of translating words and texts.

The metaphor of the ‘black box’ of international management research (Xuan, 2008; Chidlow et al., 2014) describes the hidden and invisible language and translation based processes, which are an intrinsic part of international management research. This paper uses this metaphor to provide both structure and themes to discuss the epistemological and hegemonic assumptions entailed in international management research and these can be made visible (prising open the black box) through some paradigmatic change in the epistemological-ontological orientation of the field. This, so it is argued, can be enabled and enacted through ‘institutionalising translation’. First, however, the language-based processes that are intrinsic part of international management research need to be rendered visible in the next section.

2 Multilingual research and the black box of management publications

Contemporary international management scholarship is multilingual as its many activities are conducted across several languages: For example the design of an empirical research project

may be conducted by a French scholar who negotiates access to the French headquarters of an MNC in French; the empirical work itself may well include the collection of data in several different languages, including French and probably English; the analysis of data may include the construction of categories derived from the available literature, which again may have been read in English or French or indeed another language and possible feedback of findings, which include representatives of the case company and the local *chambre de commerce* are conducted in French; whereas feedback of findings to the MNC headquarter was presented in English and required the principal investigator to translate data and interpretations. This example is taken from an ongoing research project and as an example of international management research it is not unusual as it includes the use of two and sometimes three languages through which research is articulated, executed and disseminated. All of this language activity disappears at the stage of academic knowledge dissemination, when knowledge becomes part of the formalised and written body of management knowledge and translation becomes invisible: In revisiting her research project of Chinese women entrepreneurs, Xian (2008) describes this deletion of translation as a ‘black box’, as the experiences as captured in data could not be expressed in the English language. Xian (2008, p, 232) describes this as follows:

‘The dilemmas and problems [of translation – the author] remain in some sort of “black box” (...). The presupposition that all cultural elements can be carried across unchanged in the translation process and that the translator can remain “invisible” are in need of rethinking if international and across-cultural research projects are really seeking to extend existing knowledge to a global context (...)’.

The dilemmas and problems of translation can be understood as the decisions that a translator takes as these change and transform data and ideas (Kinnunen and Koskinen, 2010). It is for this reason that the agency of individual and collective translation needs to be incorporated into the cognizant actions of management scholarship and this entails the abandonment of its current (mainstream) worldview of translation as a technical task only.

The relevance of these two examples becomes more clear, when considered within an understanding of different languages expressive of different perspectives and worldviews which cannot be accessed outside the respective language system. This approach is discussed in the next section.

2.1 *A linguistically relative world*

The black box where international management research unfolds contains those ideas and thoughts, data, meanings and interpretations that have been generated in a language other than English and it also contains decisions about what and how to translate as taken by the translator; with the translator being possibly the author or authors themselves, a paid professional translator, a bilingual respondent or any other party.

Taking a philosophical stance informed by the traditions of linguistic anthropology and linguistic relativity (Duranti, 2005), the existence of the ‘black box’ is not a negligible oversight, but what is contained within it changes, sometimes radically, the character of the presented findings and the body of knowledge that is developed or contributed to. In other words, the consequences are epistemological and ontological in character as they impact on how knowledge is presented and to which effect. It then also matters that the knowledge expressed in research accounts is almost exclusively English-language knowledge.

While all written knowledge is always coded in a language system, whose syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships between systems of signs shape the expression of content and meaning, it is also important that different languages code knowledge in different ways – which is the fundamental insights offered by linguistic anthropology:

(...) participants first and researchers later [with] a point of view, a way of thinking about the world and the nature of human existence. (...) But language is more than a reflective tool whereby we try to make sense of our thoughts and actions. Through language use we also enter an interactional space that has been partly already shaped for us, a world in which some distinctions seem to matter more than others, a world where every choice we make is partly contingent on what happened before and contributes to definitions of what will happen next’ (Duranti, 2005, p. 5).

Any reality that is captured, interpreted and presented through one particular language system is therefore different from those realities captured through another system. In this regard no two languages reflect, present and confirm the same reality. A recent study by the tri-lingual (German, Chinese, English) economist Keith Chen (2013) is a case in point as its premise is located within linguistic relativity that ‘Languages differ widely in the ways they encode time’. From thereon he shows ‘[T]hat speakers of languages that grammatically associate the future and the present, foster future-oriented behaviour. They save more, retire with more wealth, smoke less, practice safer sex and are less obese’.

Linguistic anthropology concerns itself not only with language use as situated practice, but also with the relationship between language and worldview as captured in the principles of linguistic relativity: '[T]hat users of markedly different grammars are pointed by those grammars to markedly different observations and different evaluations of extremely similar acts of observation, and hence are not equivalent of observers but must arrive at somewhat different views of the world' (Whorf, 1956, p. 221).

In terms of contemporary academic relevance, these different worldviews-cum-languages are associated in particular with different systems of categorising the world of phenomena and how they are experienced. Thus Whorfian linguistics state that the linguistic system in our mind provides an organising systems for the kaleidoscopic flux of impression and experience. Each language, according to linguistic relativity, provides different categories and types to dissect the flow of experience into conceptual categories. Duranti (2005: 63) points to the gender distinctions found in European languages (usually comprising masculine, feminine and neuter) and contrasts them with the Bantu languages where gender categories can have more than a dozen such distinctions. One can easily imagine how a Bantu exploration of 'gendered roles at home and at work' would be diminished within an English-only publication based on hegemonic assumptions of universal expressability of all concepts and ideas in English. Ringberg et al. (2010, pp. 84 onward) provide the example of the different meanings of the English word *hierarchy* and its translation into the Spanish word *jerarquía*. While apparently similar, there are nevertheless very different meaning systems and categories for social groups and relationships associated with these words, ranging from an organizational-bureaucratic order encoded into the English word, to an organisational order based on family relationships in the Spanish word to an order based on absolute patriarchal control (in Mexican meaning systems). An unreflective (i.e. hegemonic) use of the English word can potentially gloss over these other meanings systems, evoking the more dominant connotations of the English word. Therefore, with increasing and accelerating cross-border, cross-cultural and cross-languages research, there is an urgent and strong need to address such shortcomings of the 'black box' and its blind spots.

The principles of linguistic relativity leave room for considerations to work across languages as it is possible to acquire the syntax and vocabulary of other languages through the learning of a language (Agar, 1994). The possibility to understand perspectives generated in different languages is an enterprise of translation. Translation is understood not as a mechanistic replacement of one word, phrase and grammatical structure from one language by those of

another language, but as a series of interpretations and decisions which are based on a deep understanding of words, meanings and activities within immediate situations as well as within larger socio-political, historical and cultural systems (Baker, 2011; Venuti, 1998). It is therefore an enterprise that requires decisions, insights and agency (Kuninnen and Koskinen, 2010).

The antecedents for the incorporation of translation as a necessary and important aspect of international management research are based on a pre-existing acknowledgement of the existence of the nexus of ties between linguistic codes, experiential knowledge and worldviews as well as individual and institutional willingness to engage with the phenomena of such different language and life words. In the mainstream management community as well as in sections of critical management communities, this is currently not the case. It is a community that is bound by the use of its lingua franca, English, which is viewed as a ‘tool to be mastered’ rather than a life force which changes the ‘other language’ experiences and bodies of knowledge it captures. Furthermore, in evaluating written accounts of research, the standards of native speakers are used to assess the quality and rigour of submitted scripts; thus English may be used as a lingua franca, but at the last and most important stage of knowledge dissemination, the community uses English language standards as based on native speaker competences and norms. Steyaert and Janssens (2013) critique the unreflective and hegemonic use of English as based on a notion of pragmatism which prevents the management community to develop more imaginative ways to engage and incorporate language diversity. A study by Chidlow et al. (2014) who researched the treatment of languages and translation within international business literatures from a methodological perspective, supports the polemical and joyful theorising of Steyaert and Janssens. These scholars found that the stance toward languages/translation resonates with a ‘technicist paradigm’ (p. 562), which is based on assumptions of complete equivalence of meaning between languages, and which ignores cultural-political and historical contexts of translation as well as the agency wielded by translators themselves. In sum, the philosophical foundations of mainstream international management research are based upon a representationalist epistemology and on a realist ontology (Johnson and Duberley, 2000) which underpins the majority of research projects in international management.

2.2 *Opening the black box*

Epistemological and ontological positions have consequences for the bodies of knowledge which are generated and published in written form and presented as true or truthful. In the light of the outlined stance of management scholarship toward language multiplicity, Steyaert and Janssens (2013) articulate three strategies (scandalization, scrutinization, invention) to counteract the ‘unquestioned support for English as the lingua franca of academia’ (p. 132). The enactment of such strategies is already under way as there are an increasing number of published contributions which challenge the language status quo. Considerable collective contributions have been made by the emergence of a language-sensitive international business/management literature, which is a body comprising empirical and theoretical pieces which take languages and language diversity as found in particular (but not exclusively) MNC settings as their point of departure to investigate and understand the role and function of languages, language agents and the consequences of language diversity for policy and practice in international business settings (e.g. Piekkari and Zander, 2005; Piekkari and Tietze, 2011; Brannen, Piekkari and Tietze, 2014). Mainly, studies within this approach are drawing attention to the formative and performative influence of languages in international work settings, including their disruptive and integrative functions within diverse settings and themes such as global teams (Henderson, 2005; Hinds et al., 2014; Tenzer et al., 2014), emotive and identity impacts of languages use (Neeley, 2013; Steyaert et al., 2011), language policies (Frederikson et al., 2006) and their consequences (Louhiala-Salminen et al, 2005; Vaara et al, 2005) have been made. The agentic role of language mediators who operate at the interstices of MNC structures have been incorporated into the literature (e.g. Marschan-Piekkari et al, 1999; Barner-Rasmussen and Aarnio, 2011; Heikkilä and Smale, 2011) as have the ‘translation decisions’ made by senior role holders (Logemann and Piekkari, 2015) and the role of translators in international knowledge transfers (Holden, 2008).

In their philosophical orientation, most (but not all) of the contributions emanating from this stream of work are underpinned by constructionist epistemologies where language is seen as a performative force through which life worlds are enacted and created.

These accounts are supplemented by a second effort within the international management academic community, whereby the individual and collaborative practices of international research teams are scrutinized and used to demonstrate that many aspects of social-academic interactions and the consequent generation of knowledge are impacted upon by languages and their different, yet invisible location within a hierarchy of languages. Merliäinen et al. (2008) and Thomas et al. (2009) report from a Finnish-British research collaboration into the

identities of workers and consultants. Taking the content of their comparative (British, Finnish) study aside, they also investigate the initial tensions between the Finnish and British researchers as expressive of hegemonic relationships which privilege the English language data, English language findings over the Finnish ones. They identify this as a ‘hegemonic closure of meaning’ (Meriläinen et al., 2008p. 587) emphasizing the greater importance of English-language based meanings over others and as such constitutive of core-peripheral power relationships (see also Kachru, 1986 for language-based analysis, Üsdiken, 2010, Grey 2010; Meyer and Boxenbaum, 2010 for analysis of management research traditions within peripheral-core geographies). In particular the previously mentioned notion of how to translate and interpret notions of gender became a focal point of their discussions as in ‘... in Nordic languages there is no straightforward linguistic distinctions between the terms sex and gender (...). In Finland, feminist researchers have used the concept *sosiaalinen sukupuoli*. This translates to social sex, which is an explicitly ambiguous constellation in the Finnish language’ (p. 317). This ‘small’ difference in the existence of gendered pronouns and their use had far-reaching consequences as for example, the interpretation and analysis of both Finnish and British data privileged (initially) the British meaning system in how research findings were categorised and presented in written accounts, using the English pronouns and ‘hiding’ the Finnish meanings.

In other words the experience of linguistic difference and instances of linguistic relativity in the data were initially leading to tensions within the research team (Fins ‘versus’ Brits), but then articulated and understood as expressive of institutional patterns and historical power relationships. This is an important finding, which is supplemented by Tietze and Dick’s (2013) findings about tendencies in the management scholarly community to individualise experience and attribute failure to publish in English with personal malfunction to achieve sufficiently high level of language competence rather than with institutionalised assumptions. Likewise, Horn (2016, p. 27) provides evidence that non-native speakers of English ‘go to great lengths to conceal their linguistic identity (...). They take action that goes far beyond standard practice such as employing translators or working with professional editing services. Some scholars reportedly removed references to their country-of-origin from their manuscripts (e.g. bibliography, samples, case studies) out of fear of being exposed as non-native speakers’.

These more reflective pieces offered by these researchers supplement the body of language-sensitive international business literature as they open the black box in a different way:

pointing to the minutiae of cross-language reflections, negotiations, exchanges and communicative encounters which so strongly influence the construction of knowledge accounts. They also point to the ‘closure of meaning’ as it gets lost, changed and moulded in the translation process.

In sum, the enigma of the ‘black box’ is prised open as a body of empirical-theoretical work has made language diversity its intellectual project and point of departure. Some reflective pieces point to the invisible processes of language-bound social-academic relationships which unfold in historical-political contexts and which also part of the establishment of bodies of knowledge. These contributions open the ‘black box’ in different ways, which are expressive of the beginnings of rethinking the role of languages in international research. While the black box has somewhat been prised open, I now make an argument that this change in orientation has not yet been fully institutionalised. I do so by briefly outlining the contribution of translation and translation studies to the field of international management research and will proceed from thereon to some realistic proposals how to further such institutionalising of international research practice.

3 The contribution of translation studies

After a modest start as an independent field of inquiry in the late 1970s, translation studies have since matured into a full-fledged academic discipline (see e.g. Snell-Hornby, 2000). In contemporary times its basic premise is known as skopos theory; with skopos meaning the purpose or the function of the translation that gave translators the licence to depart from the source text content and style when necessary, thus breaking away from old pre-theoretical requirements of fidelity. One can thus argue that the two central features that became essential for the early establishment of translation studies as a field of independent inquiry were concerned with translators’ agency and the consequences of their decisions.

Translation studies as a discipline is still growing with “meteoric speed” (Baker & Saldanha, 2011: xi) and scholars from other disciplines are increasingly drawing upon its ideas and approaches in order to understand globalization and its consequences as multifaceted phenomena (Dodson, 2005; van Leeuwen, 2006;). There are some early signs that management researchers are starting to take translation seriously and as such are also contributing to ‘opening the black box’ (e.g. Janssens et al., 2004; Ciuk and James, 2015; Rovik, 2016; Tietze, 2010). This growth and spread of the application of translation studies in itself provides some substantiation to the argument that, through globalization, natural

languages are increasingly meeting and are brought to bear on each other. The existence of a shared *lingua franca*, i.e., the English language, has not eradicated or rendered superfluous issues resulting from language diversity. Rather the contrary, the need to translate has become increasingly pressing (see e.g. Cronin, 2013).

Translation studies have also developed into new directions, including the rise of sociology of translation and the increasing attention paid to translating and interpreting in various contexts (e.g. skopos theory – see also Chidlow, et al., 2014, for discussion of its relevance for international business research) and some translation scholars shifted their attention to the translating actors and their social context. In this subfield of sociology of translation the focus is on translators, their habitus (see Vorderobermeier, 2013) or their agency (e.g., Kinnunen & Koskinen, 2010), but with a full understanding of the contextualized nature and embeddedness of their activity, situating them in a network of expectations, opportunities and constraints. A number of approaches have been put forward to explain the networked nature of translation practice and the role of collaboration in translational practices (e.g., Risku, 2012), creating a new, more collective understanding of agency in translation. Thus, translation scholars have embarked on their own empirical project into the translation process, eager to open up the black box of translators' or interpreters' head (Göpferich, 2008) and looking at translators' decision-making in minute detail, observing and recording the gradual process of translating.

These approaches are not unlike those observed and recorded in the reflexive reworking offered by the Finnish-British research team, where the 'clash of languages' did not remain a hidden part of the black box, but was rendered visible through collaborative translation. The sociology of translation approach has recently also encompassed the study of translating in various non-professional contexts (e.g. volunteer contexts such as political activism, fan-subbing and crowdsourced localisation projects; Susam-Sarajeva and Pérez-González, 2012), where bilingual language agents translate and interpret in line with the expediencies of the situations and context as well as with their own abilities and intents. Similar agents (the language nodes or mediators) and similar activities (ad hoc translation/interpreting) have been identified in the language-sensitive international business literature; similar activities inform the work that bilingual management researchers frequently do themselves when translating data, consulting with other language agents about divergent or different meanings (e.g. Xian, 2008). Once framed from a non-technicist perspective, these acts of translation can be investigated as agency-driven and as embedded within cultural, historical-political

contexts (e.g. Janssens et al., 2014) and as constitutive of constructing bodies of management knowledge.

As translation has taken some tentative roots in international management research (e.g. Holden and Michailova, 2014), questions arise how to deepen these roots with a view to strike a balance between using English as a language of mutual intelligibility while acknowledging the diversity of 'other languages' and the worldviews they express.

3.1 Institutionalising translation: themes and methods

This paper started on the assertion that knowledge and publication practices of management scholars are institutional in so far as they are based on shared protocols and norms of how, what and where to publish in particular. One underlying, yet unacknowledged assumption of contemporary publication policy and practice is that English is the only valid language to publish knowledge in and that this use of a single language only is of no consequence. Yet, available research literature (e.g. Boussebaa and Brown, 2016; Horn, 2015; Thomas et al., 2009; Tietze and Dick, 2013; Xian, 2008) has shown that there are indeed consequences for management researchers, their well-being as well as their status in their profession, for the formation of collaborative relationships and also for 'knowledge itself' as 'English only' research accounts frequently do not express the richness and facets of experiences and findings 'of other languages'.

These assumptions of 'English only publication practices' are based on a belief that the English language is a universal language, able to express all truth and experiences. Yet these assumptions are erroneous in so far as all languages and how they present and signify the external world are symbolic, culturally agreed systems (de Saussure, 1986). There is strong evidence that this is indeed the case; for example Holden and Michaelova (2014, p. 906) show that the translation of a whole corpus of knowledge and ideas from English into the Russian language requires 'entire terrains of corporate contexts and experience linking multiple mental and social frames of references'. Ignoring these multiple frames has been described as 'scandalous' (Steyart and Janssens, 2013). This scandal has been expressed by describing languages as the orphan of international business research amongst others. The 'scrutiny' of published literature has shown that both theoretical orientations and empirical projects exist which challenge this scandal and from thereon it becomes possible to move

towards 'invention', which is a call to the management scholars and their creative potential to respond constructively to a multilingual world and its centre: 'At the heart of multilingualism we find translation' (Meylaerts, 2013, p. 537).

Such creation of invention of different practices can take different forms. First, it comprises a variety of different academic contributions: The continuation and strengthening of empirical contributions to language-sensitive international business and management studies are a case in point. While this stream of papers and contributions has by now established itself as an acknowledged and rich sub-field of comparative management, there are still many facets of language use, language strategies both within and outside MNCs that remain unexplored. It could be foreseen that this field continues with the same strength and sense of purpose that has seen the field of cross cultural management establish itself as a respected and valid field of study. There are many avenues for inquiry that are currently being opened up; to name but one or two: the work and involvement of professional translators and interpreters has been shown to be central to knowledge transfer and cultural mediation work. Blenkinsop and Shadema-Pajou (2010) base their study of *tarouf* (a Farsi word, that expresses a particular way of hospitality and is closely associated with business etiquette) on empirical interviews with professional translators. The existence and effect of 'untranslatable' words as found in some adoptions of Japanese production and quality practices provide points of departure to engage with similarity and difference and the role of translation in their respective creation (e.g. Piekkari and Wesley, 2015). The work of bilingual-bicultural agents has evoked some responses (Brannen and Thomas, 2010; Barner-Rasmussen, 2015) and continues to provide rich opportunity to explore embedded international agency in a multitude of contexts. Investigations departing from a semiological analysis of key vocabulary point to the hidden layers of meanings that only unfold through contextual analysis (for examples see Brannen, 2004).

Second, as a field establishes itself, one also finds academic contributions that are theoretical and conceptual in character. As with the field of comparative cultural studies, the language field has produced such pieces – such as Brannen, 2004; Janssens et al., 2004; Steyaert and Janssens, 2013 and 2014; Chidlow et al., 2014, all of which made important contributions to introduce new ideas and vocabulary to international management research. Yet, in order to advance and establish our field, there is a continued need to develop its intellectual content and debates and this, in turn, requires more engagement with scholarly and even philosophical works from other disciplines. For example, the successful expansion of

'discourse studies' and discursive approaches within management studies was carried forward by the existence of many empirical studies, but its academic credibility and contribution was based on a whole series of pieces and debates about the epistemological, theoretical and ideological contribution of 'discourse' to the understanding of organisational and managerial practices. Some of these debates took the form of discussions of the contributions of particular thinkers and philosophers (e.g. Habermas, Foucault, Bourdieu, Weber); others took the form of academics debating, disagreeing and formulating points and counterpoints and the embedding of respective positions within wider moral-philosophical frameworks (Alvesson and Willmott, 1992; Alvesson and Kärreman, 2013; Boje et al, 2004; Grant et al, 2001; Parker, 1992; Willmott, 1993). Similar philosophical and political pieces still need to be written by scholars who are positioning their work within the 'languages' approach. Here, Ellis and Zhan's (2011:108) comment on international business theory also holds true for most 'big ideas' and theories in general management studies and other functional areas: 'The production of international business theory is dominated by English-speaking scholars in general and authors affiliated with US institutions in particular'. This holds true also for most management and organisation studies, despite their traditions of using French thinkers such as Foucault or Bourdieu and German sociologists such as Weber and Habermas for developing theoretical approaches to understanding organisational and management practice. The use of these thinker's ideas are drawn on, mainly, from their translated works. Here, the lessons learned from Bruno Bettelheim's (1984) investigation of how Freud's work was (wrongly) translated by American translators/psychoanalysts as an exclusively objective and clinical quantitative science as their unconscious desire not to take 'this profound' science to heart provides food for thought.

Thirdly, such engagement also includes a new approach to handling questions of translation within the methodological sections of research accounts. The methodological pieces offered by Chidlow et al.,(2014) and also by Úsunier (2011), as well as the contribution made by Piekkari and Welch (2006) and Marschan-Piekkari and Welch (2004) offer insights into the practicalities and issues of conducting cross-language research and also touch on methodological-philosophical underpinnings that our emergent sub-field needs to concern itself with more strongly. An increasing number of self-reflective pieces such as those discussed in this paper may also contribute to rendering linguistic hegemony visible and thus provide moral impetus for the multitude of possibility that is currently 'becoming possible'. Such impetus is also furthered by the augmenting of language-based contributions through

the existence of specialist conferences and committees, the hosting of conference streams; and the network building that is currently taking place as well as editing projects on journal or book basis. Thus, the expansion and deepening of the available body of work is one part of the two-pronged (themes and theory/method) approach that is necessary to augment our field into a more visible and influential position.

3.2 *Institutionalising translation: stakeholders*

Invention is not only a change in thematic and methodological direction, it is also based on the willingness of stakeholders in the community to accept these changes and enact them through changing normative behaviours. An important stakeholder group are the senior gatekeepers or 'literary brokers' by which is meant those members of the academic community which are in positions where they can influence the publication process and outcome. They are 'significant mediators in English medium publications ... they are involved in the production of such texts [and] influence the texts in different and important ways (Lillis and Curry, 2006, p. 3). To name but a few, they are editors, members of editorial boards, reviewers, senior colleagues who advise on publications on so on.

The role of these influential stakeholders is an important one to be considered as they can initiate, reflect and institutionalise change. Lillis and Curry (2006; 2010; 2015) have perhaps made the most significant contribution in identifying the role and influence of 'literacy brokers' in the production of textual accounts in the context of research work by academics who are not native speakers of English. While their own research into this phenomena is not located within management studies, their key findings that the dominance of English as a medium for academic publishing is influencing practices of knowledge production and evaluation hold also true for publications in management and business journals. The language ideologies enacted by reviewers and editors on articles submitted for publication in English-medium international journals show that their orientation toward the English language and English language standards impact directly on the evaluation and circulation of knowledge accounts. English is also shown to be treated as a 'single stable semiotic resource and the native speaker is attributed to a privileged position'. (Lillis and Curry, 2015, p. 148) Yet, by the same token, Lillis and Curry show that reviewer and editorial practice also vary enormously in their evaluative regimes, which remain a contested space with 'evaluators (...) differing in how they orient to English, language and language work' (Lillis and Curry, 2015, p. 148).

Many management and business journals have a language policy and some of these policies refer to the standard of English, stress the publication of English language texts and sometimes provide a link to a source about how to approach the issue of translation if a manuscript is not written in English. From a cursory glance to ten well established management journals, none provides any guidance about issues that may arise from translating texts or data, all either state or assume a ‘native speaker model of English’ (as opposed to a stance of advocating a lingua franca model) – all view and treat language and translation from a technicist perspective. There is little systematic knowledge about the language/translation policies and practices of the established and influential management and business journals, the orientation of their editors, editorial boards and their reviewers. Therefore, investigations into what policies exist and how and whether they are enacted as practice, is part of scrutinising our collective practice with a view to changing it. Before invention can take place, however, scrutiny and debate needs to occur. Montgomery (2013, p. 57) points to the fact that while non-native English language speakers have started to develop their own Englishes and how they want to use English, Anglo-American English continues to keep its role as a global norm in one major and critical domain: professional written discourse. Yet, standards are moving and evolving norms and English language standards are no longer determined by a group of powerful nations, but instead by a ‘consensus of gatekeepers-publishers, editors, educators, authors of language textbooks, speechwriters, journalists and other middlemen who actually shape the form of a language that reaches the reading public(pp. 57 – 58). In other words, the world of English language publications is ruled by a silent oligarchy of powerful knowledge gatekeepers.

In the light of strongly emerging debates about the role of the English language, a consensus based on more forgiving, flexible standards that would not compromise mutual intelligibility needs to be discussed. Harzing and Metz (2012, p. 699) have made a start by investigating the geographical composition of editorial boards – with regard to English and language aspects, they find that:

Our study shows that the representation of countries with average English language skills continues to be abysmally low (...) Yet, it is reasonable to assume that at least some scholars from countries with average English language skills would have sufficient English literacy skills to serve as editorial board members of English journals, because they read academic articles in their field in the English language and the present their work at (English based) international conferences.

Thus, research that could propel forward the language-sensitive field of management scholarship also includes investigations into the language competences and diversity of editorial boards, the orientations of editorial board members and reviewers toward the English language, and the practices that are used in text evaluation. Such investigations could also focus on whether ‘linguistic difference’ is encouraged or rendered visible (e.g. by having the abstract published in two languages), how issues of translating data or philosophical works are treated (or not) in the sections about methods and methodologies; how willing a journal is about including an overview of findings that are not produced or published in English. A recent piece by the science-business journalist Matt Pickles (2016) reports that 6000 scientific journals are published in Brazil, mostly in Portuguese, and only a handful are recognised by the international index of journals. Surely, some of these journals must be business/management journals and have something relevant to contribute to the English-language management community. A journal that engages with this non-English body of knowledge by providing brief overviews of them is a truly international journal; most management/business journals only appropriate the word ‘international’ as an easy descriptor.

Our field has a need not only for more empirical and conceptual contributions, it also needs to gain an understanding of the institutional structures and practices it is part of, in order to have a considered view about how and whether to challenge particular aspects of these.

4 Conclusion

In 2007 Cheng envisaged a new path for international management investigations to become amongst others more multidisciplinary and phenomenon-motivated. Delios (2016, p. 5) also sees innovative international research as based on ‘deep reports of context’ – not unlike those identified by Holden and Michaelova (2014) - where details of national, provincial, local and indigenous factors shape brittle and emergent relations. Such research needs to include aspects of situated language use and deploy methods and protocols how to incorporate these into (English language) research accounts. In a global world, phenomena under study are expressed, captured and ultimately represented in different languages. If one takes serious heed of the insights from translation studies, linguistic anthropology and emergent international management scholarship this agenda needs to include a more conscious and extended awareness of ‘other languages’.

The establishment of English in the role of a global language is due to historical-political developments (Phillipson, 1992) and also propelled forward through technological and cultural developments, favouring the English language (Crystal, 2003; Ostler, 2005). These developments have always been associated with the notion of dominance of language, cultural and economic systems over others (Phillipson, 1992) and its continuation as linguistic hegemony into contemporary academic and cultural practice. Hegemony was metaphorically captured as a 'black box' and it was argued that its effects can only exist and thrive as long as they remain invisible and hidden. In 2013 Steyeart and Janssens proposed a three-pronged strategy to challenge contemporary institutional hegemony, consisting of scandalisation (languages as unacknowledged 'orphan'), scrutinization (exploring language practice and policies in international contexts) and invention (developing body of thought and practice that incorporate languages and their transformative effect on publication practices). The tenor of this paper is that scandalisation is unfolding, is useful and may have to continue for a while; yet that the field is ready for scrutinzation, by which I mean both the scrutinization of academic themes and ideas as well as the scrutinization of one's own collective practice and assumptions. If done well, these should set the bedrock to move to invention, so that practices can be changed and replaced if needed. Referring to translation studies and the advances it has made in the past two decades, interdisciplinary projects, may become part of an innovative phase of international management research which also needs to see a considerable shift in its institutionalised publication practices.

The use of English as a shared language of knowledge has propelled forward knowledge transfer across linguistic boundaries in many beneficial ways. Yet, it has also reduced the possibility to acknowledge the existence of bodies of knowledge, perspectives and experiences that are not easily captured within the signification codes of the English language. Despite the espoused constructionist stance, both individual and institutional, of large parts of the management scholarship community, its epistemological and methodological practices are still mainly monolingual in character. Based on the contributions of linguistic anthropology and the theoretical parameters of linguistic relativity, such an orientation needs now to be supplemented, complemented and changed by an acknowledgement of 'languages' and translation. This view does not express a radical break with using English as a shared language of knowledge, but it implies a more considerate use of English as a lingua franca, which is not owned by the institutional gatekeepers presenting native speaker communities.

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